



Fitness bands

They're one of the hottest trends in the wearable tech movement – but are the bands you can strap on to monitor your fitness really a key to an improved lifestyle? Three volunteers put them to the test

Frank Webster

Director, Finders Keepers

What Misfit Flash, £29.99 (above, left)



I keep fit by walking the dog, playing sport, and I'm currently practising for dancing competition Strictly Oxford 2015. This was easy to set up and it synced quickly with my iPad. The little disc goes into a watchstrap or clips onto your pocket – but it wasn't easy to get it into the strap. However, once it was in, it stayed in. The strap is flexible, waterproof, and lightweight. It gives you hints on how to achieve your goals – for example, walk for an hour, run for 20 minutes or swim for 30 minutes – and then you can vary those activities. I can see how it would motivate you to reach your goals every day. It's also good value for money, as the battery lasts up to six months and you don't need to charge it. I'd continue to use it for the sleep tracker: I'm a very light sleeper and it tracks your hours slept and breaks your data down into light and deep sleep.

 **Frank Webster is a member of IoD Oxfordshire**

John Bycroft

Sales and marketing director, Insider Technologies

What Jawbone Up Move, £39.99 (above, centre)



I'm hardly Jawbone's target market. Aside from walking the dog and occasional tennis, nobody could ever accuse me of being a fitness freak. However, having used it for the past three weeks, it's staying on my wrist. I've got one of those BMIs where I've got a bit to lose. Jawbone set a target for me of 10,500 steps a day. Now, when it gets to 9pm and I'm thinking of another glass of wine, it makes me think, 'I'm only 700 steps from my target, I'd better do something.' I'm also impressed by Jawbone's sleep function. By tracking how many times I wake during the night, it's helping me reach my eight-hours-a-night target. It may look cheap and nasty – in business meetings, people say, 'What the hell's that? Is it a magnetic band?' – but by giving me stimulus to exercise, such conspicuousness is easily forgiven.

 **John Bycroft is a member of IoD Berkshire**

Fiona O'Mahony

Client sales manager, Director

What Fitbit Charge HR, £119.99 (above, right)



I received my Fitbit Charge HR when I attended a Bupa event. At first I was very excited as it was January and I said, 'Great, this is going to be a motivator.' However in my head I thought 'I don't really believe that – it's just a gadget and I'm not really a gadget person.' It looked quite nice and stylish, and was really easy to set up and link to my phone with the free app. It monitors all aspects of my health, including steps, sleep and calories. It recommends 10,000 a day, which has made me more active. If I don't reach my target when I'm back home in the evening I find myself walking around the house to do so. As I'm a bad sleeper I really get a buzz if I manage to get my seven or eight hours' sleep at night. It's now become part of my day – I won't be taking it off as it makes me feel good.

 **Fiona O'Mahony is client sales manager of Director**

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