

Spotlight on wearables: Tech competitors will challenge Apple's dominance

Article

Apple towers over today's smartwatch and hearable markets, and it's well-positioned atop the smartphone market.

- AirPods will account for **31.1%** of the US hearables market this year.
- Apple Watch users will represent **46.2%** of US smartwatch users.
- IDC estimated that, globally, Apple had a **34.1%** share of wearables shipments in 2020, including hearables, smartwatches, wristbands, smart glasses, and clothing—but not augmented or virtual reality (AR/VR) devices. In Q3 2021, that figure dipped to a still strong **28.8%**.

Wearable Device Shipments Worldwide, by Brand, 2019 & 2020

millions, % of total, and % change

	2019		2020		% change
	Shipments	% of total	Shipments	% of total	
Apple	111.5	32.2%	151.4	34.1%	35.9%
Xiaomi	41.7	12.0%	50.7	11.4%	21.7%
Huawei	28.9	8.3%	43.5	9.8%	50.7%
Samsung	31.4	9.1%	40.0	9.0%	27.3%
Fitbit	15.9	4.6%	12.9	2.9%	-18.8%
Other	117.1	33.8%	146.1	32.9%	24.7%
Total	346.4	100.0%	444.7	100.0%	28.4%

Note: numbers may not add up to total due to rounding

Source: International Data Corporation (IDC), "Worldwide Quarterly Wearable Device Tracker" as cited in press release, March 15, 2021

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Apple's current dominance has led to major investments by other technology companies in smartwatches and hearables:

- **Google** bought **Fitbit** and allied with **Samsung** on a major refresh of its wearables operating system Wear OS late last year.
- **Facebook** is developing a smartwatch.
- **Amazon** has Echo Buds.

Firms are also looking for the next breakthrough form factors. Today, competitors offer major products in connected clothing (**Under Armour**, **Jacquard** by **Google**), rings (**Movano**, **Oura**), and connected glasses (**Snap's Spectacles**, **Vuzix**, **Facebook's Stories**). Gartner predicts rapid growth in most of these areas, except wristbands.

[Read the full report.](#)