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Token Ring aims to wrap security around your finger

Jewelry that makes payments, unlocks doors and works as a password manager.



Scott Stein
June 27, 2017 7:00 a.m. PT

4 min read



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I'm not sure I want my entire life on a ring I wear on my finger. But Token's pitch for the future of wearables is pretty fascinating: something that acts not as a fitness tracker or notifier, but simply as a secure ID. Sooner or later, it's an angle that other wearables are bound to get deeper into, too.

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The Token Ring is the first product made by Token, a company specializing in biometric security (no relation to the old networking term). The ring is made of thick metal and plastic, but inside it has an optical sensor, a fingerprint sensor, and NFC and Bluetooth along with a chip with a secure element inside. It can pay for things. It can unlock things. It's basically a wallet and keychain on a ring.

This isn't a unique idea: smartwatches can already unlock computers using two-factor authentication, and many wearables have contactless payments. But Token's added fingerprint sensor and NFC accessories could expand the range of its security and its unlocking ambition. One ring to...well, you know how the Lord of the Rings quote goes.



Token in two sizes. The fingerprint reader's on the inside.

Scott Stein/CNET

Two-factor jewelry

Token's unique quality is its fingerprint sensor on the underside. Take it off, and it requires a swipe before it activates again. A rainbow-colored LED pulse shows it recognizes the ID, but a red flash means it was rejected. The \$249 ring (roughly £195 or AU\$330) comes with a brushed stainless steel finish, but also comes in black rhodium and 14k rose gold (\$299 -- £235 or AU\$390) finishes.

Token uses gestures as well as near-field. It can do contactless payments, but it can also unlock computers via password: Knock on a table and the ring sends its code to a nearby computer.

How will all this work and be safe? Token is already working with Microsoft to support the ring with Windows 10, as well as Visa and Mastercard for contactless payments.

Using something like Token could remove the need for entering passwords and Token's taking that seriously: The company's working with FIDO Alliance partner companies (a non-profit focusing on

with [FIDO Alliance](#) partner companies (a non-profit focusing on interoperability between apps and device) to add support, and the ring is aiming to work with the World Wide Web Consortium's [API](#) for [strong cryptography](#) in web browsers.



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Using Token Ring with the NFC-equipped Token Lock.
Scott Stein/CNET

It unlocks your office, your car... your door

With a separately-sold car plug, Token says its ring can be programmed to work with any car with a smart button: It'll work with car doors now, and eventually the Start button down the road.

It could also work as a door-unlocking key in a home, provided that lock is made by Token for now. I saw it in a set demo and it made the deadbolt unlock, but as a representative of Token admitted, smart locks are a "weird ass" space. Not many of them use NFC at the moment, opting for Bluetooth instead. And [iOS 11](#), for example, doesn't do NFC door unlocking directly from the phone lock screen -- it'll only work in-app. But Token's aim is to make door unlocking more immediate and nearer range.

Token says its ring can be used as an HID proximity card, provided your office allowed it to be programmed as an office ID alternative. According to Token, the ring's two-factor authentication is more secure than a standard proximity card. Maybe biometric jewelry could be like the [BYO device movement in office smartphones](#). Maybe not.



Scanning a fingerprint on a prototype Token Ring before wearing.
Scott Stein/CNET

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How long until all wearables start doing this?

Either way, Token Ring raises an interesting proposition: Eventually, wearables are bound to start being wallets, keys and even wearable passcode keychains. It's one step below getting a wearable implant. How secure this ends up being, and how easy to use, remains to be seen. It's an idea that Token is diving into ahead of the pack, but others are bound to follow.

It could be an amazing idea, if it all works. Or, terrifying, if you worry about the idea of one device being your entire secure identity. I'm looking forward to trying it when it arrives in December, but I'm also

skeptical about all the pieces coming together.

Key specs

- Battery life: two weeks (inductive charging cradle)
- 50 meter water resistance
- Fingerprint sensor
- EAL5+ secure element on ring
- Bluetooth, NFC
- Optical sensor registers if owner is wearing it or not
- Works with iOS, Android, Windows, [MacOS](#)

- Sizes US 6-12
- 9 mm wide, 2.5 mm thick
- \$349 for Token and Token Lock (roughly £275 or AU\$460)
- \$349 for Token and Token Car Plug adapter (roughly £275 or AU\$460)
- \$399 for Token, Token Lock, and Car Plug (roughly £315 or AU\$530)

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A Lot of Prime Day Deals Are Overhyped but These 75+ Deals Under \$25 Are Worth Buying Right Now

CNET's experts have combed through hundreds of deals to bring you the best ones under \$25 in every category.

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curated items on :

By [Aashna Gheewalla, P](#)

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Our expert, award-winning staff selects the products we cover and rigorously researches and tests our top picks. If you buy through our links, we may get a commission. [Reviews ethics statement](#)

We're on the third day of Amazon's massive [Prime Day sale](#). The price cuts are as big as the sale event, with discounts across a variety of categories including big ones like [TVs](#), [mattresses](#) and [appliances](#), and smaller ones like everyday essentials and health and wellness goods. And get this: You don't have to shell out big bucks for a great deal.

There are plenty of excellent deals, even record low prices, live right now that won't require you to spend more than \$25. We've rounded up the best of these budget finds, including [smart home gadgets](#), health and wellness and home essentials.

This story is part of **Amazon Prime Day**, CNET's guide to everything you need to know and how to find the best deals.

With the impending [tariff-related price hikes](#), now is a great time to get some essentials before the prices go up. These budget deals are an excellent way to save some cash on everyday essentials. CNET's shopping experts have curated these deals and, below, you'll find something to fit your needs. We're also working to update this article throughout the sale as offers expire and new ones become available so make sure to check back regularly.

We're also monitoring competing sales at [Best Buy](#) and [Walmart](#). If you have a little more room