



How safe is Covidsafe?

Jon Mamonski gives the federal government's coronavirus app the once over

At the time of writing more than five million Australians have downloaded Covidsafe, an app that traces every person that's been in contact with someone who has tested positive for coronavirus in the previous few weeks. It's a bid to automate coronavirus contact tracing and allow the easing of restrictions.

How does the app work?

After you download the app on the Australian Apple App store or Google Play store, you will be asked to register your name (or pseudonym), age range, postcode and phone number. That information will be stored and encrypted on a government server and then passed on only to state and territory health authorities in the event that someone you've been in contact with has tested positive. Using Bluetooth, the app records anyone you get close to (within 1.5 metres) for 15 minutes or more who also has the app. The two apps exchange anonymised IDs, which cycle every two hours and are stored encrypted on phones and deleted after 21 days.

What personal data is collected?

The name you choose to provide, your age range, your phone number and your postcode, information about testing positive for coronavirus and then the contact IDs - should you consent to that being uploaded. Bluetooth data is also uploaded to the server upon testing positive in order for the government to figure out, using signal strength, which of you need to be notified. The app does not track location.

Who can access the data?

Health minister Greg Hunt has written a direction that mandates only health authorities or those maintaining the app can get access to the information. The government has said that police will not be able to get the data, even with a warrant, and court orders will not be able to force the government to hand over the data.

The government has said it will legislate to prevent data from the app being moved offshore, including for requests for data by the US government under laws such as the Patriot Act so, it is safe to download.

This is planet Earth

What if we could track Earth in a computer, a system with an ever-flowing set of data that can be tracked, analysed and potentially even predicted? Microsoft's latest environmental initiative is dubbed a 'Planetary Computer.'

We should be able to track any event happening in the world – a bushfire in Australia or flood in India and have the data readily accessible on a single artificial intelligence (AI)-driven platform. Of greatest importance is the ability to see and register changes to

our environment in real time. If Microsoft succeeds it could reshape our relationship with Earth entirely.

Lucas Joppa, Microsoft's first chief



environmental officer says, "Think of this less as a giant computer in a stark white room and more of an approach to computing that is planetary in scale and allows us to query every aspect of

environmental and nature-based solutions available in real time."

As soon as we could take flight in balloons and tie cameras to kites we have been trying to capture and understand the world's environment. The Planetary Computer takes that idea to its logical conclusion, serving to capture and

predict everything happening on the planet – at once with a combination of satellite imagery, sensors in the air and even robots on the ground. Discover more at: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=y9eJMzEjlc>



REVIEW
SMARTWATCHES

No longer a novelty, smartwatches are becoming an essential wearable. These tiny wrist computers now accurately record your health measures, track your journeys, read your messages and email, launch and end your calls and as a bonus, tell the time – with digital or analogue designs in any number of watch faces. Best of all, battery life has improved dramatically – with six months for some models. Here's the top twelve smartwatches, road tested for 2020.



SAMSUNG GALAXY WATCH
Superb design, very tactile with rotating bezel. Two sizes in black or rose gold, auto fitness tracking, optional e-SIM to take calls and Samsung Pay. Best smartwatch overall.
Design ★★★★★
Water Resistance ★★★★★
Connect/Function ★★★★★
Health/Fitness ★★★★★
Price \$359



AMAZFIT GTS
Huami is China's biggest smartwatch maker. Pays design homage to the Apple Watch at half the price. Dazzling display and 14-day battery.
Design ★★★★★
Water Resistance ★★★★★
Connect/Function ★★★★★
Health/Fitness ★★★
Price \$230



FITBIT CHARGE 4
Now owned by Google, more health tracker than smartwatch with Fitbit's functionality and a solid 7-day battery.
Design ★★★
Water Resistance ★★★★★
Connect/Function ★★★★★
Health/Fitness ★★★★★
Price \$249



GARMIN VIVOACTIVE 4
Great all-round watch from Garmin with a 7-day battery. Bit big on the wrist for some.
Design ★★★
Water Resistance ★★★★★
Connect/Function ★★★★★
Health/Fitness ★★★★★
Price \$549



NOERDEN LIFE 2+
Designed with Paris in mind, it has analogue looks and invisible tech. Replaceable 6-month battery, all the fitness features you need and a low price.
Design ★★★★★
Water Resistance ★★★★★
Connect/Function ★★★★★
Health/Fitness ★★★★★
Price \$159



APPLE WATCH 5
No denying it's a good watch that's dogged by poor 18-hour battery life and a hefty price tag. Only works with iPhones.
Design ★★★★★
Water Resistance ★★★★★
Connect/Function ★★★★★
Health/Fitness ★★★★★
Price \$649-\$1099



SAMSUNG GALAXY WATCH ACTIVE 2
Outstanding design and very comfortable to wear. Two sizes, auto fitness tracking, swap straps. Optional e-SIM to take calls and Samsung Pay. Best sports smartwatch.
Design ★★★★★
Water Resistance ★★★★★
Connect/Function ★★★★★
Health/Fitness ★★★★★
Price \$392



AMAZFIT T-REX
Released at CES 2020, the T-Rex is built for tough conditions, with an amazing 20 days of battery life. Best value outdoor watch.
Design ★★★★★
Water Resistance ★★★★★
Connect/Function ★★★★★
Health/Fitness ★★★
Price \$219



HUAWEI G2
Brilliant bright screen and well designed with up to 14 days of battery life. Music plays with earbuds.
Design ★★★★★
Water Resistance ★★★★★
Connect/Function ★★★★★
Health/Fitness ★★★★★
Price \$428



KATE SPADE SCALLOP 2
Fossil-designed and a well featured watch. NFC pay, health tracking, leather or metal straps.
Design ★★★★★
Water Resistance ★★★★★
Connect/Function ★★★★★
Health/Fitness ★★★★★
Price \$569



NOERDEN MATE 2
Minimalist watch with hidden smarts. Interchangeable bands, replaceable 6-9-month battery, camera remote control and a low price. Best battery life watch.
Design ★★★★★
Water Resistance ★★★★★
Connect/Function ★★★★★
Health/Fitness ★★★★★
Price \$189



Samsung steps up with better buds

Building on the wireless sound experience offered by the Galaxy Buds, Samsung's new Galaxy Buds+ are designed to provide a convenient and high-quality listening experience.

Featuring advanced speaker and microphone technology, all-day battery life and new customisable sound, navigation and fitting options, Galaxy Buds+ allow you to enjoy studio-quality audio on your terms.

With sound by AKG, Samsung is raising the bar for sound quality with an innovative two-way speaker system with an added

tweeter for richer treble and a woofer for powerful bass sounds.

If you rely on your wireless headphones for phone calls and video conferencing, Galaxy Buds+ are fitted with three mics—one inner and two outer, for crystal clear voice capture. The exterior microphones use "beamforming" to hone in on your voice and tune out background noise so that you can always be heard, no matter where you are.

With improved Ambient Sound2 you can tune out the outside world when you want to or amplify background noise when you need to stay alert by selecting from a range

of new settings including low, medium, high or extra high.

Galaxy Buds+ offer 11 hours of music playback and can double to 22 hours by using the 270mAh wireless charging case — perfect for on-the-go listening. When in a hurry and need to recharge, quick-charging capabilities can generate 60 minutes of playback in just three recharging minutes by using wired, wireless, or device-to-device charging with Wireless Powershare4.

If you have Spotify, you can continue listening instantly through a simple 'Tap & Hold' gesture. Available now for \$239.

A boost from Telstra

Telstra has announced the launch of the Telstra Smart Wi-Fi Booster 2.0, a new solution for a superior in-home Wi-Fi network experience. The Wi-Fi EasyMesh-certified Gen 2 Booster is specifically designed to work together with the Telstra Smart Modem 2.0 to improve in-home Wi-Fi. With a simple two button setup, a single booster will pair directly to the modem and boost wireless coverage, helping to reduce or resolve black spots and extending wireless coverage around the house. Very handy when there's lots of family trying to share your Wi-Fi.

In addition to the Gen 2 Booster, the Gen 2 Smart Modem is the first Telco ISP-provided device of its kind in the world to be certified by the Wi-Fi Alliance as Wi-Fi EasyMesh approved. The technology is highly scalable, enabling you to easily add wireless access points where you need and with both the booster and the modem having the EasyMesh technology it means better coverage, reduced dropouts and an improved experience.

This means smartphones and other wireless devices in the home will automatically connect to a Wi-Fi connection as you move about the house.

Telstra Connected Home & Business Executive, Michele Garra, said the second-generation Wi-Fi Booster was just another step towards creating a best in class connectivity for customers.

"Telstra is not only the first Australian



telco but also the first telco in the world to have the global Wi-Fi EasyMesh standard accreditation on both a modem and extender device. Now, our customers can get even better Wi-Fi coverage in their home or small office and can take steps to reduce or resolve black spots in those hard-to-reach places."

The Telstra Smart Modem 2.0 and Telstra Smart Wi-Fi Booster 2.0 are now available for all Telstra Broadband customers. Customers who already

have a Telstra Smart Modem 2.0 will have a software upgrade sent remotely to their device so they are able to take full advantage of the benefits when they purchase one or more Gen 2 Boosters.

The Telstra Smart Wi-Fi Booster 2.0 is available online or in store no for \$192 outright or \$8 per month for 24 months per Booster when you maintain an Internet plan. Minimum cost \$192 + your plan charges.

For more information, go to, telstra.com/smartwifi.

Business or

Winner of countless Consumer Electronics Innovation Awards for their laptops, Dell is taking that commitment one step further with the launch of the new XPS 13 2-in-1, redesigned and higher performing than the previous generation.

More and more we're watching a great deal of video on our laptops and Dell make it a real pleasure.

To achieve this, the 'InfinityEdge' display in a 16:10 format has been refined, offering a stunning edge-to-edge screen and 7 per cent larger viewing experience. Dell's smallest laptop camera

is now located at the top bezel, a long-awaited ask from customers. The new display offers improved colour accuracy and resolution as well as the ability to enjoy HDR content with a HDR400 certified UHD+ panel and Dolby Vision.

Because today's device-driven culture we're staring at devices for hours on end each day and consuming high levels of blue light. Dell has partnered with Eyesafe to intelligently manage light energy at the source to selectively reduce harmful blue light and disperse it across the light spectrum.

Starting at \$2124 at dell.com/en-au

pleasure from Dell

When you need your laptop to perform unplugged for life on the road, Dell's new 14-inch Latitude 7400 2-in-1 achieves a simply incredible 18 hours of battery life using a powerful Intel 8th-gen Whiskey Lake processor. It also offers a full complement of ports. Of course the awards continue with a 2020 CES Innovation Award for the Latitude 7400.

Considered the smallest 14-inch laptop in the world, the Dell Latitude 7400 is first PC to use a proximity sensor enabled by Intel Context Sensing Technology. 'ExpressSign-in' detects

your presence, wakes the system and immediately scans for facial recognition to log in with Windows Hello. Even when you step away for a break it will recognise that you have left and lock itself to preserve battery life and maintain security.

It's variable-torque hinge means that it can be opened easily and it's offered with a stunning new Titan Gray machined aluminum finish. It also the first Latitude to use Dell's 'ocean-bound' 100 per cent recyclable plastics packaging.

Available now from \$3265 at www.dell.com/eu-au



The isolation games

These are strange days to be confined to home and while new movies are being shelved, games are relatively unaffected. Games are the most entertaining and social thing you can do while we all wait for the COVID-19 to move on. No matter what console you own, Jon Mamonski takes a look at the best games to play right now



THE LAST OF US
PlayStation 4

The challenge is zombies and while The Last of Us lasts only around 15 hours. Not only is this a chance to revisit one of the best PlayStation exclusives but depending on your sense of humour you might find the post-apocalyptic setting wryly amusing.



DESTINY 2

Xbox One, PlayStation 4, and PC
Best of all, the base version of the game, subtitled New Light, is completely free to play and a lot of the appeal of this game involves playing and replaying sections with friends online. You can use a microphone for socialising between battles.



GRAND THEFT AUTO

Xbox One, PlayStation 4, and PC
Yes, it's been with us for years and for good reason. Chances are, if you have a console, you probably have Grand Theft Auto and if not, it can be bought for fairly cheap. The single player version already has 30 hours of gameplay on its own.



FIFA 20

Xbox One, PlayStation 4, Nintendo Switch and PC
A football simulation video game featuring VOLTA Football for the first time, a new mode that provides a variance on the traditional 11v11 gameplay and focuses on small-sided street and futsal games.



DARK SOULS

Xbox One, PlayStation 4, Nintendo Switch and PC
From Software developed Dark Souls is one of titles such as Sekiro: Shadows Die Twice and Bloodborne. Dark Souls requires time and patience to master and that is something that you now have at home.



ANIMAL CROSSING: NEW HORIZONS

Nintendo Switch
Just released, this is a Family game, like past games in the series. New Horizons is about moving into a village with other animals. You get a house, you pay off the loan to a raccoon named Tom Nook, you get a bigger house to add more decor, and so on. The idea is to live a life inside a pleasant virtual town. The new Animal Crossing does seem to be a great game for Iso. Similar to The Sims, the goal is to live a happy, stress-free life.



RED DEAD REDEMPTION 2

Xbox One, PlayStation 4, and PC
With one of the biggest and most realistic open world environments ever designed, it also has a story that lasts at least 50 hours, so that's going to keep you going for a while. Cowboy adventure Red Dead Redemption 2 has a hugely popular online mode where you can play alongside other players but it's reputation was built on the vast single-player campaign.



POKÉMON SWORD AND SHIELD

Nintendo Switch
Sword and Shield are the latest entries in the Pokemon series and it offers hundreds of hours of gameplay – as well as online options that let you trade with people from around the globe. Never tried Pokemon? In Iso, now's the best time to give it a go. Pokemon Go is free and it's been redesigned so it's easier to play it at home.



THE WITCHER 3

Xbox One, PlayStation 4, Nintendo Switch and PC
Thank *Game of Thrones* for the onslaught of medieval games. If you've been enjoying the Netflix series, then this is a great alternative as the filming of the second season has been suspended due to COVID-19. One of the best action role-playing games and because it's been around a while, look for the complete edition discounted.



MINECRAFT

All Formats
Minecraft is a virtual open world video game where players can dig, mine, build, craft and enchant things. Typically described as a "sandbox game" because players can create their own worlds and experiences. It has the ability to play with others and has a Creative mode, where you can't be attacked or killed so you can chat and socialise online, which is useful, especially as it is a family game.



PLAGUE INC. EVOLVED

Xbox One, PlayStation 4, Nintendo Switch and PC
Is this the most relevant game today? This strategy game is all about trying to infect the world with a man-made pathogen. It's becoming notorious now because of its subject matter and because the mobile version was banned in China at the start of the coronavirus outbreak. Available on all formats elsewhere.



THE LEGEND OF ZELDA
Nintendo Switch

The game's been around for a couple of years but is still regarded as one of the best designed. If you have already played it, but never had the time to completely finish it, now is the perfect time to give it another go. If you're talking about massive game worlds which people have ended up spending hundreds of hours in then Zelda is for you.



FOOTBALL MANAGER 2020
PC

Run your football club, your way. Every decision counts in FM20 with new features and polished game mechanics rewarding planning and empowering managers to develop and refine your club's, and your, unique identity. If you are missing soccer, then it may end up being the only video game you will need – coronavirus or not.



FORTNITE

All formats
It's estimated more than 250 million of us play Fortnite and it's free to download, which is great if you're not used to playing games and don't want to buy any. It's a survival game where 100 players in combat fight to be the last player standing like *The Hunger Games*, where strategic thinking is a must in order to survive.



THE SIMS 4

PC
A staple for years and can potentially last you forever. Currently it's discounted at EA's own website. A virtual dollhouse, it gets you to manage the lives of virtual families, constructing their houses and entire social life and careers. There is a ton of expansions to add and a huge online community to socialise with.



RING FIT ADVENTURE

Nintendo Switch
One of the many problems with Iso is that you are not getting enough exercise. Ring Fit uses a modified Pilates resistance ring that you do exercises with while you play the game. It's become wildly popular and must be purchased over the counter to get the required special controller.