

A basic Watch buying guide

Lets first say that these lists will not discuss complications (functions) that watches have. . These following three lists will mention aspects of the watch or its construction that are often function agnostic. Plus, these items are overall things to look for. There is no "perfect" watch, so just make sure the watches you are looking for satisfy as many of the items below as possible. In "Part 1," will discuss features you should look for in what I call an "entry level luxury" watch. This is going to be the \$400 and above price point. I will not cap it because different watches simply give you more for the money and these features are certainly things you'll want in upper range watches as well. The next price point will be \$1200 and up, and finally we will have the price point of about \$22,000 and up. This latter price point will include things at the \$22,000 level as well as the \$200,000 level.

A common question The below principal applies to many things

Q ? To me, a watch is a watch. What makes expensive timepieces worth the money when they don't do anything my \$150 watch does 't, it keeps time just as well as any of these \$5,000 or \$50,000 watches people go crazy for.

A. A simple question from a simple person. This is one we've heard before and one we'll likely hear again. It is true that your Timex tells you the time as accurately as someone's [Rolex](#) omega or armin strom, but a watch isn't about telling the time, it is about your relationship with time. A watch is about style, a story and the history of both your watch and your own life. On a more practical level, there are countless hours of research and development put into high-grade watch movements, employing the finest mechanical engineers in the world to compile hundreds of tiny parts into a durable and accurate machine, all in the size of something slightly larger than a quarter. High-grade watches are about craftsmanship and style, not just about telling time. If life was as simple as you make it seem, none of us would own anything of quality because, after all, a shirt is a shirt as long as you're not naked; a bus can get you someplace as fast as a car; and a cardboard box can keep the rain off your head as well as a home.

Glossary

- Rattrapante = **Double chronograph** includes two separate [stopwatch](#) mechanisms in order to estimate two separate events of different durations
- Sonneries = music
- Fusee & chain = a fusee is a cone -shaped pulley with a spiral groove around it, wound with a cord or chain which is attached to the mainspring barrel
- Perpetual calender = the dates do not need adjusting
- GMT = greenwich mean time 24 hr 2nd time zone
- automatic = self winding mechanical watch
- [eco drive](#) uses light, [kinetic](#) uses movement, to charge / store energy in a capacitor to power a quartz watch

Most of you may not know this, but over 30 of the biggest watch brands in the world are all owned by three large conglomerates. For example, did you know that Omega, Hamilton, [Longines](#), Tissot, Blancpain, and Breguet were all owned by the same company (Swatch Group)? How about Panerai, Jaeger-LeCoultre, IWC, [A. Lange & Sohne](#), and Cartier (Richemont)? Finally, did you know that Hublot, [Tag Heuer](#) and Zenith were all owned by LVMH? **Changes your perspective on things, doesn't it?**

While there are certain technological and logistical advantages to a family of watch brands (e.g., sharing movements, cases and even employees), today we are going to take a look at independent brands. That is, brands that are owned by private groups (in some cases, a family), and that do a large percentage of their work in-house, without off-the-shelf components. More specifically, each manufacturer must either make their own movements in-house or heavily modify existing movements using proprietary methods. These [watches](#) represent a growing trend in the field: creative and unique pieces coming from small shops, providing for a more interesting and dynamic product. After all, who wants to pay top dollar for something that came off an assembly line?

Watches hunter jewellers policies

-**Warranty**, watch batteries & pressure testing are not normally covered under any manufacturers warranty (unless purchased from hunter jewellers)

-**Batteries**, If a watch is brought in because it is not working, this indicates there is a fault, This is usually a battery, but there can be many other reasons.

-**Servicing** Quartz & mechanical watches both have moving parts that require cleaning adjusting & lubrication from time to time,

-**Accuracy** mechanical & or automatic watches in general need to be wound & or worn daily for them to be accurate, variation occurs depending on use etc. variation is +- 5seconds per day Magnetic fields (electric motors therapeutic magnets etc) can influence function of watches

-**repair times** vary depending on problem. Batteries, possibly while you wait - unless we are very busy, Servicing can take weeks to months

-**Water resistance** can not be assured unless pressure tested. pressure testing tests a watches water resistance at 1 point in time. w/r = splash resistant only, 50m = still water swimming, 100m = surf, 200m shallow diving, 200m+ diving,

-A service on a watch movement does not automatically receive a pressure test

-**reliability**; manufacturers recommend watches to be pressure tested every 12 months or so, seals replaced & servicing every 3 to 5 years, this is to ensure water resistance & reliable operation. The quality of materials & manufacturing, good care & operation is how you govern reliability

-**be aware** when you pull & push buttons you are interfering with the seal potentially allowing the water resistance to be compromised even after being pushed back in. impacts & damage to glass & crown can also affect water resistance as can sudden temperature changes (such as showering).

-**Sudden** temperature changes can cause slight misting/condensation in watches, & then goes away quickly, this is not a leak. A Water leak in a watch forms more as droplets & or heavy condensation which in general does not go away quickly. **If in doubt have it checked /Ask. .**

Watch bands & glass custom fancy & fitted, can be difficult to replace in the future. if you are buying a watch intending it to be usefull for a long time choose a standard classic type round flat glass & plain square ended band, minimal functions, this will make it much easier to repair & replace parts

Part 1 entry level For \$400 and up watches:

This is a broad range of watches with probably the largest selection of watches in it. For some of you \$400 is a huge sum for a watch, while for others of you, this is a paltry amount barely worth your attention. If you are in the former category, you'll want to listen up as these are important things to look for. Again, this is just one partial list, and there are of course others things that go into a good watch.

1. Sapphire Crystal

A watch crystal is the transparent cover over the face of the watch. Crystals have been made using different materials over the years, but only a few major materials dominate the market today. Most of the watch you'll look at have one of two types of crystals; mineral glass or synthetic sapphire crystals. Mineral crystals are cheaper and offer one benefit over sapphire - they don't tend to shatter if stuck hard. Meaning they will crack, but not shatter. Shattered sapphire crystals are relatively rare and typically occur with a harsh impact. The better the watch, the thicker the sapphire crystal will be, and thus less likely to crack. Sapphire crystals are incredibly scratch-resistant though. You often see well-worn watches with beat up cases but a "flawless" crystal. Thus, sapphire crystals are more desirable to mineral crystals and should be preferred the majority of the time.

2. Solid Metal Construction

To some people it might be obvious to get a watch out of solid metal, but you'd be surprised at how some cheaper watches cut costs. Steel watches should be made from grade 316L stainless steel almost all the time. Plus, the watch case and bracelet links should be solid pieces of metal rather than folder metal or anything hollow. It is easy to tell a solid bracelet by looking at the side of it and noticing it if looks like one solid piece. In watches at this level, cases are best made from the fewest amount of pieces and using the most metal possible. This means the least (or no) amount of materials such as plastic or otherwise.

3. Swiss movement or Japanese Movement (if it is a Japanese watch)

Switzerland is known for making high quality watch movements - you knew that. Japan also makes good movements, but not all movements are created equally. Most of the the time Swiss movements comes from ETA, or Ronda - especially if they are quartz movements (though this is not always the case). Japanese quartz movements typically come from makers such as Seiko, Citizen, and Casio. While these countries are not the only makers of movements, at these price points try to get movements from these regions as much as possible. Plus, if a watch is not Japanese, try to find one with a Swiss movement. You generally want to stay away from Chinese movements, though this is not always a signal of low quality. Japanese watches probably utilize Japanese movements the best, though you'll find Japanese movements (often Miyota which is part of Citizen) in timepiece from all over the world. Lastly, at this price point don't worry too much about finding mechanical watches - you are just fine with a quartz movement - even though there are plenty of mechanical movements available.

4. Solid Feeling Construction

You want your watch to feel well put together and solid. Check to see how well the strap or bracelet fits to the case. There should be little to no wiggle room. Put the watch on your wrist and see how well the clasp or buckle operates, they should be smooth with a nice action. They should further not feel flimsy or poorly sized. If the watch has a rotating diver's bezel, again twist it around and see how much movement it gives in a resting position. A good watch should not make too much or any noise when shifting around briskly on your wrist, and it goes without saying that it should feel like it is all assembled in tight fitting manner. It is also the case that a lot of the time Swiss companies (even at these lower price points), make better metal bracelets than other countries even Japan. It is true that a Swiss design bracelet might actually be manufactured elsewhere, but they take great pride in refinement of these areas.



Part 1 continued 5. Designed by Actual Watch Makers

Consider that two types of people are designing watches. Those that care about how well a watch functions as a timepiece, and others that just care about how they look. The best watches are designed using fundamental watch design principles that value function AND form. The alternative are "fashion" watches that might look nice, but actually have superfluous or vestigial design cues. Worst case scenario is a watch that is so poorly design it does not even function properly. Examples of this are missing chronograph subdials, erroneous markers on dial, inoperable measuring scales just placed for show, and my all time biggest pet peeve - hands that are too short or the wrong size. The last thing you want is your nice *looking* watch to function like a movie prop. So do yourself a favor and really take a good long look dial and all its features figuring out what each and everything function does, along with making a decision of whether it is usable given your standards. This is one of the biggest problems in the watch market today, and you'll be proud that you took the time to find a watch that was actually designed to be a highly functional instrument.

6. Locking Deployment Clasp if on Metal Bracelet

Cheaper watches with metal bracelets still have what is called a single locking clasp. This is the type of bracelet that literally just snaps or clicks into place. The best metal bracelets have what are know as "double or triple locking clasps." The image below has a bracelet with a double locking clasp (deployment). The piece on the left "locks" via clicking down when it attaches to the bottom segment. That is the first "lock." The second is the little metal flap that "locks" again over the first piece to secure it being closed. A triple lock often features a push-button in the mix, or there are also "double locking clasps" with a push button instead of a fold over flap. The bottom line is that you want a watch bracelet that will stay secure on your wrist no matter you are doing or if you accidentally hit bracelet on something.



7. Weight

Watch weight is a polarizing concept. Some people (like myself) love heavy watches. Others want something very light. On more expensive watches you start to see materials such as titanium which are lighter than steel, but in this price segment weight is often times a sign of quality. Even though titanium is available at this price level, it most likely is not the higher (grade 5) quality titanium that is what you'll want. At this price level, you are only going to get that nice crisp quality look with steel. Like I said, weight often signifies solid construction using a high quality steel. So feel the weight of a case and bracelet to make sure it is substantial enough to justify your investment.

8. Signed Crown and Buckle or Clasp

A good watch maker is more often than not a proud watch maker, and is fully invested in each watch they design. This means there are typically four places that you'll watch to see the name of the watch makers. This is on the face of the watch, the caseback, on the crown, and on the deployment clasp or strap buckle. These are also known as "signed crowns or buckles/ deployment clasps." The manner of "signing" can vary, but at this price level are usually some type of light laser engraving. Higher priced watches have logos and graphics done relief (raised versus etched into the metal). Cheaper watches have bare crowns and deployments which make it too clear that these parts are taken from a parts bin and have no personal touch.

9. Good Dial Lumination

Not all watches are expected to have dials that illuminate in the dark for low light viewing - these are typically the more classic or formal watches. However, almost all sport and causal watches have some type of luminant that is applied on the hands as well as somewhere on the dial. The quality of luminant greatly varies. Some is so impractical that it should not even be there. An example being that you need to shine a bright light directly to the face of the watch for a minute or so, and then the dial dimly glows for a few minutes. Alternatively you have luminant that charges easily with exposed room or sun light and glows for hours. The Japanese tend to make the best luminant, but you get get Japanese luminant watches from all over (watches will never indicate the source of the luminant, but look for LumiNova, or better yet SuperLumiNova is possible). An alternative to luminant are watches that use tritium gas tubes. These tubes are made by just one company in Switzerland and glow by themselves for about 25-30 years. Tritium gas tubes are not tough to find as a few watch brands almost exclusively use them and can be had for reasonable prices. Still, most watches will have applied luminant. Look for large surface areas of luminant that is applied richly (looks raised up a bit).

Part 2 \$1200-\$22000 mid level

Once you have realized that getting a watch is a practice of passion and taste, you start to have higher expectations. Plus your foray into the world of horology has led you to realize a few things. Among those things are that you want a mechanical movement over a mere quartz movement, and that names are beginning to have meaning to you when it comes to selecting favored watches. Not only that, but you also learn that just because fashion labels make nice clothes they aren't always key players in the luxury watch world. You might also be the type of person that grew up around watches and simply have more sophisticated tastes. Whatever the reason is, if you are going to spend \$1200 or more on a watch, these are factors you'll want to consider when getting a medium range luxury watch.

1. Mechanical Movement

Save for limited circumstances, if you are buying a men's watch for over \$1200 it will most likely have a mechanical movement. If it doesn't you'll want to make sure it is a pretty special type of quartz movement such as Superquartz (such as Breitling's thermoline quartz movement that is accurate to 5 seconds a year). Otherwise, the name of the luxury watch game is having the best possible mechanical movement possible. Why? This is not an easy answer to be honest because quartz watches are actually more reliable and accurate for the most part. Still, a mechanical watch movement never needs a battery, represents the classic way of making watches, and offers a certain emotion value that the "tick, tick, ticking" of a quartz watch simply cannot offer.

2. Anti Reflective Coating

The enemy combatant here in "glare," and you want as little as possible when trying to read the face of a watch. Compare the dial of a higher end versus less expensive watch in the light and you'll see what I mean. Similar to the anti reflective (AR) coating on glasses, on watch crystals the coating really can improve legibility dramatically. There are two places that AR coating is applied. That being on the front and rear of a crystal. Preferably you want the coating on both sides, but you should at least want to have it on the bottom. One issue with AR coating is that it can wear or scratch off and may need to be reapplied, or a new sapphire crystal be required if you beat up your watch too much. Lastly, the more curved a sapphire crystal is, the more likely you are going to want full AR coating on it, which is often referred to as "double AR coating" (applied to both sides of the crystal).

3. Screwed Links in Bracelet

This is a pretty simple concept. Metal bracelets are made of links that are connected together. The two types of items used to hold the links together are screw bars or pins. Pins are small rods that come in various styles and qualities. They are pressure applied using a small hammer or device that inserts them in the bracelet. To adjust the bracelet a small pressure tool must be used to remove pins and then reinsert them. Alternatively you have small screw bars that go into a bracelet using a tiny screw driver. These are considered better because they are higher quality, look nicer and will last longer. Both types of link bars can be adjusted by you if you have the right tools. Sometimes a heat sensitive glue is used to hold screws in place which should be heated up to allow for unscrewing.

5. Quality Case Finishes and Polishes

Do you remember what real chromed metal was? It was that super mirror polish on steel that was hard to achieve and needed to be constantly polished. It was hard, and it was beautiful. While the look of chrome was popular, its costliness was not. As at some point fake chrome was invented. My memories of fake chrome were from the 80s when you'd see it peeling and flaking off of cars. That was not real chrome, that was some cheap coating or surface over cheaper sheet metal. Take this concept and apply it to watches. Not all nice looking watch surfaces are real, or even well done. At the highest level you have milled steel blocks that are precision cut and then polished by hand. On the cheapest end you have stamped or injection molded metal that is not as nice or durable. The better the metal underneath, the better the polish and finish can be on the surface. The reason I use two terms is because "polish" is often the term used for that mirrored high glossy look. While metal that is brushed or in a satin style is known as being "finished." Just a slightly different of terminology, but they are often used synonymously or together. Like "polished finish." But it wouldn't feel right saying "brushed polish." Some of the best cases have different types of polish on them. And not all polishes result in the same look. Say the sides of the case are polished but the top is in a brushed metal finish. A lot of this comes into place on higher end watches, but in a mid range luxury watch you want to closely inspect the metal to see how well done the edges are, and also make sure that whatever finish or polish that is on the metal is neatly and evenly applied, as well as directly on the metal as opposed to some coating that will peel or wear off. Anyone who has had cheaper watches can attest to how this can occur inside of a metal bracelet. Overall a good polish will preserve its look for a long time, while a cheaper polish will fade fast.

6. SuperLumiNova Luminant

Just because a watch has a luminant compound applied to the hands or face, does not mean it will glow well in the dark. I've tested cheaper luminants that need to be directly placed in front of a very bright light source for 30 seconds to really shine at all. After that they glow in a dull manner for maybe 10 minutes as best. This is not how good luminant should work - and at \$1,000 and up, you deserve a quality lume if you are getting a watch with applied luminant. Of the best luminants is SuperLumiNova. It is certainly the most popular quality luminant, but not the only one. Thus, if there is a luminant that is known to work well, but has a different name, they you are probably ok. Right underneath SuperLumiNova in terms of quality is just "LumiNova." If the luminant has no special name like "SuperLumiNova" or something else that sounds fancy, it is probably cheap and won't work too well. Having a good luminant compound is just step one. A watch should also have enough layers of the luminant and it should be on a large surface area. Testing a luminant is easy. It should not require bright lights to charge in, and simply cupping your hands over the watch should be enough to have the shine of the luminant pop out. So do yourself a favor and make sure you get a watch with a good luminant compound, if it has luminant at all.

Part 2 continued 7. Brand Pedigree

This is a bit of a tough topic to explain, because you have all of those mainstream brands that people are familiar with, and then you have many less known brands that are sometimes much better than the mainstream brands. Because there are 100's of watch companies out there, you can't rely on name recognition alone to identify whether a brand is worth getting. Instead, if you aren't familiar with a brand, see that it has at least some story behind it and perhaps has a story behind the designs as well. You may be thinking, "well if the price is right and the watch looks good, who cares?" You'd be surprised how important the "story" of a watch and its brand are. Just ask any collector about brand or their favorite watches. I promise you at least some of the lecture will go into discussing the history or unique construction of the watch or its design. So what I mean by brand pedigree is to look for either well-known brands familiarized for making good watches or iconic designs ("this watch is the 'Audi' of the timepiece world"), or a brand with a special story or interesting founder that themselves engages in most of the watch making and design process. If you aren't familiar with a brand and unsure about them. Ask someone who knows.

8. Observable Dial and Movement Decoration

Mid range luxury watches should all have at least some manner of decoration, even if it is hidden on or in the movement and you cannot see it. This can be a simple as a special polished finish on an automatic movement rotor, or a textured dial on the face of the watch - perhaps just in the chronograph subdials (if there are any). These little features help make the watch feel more valuable, and are proof that effort went into the little touches. Consider this (even if you think Las Vegas is a joke). What makes Las Vegas hotels feel nicer than most standard luxury hotels? Because the Vegas hotels are much more lavishly decorated with many little details that other hotels either neglect or don't consider. The best Vegas hotels have real character, not just up-scale genericism. That is what I am talking about here. Thus, look for things such as machine engravings on the dial, as well as a variety of potential polishes on the movement. Sometimes you'll even have decorations on the case of the watch. Even your basic Rolex Submariner watch has some decoration on the movement rotor even though you wouldn't know it from just seeing the watch on the outside. These features will make a watch more memorable to you.



9. Unique Design

There are essentially three types of overall watch designs looking above the mere genre. First are totally original designs that aren't based on any specific watches from the past. These types of designs are often a mix between classic watch genres and the designers' own interpretations of watch making. Then you have "homage" watches that attempt to strictly replicate an iconic, emblematic, or specific watch (e.g. all the Rolex Submariner homage watches, or "aviator" style watches). Then you have a mix between two where a designer takes one or more well-known looks or styles and adds their own twist or two to the design execution. Pretty much every watch out there falls in one of these three types. While there are plenty of homage watches in the entry-level luxury watch range, at the mid range level you want to see as much originality in the design as possible. Above that, every watch should be almost totally original. I mean that is part of what you are paying for right? You don't want people mistaking your \$3,000 watch for a \$300 watch because they are both homages of the same style, even though the \$3,000 watch is of a higher quality. Determining a unique design can also take a level of skill because if you don't know about a lot of the watches out there, you might not know if the design is original or not. You can either ask around, or use your gut and decide whether or not the watch looks unique enough for your tastes.

10. Value Retention

This principle will really only apply to a few key brands, but you can do a lot to ensure your watch holds as much value as possible. The key factors in value retention other than having a watch from one of the major collector's brands, Rolex, Patek Philippe, Armin Strom, Omega, etc.. is to have a watch that satisfies as much as the previously mentioned items to look for in a luxury watch. Having a good movement, attractive and original design, and high level of craftsmanship using quality materials will all keep demand for a watch healthy. Most of the time you are not going to be able to sell a watch for more than you purchased it, especially at this range, but you don't want to be insulted at what the market will offer you if you plan to sell your watch at some point. Then again, if you are the type of person who will die with his or her watch collection, none of this value nonsense is at all important.

Part 3, \$22000 & above

1. Precious Metal Construction

It should go without saying that a high end expensive watch should be constructed from quality materials. This means the best possible metals and so forth, but it is also a good idea to ensure that the metals involved are inherently valuable. Take for instance a luxury watch that is 18k gold versus titanium. Which one is going to have more value in the abstract? Not only that, but it is a good idea to investigate how much precious metals are used. Parts of the case? All of the case? Are the hands and hour markers gold? When talking about watches at \$22,000 and up, you should expect to see a fair amount precious metals used in the construction and execution of the watch. The most common metals are of course the various colors of gold (yellow, rose, pink, red, white, etc...) as well as platinum. Silver is rarely used for cases, and a bit more commonly use for traditional looking watch dials. It also goes without saying that precious stones also are a desirable component given the style and variety of the watch.

2. Natural, Quality Jewels

As I just mentioned, if you are purchasing a watch with precious jewels you want to take a close look at them. The first thing to look at is the origin of the stones. The two major options are natural or manufactured. Natural stones are obtained the traditional manner - via often controversial mining methods. There is an inherent romance to the concept that a stone was derived from the earth, discovered, cut and polished, and then used on your luxury item. Aside from "recycled stones" (taken from older or unsold items), the alternative to natural stones are manufactured stones. These are not synthetic stones, but real stones that have been grown in a lab. So real stones, not naturally made. Probably the most popular synthetic stones in watches are sapphires (that come in many colors now and of course make up your luxury watch crystal), diamonds to a degree, and many other types of stones (or other non-stone materials such as mother-of-pearl that is grown mostly and not harvested anymore). Of course the most valuable stones are natural ones.

You then want to look at the quality and amount of the stones. A few very clear stones with good color are going to be worth more than a large array of cheaper stones. Take a good look at the color of the stones and the size of each. Ask for the total carat amount and where the stones came from. Generally those watch companies with well-established jewelry making arms are going to have the best types of stones utilized in their high end luxury timepieces. You don't need precious jewels to make a high end luxury watch, but if you want them, do your homework.

3. Manufacture Made Movement

Most watch companies in the world do not make their own movements. They source movements from various movement suppliers. The most well known European watch movement maker is ETA, and is part of the large Swatch Group. Some companies purchase movements and use them as is, and other times they modify or add to movements (modules) making the more unique and complex. This also involves various types of decoration that a watch maker might include on a movement. The best watch makers design and construct their own movements in house - even if they don't make other components of the watches. You'll find that the top house such as Patek Philippe, Audemars Piguet, Jaeger-LeCoultre, A. Lange & Sohne, Armin Strom, among others each make their own movements.

Having an exclusive movement made by the watch brand almost always ensures a high level of decoration in a beautifully made, and sometimes very complex watch movement. You'll know that few timepieces have the same movement, and you can be part of the exclusive club of people who have timepieces with "in-house manufacture made movements" (bragging + snob rights).

5. Exotic Materials

Do you ever get bored of all the mainstream metal luxury watches? Apparently some watch makers do. The last few years have seen an impressive number of luxury timepieces being released that make use of interesting materials in the case construction as well as the movement. These materials range from unique alloys exclusive to particular watch makers, to exotic compounds you've never heard of, as well as innovative ways of using materials for watches that were not previously used for watches. In an ongoing effort to differentiate themselves, watch makers have gone to great lengths to use exotic materials for watch making. Sometimes even improving a watch in doing so.

For example, something called silicium is being used in some watch movements by companies such as Patek Philippe and Ulysse Nardin. The exotic material does not require lubrication and thus helps the longevity and accuracy of a watch movement. On the outside you have ceramics used that are very hard and much tougher than metal to scratch. Exotic materials used on the outside of a high end luxury watch can vary widely. It is of course common to see steel, gold, titanium, and various styles of leather. These days you also have materials such as rubber, forged carbon, carbon fiber, composite resin (basically fancy plastic), natural stones, complex shaped sapphire crystals, ceramic compounds, and many more. The bottom line is that with a world of interesting materials, you can appreciate unique application of some of them inside or outside a timepiece when your focus is on the very high-end of timepieces.

Part 3 continued **6. Many Hours of Hand Construction and Assembly**

A question you should always present to a watch retailer is, "how long does it take to make this watch?" They should know the answer, and be proud of it - even though it is a number of months. High-end watches are hand made and assembled by master watch makers. Sometimes a team of people will be involved in making the watch, other times a single watch maker toils for as long as a year or more on a single watch. As each part needs to be fabricated, decorated, assembled, and tested, you can imagine that the process takes a long time. The longer it takes to make a watch, the more refinement and decoration will be found in it. There is no specific amount of time that you should look for as it depends on the company. Rolex for example uses complex robotics and departments to make watches - even though their most expensive watches have jewelers who hand set gems. Rolex can take just a few days to make a watch, while a less industrialized brand can take several months.

7. Complications

High-end watches don't just have beautiful mechanical movements, they have complex movements. A watch costing in excess of \$22000 should often do more than just tell the time, or it should tell the time in a special way. Other complications affect how accurate a watch is or how interesting the movement is to look at while in operation (i.e. various types of tourbillon escapements). Other common complications in high end watches are perpetual calendars, rattrapante chronographs, sonneries, fusee and chains, moon phases, and multiple time zones along with world timers. Be cognizant of what complications the watch you are looking at has. When looking at higher-end watches you might want to ensure that the complications you are interested in aren't available at lower prices to help secure the value of your purchase decision.



8. Highly Refined Designer Looks

A high-end watch should be beautiful. It should have a large amount of time and effort invested in the design, meaning that the beauty of the watch should not wear off like the novelty and relevance of a new computer. The best watch makers are skilled in making unique designs, but ones that are "instant classics." You have to have a good eye to spot the best, but there are things you can do to test this out aside from recognizing that a watch has a famous designer. First, look at the watch again after you saw and loved it the first time. Do you still feel good about it the second time? Also, look at a series of other nice watches. Is the watch you like still your favorite when you return to it after seeing other nice watches? Last, and trust me on this one - if you have the watch in front of you, then wear it, and also have someone else wear it. Seeing it on your own wrist is not nearly as good an indicator as seeing it on someone else's wrist. The best designs will look good on anyone. Lastly, when looking at a designer look, you want to make sure it has enough unique qualities to justify the "exclusive" item you are thinking about buying.

9. Limited Production

The best luxury things in life come in small quantities and are made in limited productions by dedicated people. Besides, having too much of anything cuts the value and the intrigue. So look for limited edition or highly limited production watches. Ask how many of a particular model have been made and whether or not there are 1000 or 100,000 of them out there. The more limited a watch is, the more exclusive it is, which is a major component of true luxury goods.

10. Investment Grade Acquisition

The lucky high-end luxury watch buyer will be able to afford a timepiece that has the potential to increase in value. On the one hand there are certain brands that commonly have their most exclusive models increase in value (such as Patek Philippe and Rolex), but certain other watch models or brands may have this same quality. It is very difficult to gauge whether a watch will increase in value (unless it is a rare Patek Philippe watch that is going to be difficult to get in the first place), but do your best to follow the above guidelines and you might first yourself with an investment grade timepiece. In the end you aren't buying a watch for value alone (fashion and function are at issue), but it would be at least nice to know your acquisition retains value.