

Sony's FES Watch U has new look on e-ink face, band

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You go to your closet each morning and you choose your shirt, trousers, dress, shoes according to your mood and style needs for the day —so why not have the same style freedom with your watch.

Sony is hoping to leverage consumer preferences for day-to-day smartwatch design options. They have the FES Watch concept where the user has a [watch](#) face and strap style that the person can change at the touch of a button, with various smart-looking designs to choose from.

Sony has taken to crowdfunding for this beautiful watch item with its [e-ink display](#) and an e-ink strap.

Brad Linder reported on it Monday in *Liliputing*, with some back story: Sony launched the original in 2015 on a crowdfunding platform, which is the company's own, called First Flight, he said. The watch began selling in limited quantities. Now there is a newer version, the FES Watch U.

So what's new about it? Linder listed three things: a more solid-looking frame, water resistant design (all models, said *Android Headlines*, are waterproof with an IPX5/IPX7 rating), and rechargeable Lithium-ion battery, instead of the older coin cell battery.

Android Headlines had its own highlights on this new refresh, saying that the FES Watch U carries a new case made of stainless steel, comes in in three colors including black, white, and silver, and "The main difference between the first model and this new one is also that the FES Watch U features two e-ink displays, whereas the original model features one flexible e-ink [display](#) that made up the band and the face."

Sony offers this FES Watch U on pre-order. "The FES Watch U is available for pre-order from First Flight for ¥ 44,710 (\$439) and up (although that price includes a 10 percent discount). Watches are

expected to begin shipping in April 2017," said Linder.

JC Torres in *SlashGear* highlighted the new factor in the watch design, "Sony is adding an additional [element](#) of design. There will be 12 base designs available for the smartwatch, but that catalog will be increased over time, delivered through a companion smartwatch app."

It pairs with a smartphone using Bluetooth 4.1. It will run with devices running iOS 9 or later. Uh, iOS Yes, iOS. JC Torres in *SlashGear*: "Somewhat ironically, the app will be an iOS app, not an Android one, like the smartphones that Sony sells."

Linder accounted for the all important battery, power draw factor:

"The monochrome ePaper display only draws power when the screen is refreshed. So once you pick a design for the wrist band, the pattern should remain in place until you change it, without running down your battery. The same sort of goes for the watch face, except that if the screen refreshes once per minute so you can tell the time, that'll draw a bit of [power](#)."

The bottom line for smartwatch shoppers, however, beyond good looks, is how much wear they can get out of it without having to worry about charging. Sony stated the watch is capable of lasting up to three weeks on a single charge (charge time being around 2.5 hours), according to *Android Headlines*.

Linder said that Sony will probably only offer the watch in Japan at launch. Justin Diaz in *Android Headlines* similarly said that at the moment the FES Watch U will likely be a Japan-only release, "with the possibility of a launch in other regions depending on how successful the crowdfunding campaign for the watch is."

Torres said (as of Monday) there was "no word on whether Sony plans to bring this admittedly interesting accessory to markets outside of Japan."

Torres added: "Although it didn't gain international acclaim, because it wasn't really made available internationally, it seems that it enjoyed quite some success in Japan. At least enough to warrant a successor."

More information: first-flight.sony.com/pj/feswatch-u

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