


P3: Life360 for Apple Watch

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leosonhoay



Leoson Hoay
A0094670Y
Life360 Family Locator For Apple Watch

Life360 is an app that enables consenting users to form "Circles" and share their live locations with each other on the go. Perfect for families, travellers, close friends, athletes alike.



Why Life360 on the Apple watch?

The universality of Life360 as well as the compatibility of its features with the affordances of the Apple Watch both combine to make this app a potential hit on the new platform. What do I mean?

Life360 is a location tracker that caters mainly to the nuclear family unit. It allows for users of the app to create "Circles" amongst each other and persistently share their live location within these Circles. It has a notification system, and allows for direct messaging as well as the designation of "favourite" or "routine" places that the members of the circle visit. So while the app is mainly targeted at the traditional family paradigm, other groups can use it as well (for example: marathon teammates, travel buddies, etc.). The Apple watch, with its focus on ubiquitous usage and extreme portability, is already well suited for the placement of this application.

Secondly, the affordances of the Apple Watch that are pertinent to this application are multifarious. These 3 are especially salient (c.f. [The Verge](#)):

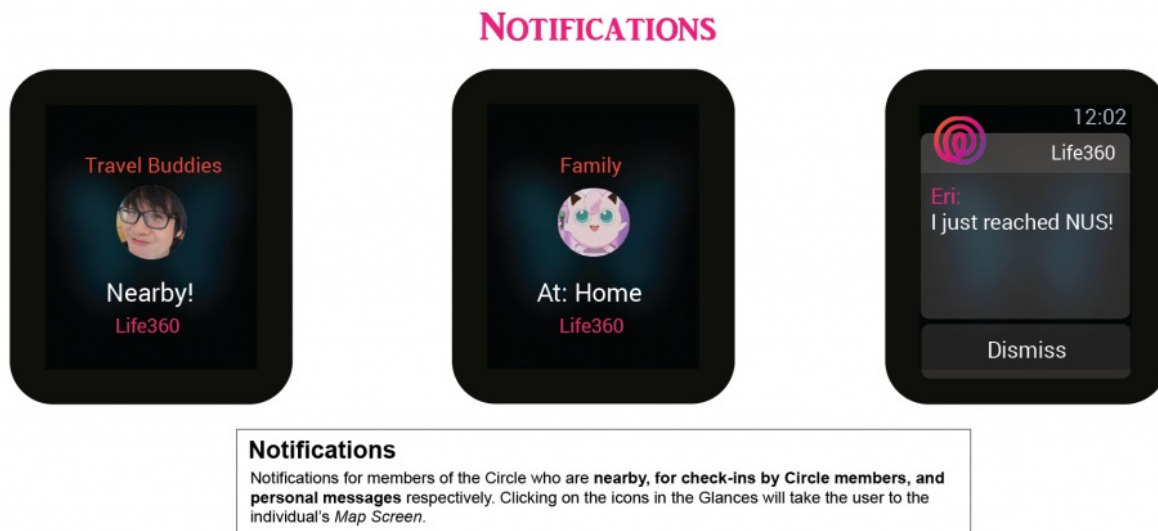
- **Mobility:** This is compatible with the location based functions of Life360, affording the ease of use and portability required for constant location transmission. Although the location mechanics of the Apple Watch in its current form have been reviewed to be

rather “sluggish”, it is expected to improve with updates.

- **The “Glances” feature:** Some important features of the Life360 Family Locator include notifications when a family member is nearby, or when a family member has arrived at a “favourited place” (such as home, school etc.) The Glances feature allows for a quick push of this crucial information to the user.
- **Satellite device of the iPhone:** The fact that the watch is a satellite device allows for a metaphorical safety net – if one loses their iPhone, family members can still track the watch (future feature) to be reassured of the safety of their loved ones. Or the watch user might be able to track his/her phone (phone tracking is one of the available paid features of Life360).

Features transferred to the Apple Watch App:

- **Notification when someone has reached a favoured destination, checked in, or when someone is nearby:** This feature takes advantage of the Glances feature of the Apple Watch. Upon tapping on the person’s avatar, the watch will bring the user to the map showing the location of the aforementioned someone.
- **Notification when someone sends the user a message:** The user will be able to view the message. But the ability to reply will not be included, for reasons stated in the next section.



Browsing through different Circles: The home screen will allow the user to select the circle that he/she wishes to look at, and upon choosing, will take the user to a list of the members of the Circle at their various locations.

HOME SCREENS

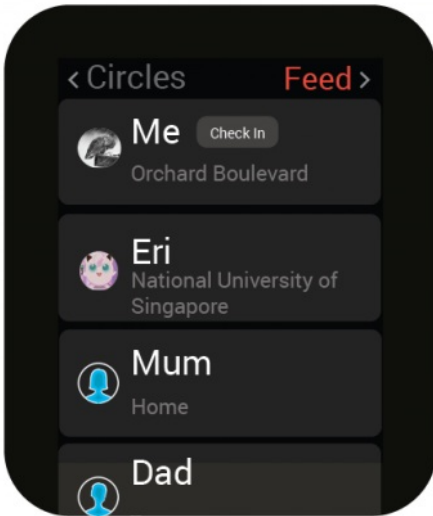


Home Screen

In the *Home Screen*, users can swipe to browse between their created Circles.
Tap on a circle to enter the *Circle Screen*.

- **Non-scrollable singular map:** The singular-person map will be non-scrollable due to the Apple watch gesture constraints and absent support for multi-finger gestures. The map will instead scale according with and follow the singular person as he/she moves.
- **Check-in function:** Life360 allows users to check in, which sends a notification of the user's location to the devices of the other members in the Circle. There will be a button for this on the watch app.

CIRCLE SCREEN



MAP SCREEN

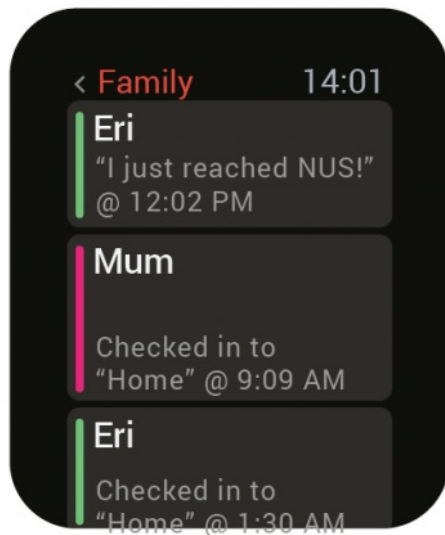


Individual Map and Circle Screen

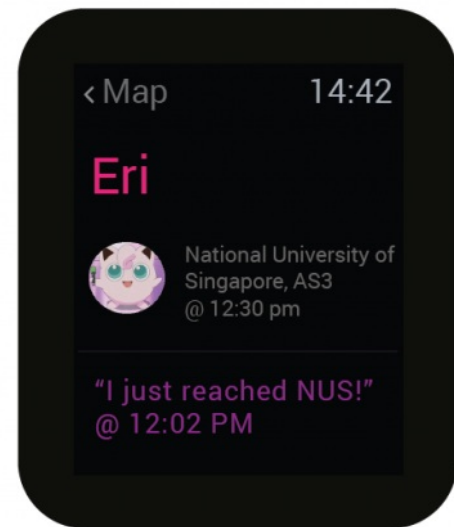
Selecting an individual member in the *Circle Screen* brings the user to the *Map Screen* of that particular individual. The Map displays location as well as the name of the individual at the bottom. The Check-in function in the *Circle Screen* allows users to notify their Circle immediately of their position. The *Circle Screen* displays members of the circle and their last known position.

- **Brief Information Screen:** Shows historic and location details of a specific person in the Circle (upon tapping on the person's location pin in the singular-person map screen).
- **Newsfeed:** Collates messages and notifications within the Circle and summarises them in a list form chronologically.

CIRCLE NEWSFEED



INFO SCREEN



Circle Newsfeed and Info Screen

Tapping on the location pin of the person in the *Map Screen* brings the user to the *Info Screen* of that particular individual. Where various information bits are displayed. The *Circle Newsfeed* displays all the notifications and messages within that particular Circle and is accessed from the **Feed link** on the *Circle Screen*.

Some features that are not transferred:

- **Replying to messages:** As mentioned above, this feature is not included. This is largely because the watch's capabilities does not offer a conducive system for text input in my opinion.
- **Creation of new circles/"families":** This would be done on the phone app, as the watch app's focus is on the core location and notification services of Life360. The idea is that the circles would have been created beforehand, at home or elsewhere, and the watch serves as a beacon for every member of the circle once they step out of home.
- **Saving of "favourite" places:** For the same reason as mentioned in (2).
- **Editing Circle settings (adding/removing members, setting up timed alerts, etc.):** Extensive customization should be left in the iPhone UI, rather than on the Apple watch.
- **The overall map representing all members of the circle within a single map:** This is not included due to the non-feasibility of including multiple members over a large dispersion area within the small screen of the Apple Watch. It is possible, but it will also not be useful as it would be messy and difficult to read.

In summary, the Life360 Family Locator has great potential as an Apple watch port largely due to the fact that it adequately makes use of the affordances granted by the watch. However, due to the fact that the watch is still experiencing certain issues (c.f. [The Verge](#), [Business Insider](#)), it remains to be seen if the application can run smoothly on the current market version version, or if more tweaks will be made to the Apple watch software to make it a better environment for third-party apps. In an ideal world however, where all the features of the watch perform as advertised, the Life360 Family Locator would be a good fit.