



WRISTWATCH GUIDE



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1 Introduction

With the current technological advancements, the wristwatch became more of a status symbol rather than a convenient accessory. Nowadays, there are countless watch brands which focus on developing the most accurate watches using various materials and techniques. As a result, it became hard for novice buyers selecting a desirable timepiece within their budget. It is also a matter of taste of the buyer because each watch brand has several collections to match the needs of the wearer. This guide aims at explaining the important components of a modern wristwatch as well as partitioning the most notable brands based on their price point. This guide is written by a non-professional to help examine the competitor brands prior to purchase. Of course, not all watch brands will be discussed in the report due to there being a countless amount of them. Instead, it will focus on examining the most widely known wristwatch brands across all countries. The watch brands will not be ranked in any way because all rankings are based on opinion and not factual information and thus differs from person to person.

2 Purchasing Guidelines

2.1 Selecting a Watch

Each buyer must understand and consider the following factors prior to any watch purchase to ensure a correct timepiece is selected without having to regret the buy in the future.

1. Spend as much as the customer can afford. It is not a good idea obtaining loans for a watch. However, if the buyer is patient enough to save money for an expensive watch over a period of time then this strategy must be adopted if this is the one watch they really like.
2. There is no perfect watch, rather each watch must have a unique feature/characteristic. Buy a watch that has an interesting story to tell when people enquire about the timepiece.
3. Wristwatch is not an investment unless it is an exclusive or a limited-edition model. Most mass-produced wristwatches quickly lose their value due to extensive supply.
4. Swiss made label does not guarantee high-quality watch. In majority of the cases it means that the watch is truly made in Switzerland. In rarer cases, it suggests that a specific criterion was met by the manufacturer when creating their watch.
5. Unknown watch brands can be as good as expensive equivalents from the other brands. Just because one brand can afford to spend more money on marketing it does not mean that the produced watches are worse quality than their competitors.
6. Understand what type of watch and features are required. This may include special occasion, sports, everyday wear or even for a collection. Such approach will narrow down the potential wristwatches and thus enable the buyer seeing what they can purchase within their budget.
7. Expensive watches are not more reliable nor break less frequent than cheaper watches. Everything breaks, high price simply means that these watches will be more expensive to repair or not possible at all due to limited parts production. Higher price may indicate that the watch was assembled using premium materials such as diamonds, gold, platinum, etc.
8. Visit a number of watch shops to try a few models on the wrist, ensure it is comfortable and once the decision is finalised check online stores for deals/offers on the selected watch. This does not necessarily mean discount, deals can include; extended warranty, watch box, etc.
9. Decide what size case looks best on the wearer's wrist as well as the clearness of the dials. Very little wristwatch will ultimately have small dial which may not be a good idea for people with poor eyesight. Similarly, large wristwatch will look out of proportion on people with small wrists. It is best to try a few different sizes to narrow down the required case size.
10. Unable to choose? Keep looking! Being in doubt suggests that the watch does not fully match the requirements of the buyer, therefore it is best to continue looking and evaluating the market for alternatives to ensure a perfect timepiece is purchased.

2.2 Things to Avoid

Novice buyers can feel overwhelmed with the watch industry; therefore, it is important to avoid the following mistakes when purchasing a wristwatch.

1. Do not purchase a watch without personally liking it because it is from a well-known brand. The wearer must have personal attraction towards the watch regardless of the brand's marketing. It is very easy to spot a person who has purchased a watch merely to show-off by asking a few simple questions.
2. Do not rely on other people's opinion and do not listen to anyone as it is a matter of taste. The buyer must personally like the watch as they will be wearing the timepiece themselves.
3. Avoid purchasing replicas and fake watches. The wearer will feel uncomfortable wearing it and watch enthusiasts will immediately know it is fake.
4. Stay away from companies making big claims such as "revolutionising/disrupting the industry" or marketing their watches as "affordable luxury". Such companies heavily invest into marketing campaigns and cut-down on wristwatch production costs.
5. Lack of information about the watch on the website indicates that the company is avoiding transparency about movement and materials sourcing. This may suggest that the company is using cheaper materials that are made to look valuable.
6. Do not purchase wristwatches with lazy/minimalist design. Lack of thought in watch design makes it look generic and generally expressed as logo absence and a simple dial. There is no reason purchasing a watch that only has three arrows without any dials.
7. No information about the warranty suggests that it may not be available for the watch. Most reputable watch brands provide two to five-year warranty with their watches which is clearly indicated during the purchase. On the other hand, extra long warranty (8+ years) from an unknown company may mean nothing as the company might not exist at that time.
8. Lack of organic coverage once again indicates that the watch is falsely advertised. Too many good and unbiased reviews is a signal that their opinion was purchased. A high-quality watch requires very little advertising as the quality will speak for itself.
9. Too good to be true. Over 30% sale on a watch is bad. Very low wristwatch price for a famous product may suggest it is a fake. Some companies falsely set their RRP (Recommended Retail Price) very high to make an illusion that the watch initially costs a lot. This enables them to always provide over 50% discount on the timepiece, making it an attractive purchase.
10. Do not judge a watch based on a rendered design image. Always view the watch in real life as oppose to nice-looking 3D model which is very easy to make. No image will show intricate details and depths of the watch as well as how the colour looks under the natural light.
11. Never purchase a watch from a store that is not an authorised dealer of the brand. They will not be able to provide an official warranty or may even sell replicas. Once a watch is selected check the official website to read the list of authorised dealers.
12. Avoid impulsive buying, always research a watch prior to purchase. Furthermore, do not purchase more than one wristwatch at the same time simply to have more watches.

3 Wristwatch Variations

3.1 Types of Watches

DISPLAY
<p>Analog – a traditional display with hour, minute and second hands at the very least.</p> <p>Digital – uses LCD touchscreen to display time and allows navigation among other functionality.</p> <p>Hybrid – usually an LCD screen which looks like a classic analog watch at a first glance.</p> <p>Tactile – tells time without having to look at the watch, primarily aimed at blind people.</p>
STYLE
<p>Casual – everyday watches that do not have any stand-out features with casual design.</p> <p>Dress – elegant design for formal wear that are slim enough to be hidden under the shirt sleeve.</p> <p>Fashion – brands that do not specialize in watchmaking and are known in the fashion industry.</p> <p>Luxury – reputable companies that have a long history of watchmaking in-house.</p>
MOVEMENT
<p>Mechanical – user must manually wind the watch by hand each day.</p> <p>Automatic – the watch winds itself when the wearer or the watch moves.</p> <p>Quartz – uses a battery and a quartz crystal to keep itself operating.</p> <p>Kinetic – self-winding movement which uses quartz timekeeping mechanism.</p> <p>Chronometer – made of high-quality materials that have passed 16-day COSC test.</p> <p>Spring – advanced kinetic movement that provides much smoother movement.</p> <p>Solar – generate power from an ambient light to recharge their storage capacitors.</p> <p>Eco-Drive – generates power from natural, artificial and dim-light without needing battery change.</p>
FUNCTIONALITY
<p>Chronograph – provides stopwatch functionality, mainly used in sports.</p> <p>GMT – has a 4th hand or a rotating bezel to indicate a 24-hour second time zone.</p> <p>Calendar & Moon Phase – shows the date as well as phase of the moon based on the calendar.</p> <p>Day & Night – indicates whether it is daytime or night time.</p> <p>Diving – designed to withstand water and has a rotating bezel which serves as a timer.</p> <p>Pilot – has specific features such as tachymeters, altimeters and compasses for aviation.</p> <p>Field – military watches built to withstand water, dirt, sand and mud. Must be very durable.</p> <p>Other Tool Watch – Other specific features aimed at specific type of professions.</p> <p>Smartwatch – connects to a smartphone to offer extensive functionality with varying capabilities.</p>

3.2 Glass Type

Below are the three main glass types of a modern watch.

	ACRYLIC	MINERAL CRYSTAL	SAPPHIRE CRYSTAL
Durability	Weak	Moderate	Tough
Price	Inexpensive	Moderate	Expensive
Repair	Polish or Replace	Replace glass	Replace glass
Scratches	Easy	Hard	Scratch-Resistant
Impact Resistance	Very	Moderate	Moderate
Other	Can be polished	Can be coated in AR*	Can shatter or crack

AR – Anti-Reflective coating.

3.3 Movements

Movement refers to the mechanism that makes the watch tick. There are several watch movements, however, the three primary types are; manual, automatic and quartz.

	MANUAL	AUTOMATIC	QUARTZ
Function	User must manually wind the watch by hand each day	The watch winds itself when the wearer or the watch moves	Uses a battery and a quartz crystal to keep itself operating
Movement	Sweeping motion	Sweeping motion	Individual Ticks
Accuracy	Prone to slight variation. Can be unreliable if not wound correctly	Can occasionally stop which would require them to be reset	Best timekeepers due to crystal sending a precise electrical impulse
Precision Loss	Few seconds each day	Few seconds each day	Few seconds a year
Upkeep	Requires tune-up every few years to ensure functionality	Requires tune-up every few years to ensure functionality	Requires battery replacement every two to five years
Repair Cost	Expensive	Expensive	Inexpensive
Needs to be worn regularly to function?	No	Yes	No
Highly valuable & likely to be collectible?	Yes	Yes	No

As seen from the diagram above, each movement has its advantages and disadvantages, making it an individual preference of the wearer. It is important to understand what the intended use for the watch will be and how much time/money the owner is prepared to spend on the watch. For example; if the user has a big collection of the watches then the Automatic movement would be a bad choice due to the nature of upkeep. Though if the collector invests into a watch winder box to store their collection, such problem will be eliminated. Another example would be purchasing a relatively expensive Manual watch for a long-term collection which is likely to increase in value over time.

3.4 Bracelets & Straps


A bracelet/strap is a fundamental characteristic of any watch with an important function of securing the movement to the wearer's wrist. As a result, they are made for specific tasks to ensure best performance of the watch. This includes; water activities, hiking, sports, everyday wear and formal events. The main bracelet/strap materials are as follows:

- ✓ Leather – calfskin, nubuck, alligator, cow, pig, sheep, kudu, vegan.
- ✓ Metal – stainless steel, titanium, gold, silver, bronze.
- ✓ Other – rubber, ceramic, textile, silicone, polyurethane, carbon fibre.

Of course, each material has a different pattern, colour, texture, size, stitching, weave, link connection, price and tactile feel. It is therefore important to research the benefits and drawbacks of each material to ensure it is suitable for the wearer and the occasion. Additionally, the wearer must decide how tight or loose they want their watch to sit on their wrist as not all bracelets/straps can be adjusted to match the exact expectation of the owner.

3.5 Clasps

Clasps are part of the bracelet/strap used to tighten and secure the watch on the wrist. The clasps are heavily dependent on the type of bracelet/strap used and as a result come in a range of types. The commonly used clasps are presented below.

IMAGE	NAME	COMMENT
	Deployant Clasp	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Looks elegant • Easy to operate • Not as secure as alternative clasps
	Push-Button Deployant Clasp	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Looks elegant • Harder to operate • Relatively secure • Scratches are not visible on the clasp
	Fold-Over Push-Button Deployant Clasp	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Harder to operate • Relatively big • Very Secure
	Double-Locking Fold-Over Clasp	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Harder to operate • Relatively big • Very Secure • Requires longer nails to open
	Butterfly / Hidden Clasp	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Very elegant • The mechanism cannot be seen • Very secure • Hard to close, easy to open
	Jewellery Clasp	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Very elegant • Precise bracelet length adjustment • Inconvenient to operate • Relatively secure
	Ardillion / Tang Buckle	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Easy to operate • Not as secure • Looks classic and simple
	Velcro Strap	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Easy to adjust size • Durable and strong • One side will be constantly exposed if adjusted/attached loosely

4. Watch Brands

This section aims at partitioning most notable watch brands into groups based on their value. Such approach will make it easier for a potential buyer reviewing all significant watch brands within their budget. The country was added to illustrate where the watch movement is manufactured. It is fairly common practice for watch makers to design the watch in country A, use the movement from country B and assemble the end-product in country C. Since the watch movement is the most critical part of any watch, the buyer must pay the most attention to that when selecting a watch country. It is a common practice for big watch brands forming a parent company that will share the manufacturing operations with sub-companies that belong to it. This enables them to make watches for each price point, keeping the quality of the watches within the specified standards.

Swatch group is the leading watch company in the world, based in Switzerland. Other groups in this country include Richemont and Franck Muller. Japanese groups Citizen and Seiko are also notorious for high-quality watches, where the latter has invented the Quartz movement. The French LVMH and Kering groups have built a high reputation around superior designer watches. Overall, the buyer must have their own preference towards a watch, be it colour, design or a specific material. It is not a good idea chasing a watch brand just because it is expensive and well-known.

Watches highlighted in green indicate personal preference.

4.1 Exclusive

Brand	Country	Group
A. Lange & Söhne	Germany	Richemont
Arnold & Son	Switzerland	Citizen
Ateliers de Monaco	Switzerland	Citizen
Audemars Piguet	Switzerland	Audemars Piguet (Holy Trinity)
Backes & Strauss	Switzerland	Franck Muller
Blancpain	Switzerland	Swatch
Bovet	Switzerland	Bovet
Breguet	Switzerland	Swatch
Bvlgari	Italy	LVMH
Christophe Claret	Switzerland	Independent
Corum	Switzerland	Citychamp
De Grisogono	Switzerland	Independent
Devon	USA	Independent
Franck Muller	Switzerland	Franck Muller
F.P. Journe	Switzerland	Independent
Graff	Switzerland	Independent
Greubel Forsey	Switzerland	Richemont
HYT	Switzerland	Independent
Jacob & Co	USA	Independent
Louis Moinet	Switzerland	Independent
MB&F	Switzerland	Independent
Patek Philippe	Switzerland	Independent (Holy Trinity)
Piaget	Switzerland	Richemont
Richard Mille	Switzerland	Audemars Piguet
Roger Dubuis	Switzerland	Richemont
Roger W. Smith	UK	Independent
Vacheron Constantin	Switzerland	Richemont (Holy Trinity)

4.2 Prestige & Luxury

Brand	Country	Group
Armin Strom	Switzerland	Independent
Bell & Ross	France	Independent
Boucheron	France	Kering
Breitling	Switzerland	Independent
Bremont	UK	Independent
Cartier	France	Richemont
Chanel	Switzerland	LVMH
Chaumet	France	LVMH
Chopard	Switzerland	Independent
Dior	Switzerland	LVMH
Eberhard & Co	Switzerland	Independent
Garrick	UK	Independent
Girard-Perregaux	Switzerland	Kering
Glashütte Original	Germany	Swatch
Graham	Switzerland	British Masters
Grand Seiko	Japan	Seiko
Harry Winston	Switzerland	Swatch
Hautlence	Switzerland	Independent
Hermès	Switzerland	Hermès
Hublot	Switzerland	LVMH
IWC	Switzerland	Richemont
Jaeger-LeCoultre	Switzerland	Richemont
Jaquet Droz	Switzerland	Swatch
Léon Hatot	Switzerland	Swatch
Longio	China	Independent
Louis Vuitton	France	LVMH
Martin Braun	Switzerland	Franck Muller
Minase	Japan	Independent
Nord Zeitmaschine	Switzerland	Independent
Panerai	Switzerland	Independent
Omega	Switzerland	Swatch
Parmigiani	Switzerland	Independent
Pierre Kunz	Switzerland	Franck Muller
Ressence	Belgium	Independent
Rolex	Switzerland	Hans Wilsdorf Foundation
Schofield	UK	Independent
TAG Heuer	Switzerland	LVMH
Tiffany & Co	USA	Independent
Tudor	Switzerland	Hans Wilsdorf Foundation
Ulysse Nardin	Switzerland	Kering
Van Cleef & Arpels	Switzerland	Richemont
Vertex	Switzerland	Independent
Vulcain	Switzerland	Independent
Zenith	Switzerland	LVMH
ZRC	Switzerland	Independent

4.3 High Range

Brand	Country	Group
Alpina	Switzerland	Citizen
Ball	Switzerland	Independent
Barthelay	Switzerland	Franck Muller
Baume & Mercier	Switzerland	Richemont
Campanola	Japan	Citizen
Christopher Ward	Switzerland	Independent
Concord	Switzerland	Movado
Doxa	Switzerland	Independent
Dunhill	Switzerland	Richemont
Ebel	Switzerland	Movado
European Company Watch	Switzerland	Franck Muller
Farer	Switzerland	Independent
Fendi	Switzerland	LVMH
Fortis	Switzerland	Independent
Fred	Switzerland	LVMH
JeanRichard	Switzerland	Kering
Junghans	Germany	Independent
Kobold	USA	Independent
Leroy	Switzerland	Independent
Longines	Switzerland	Swatch
Louis Erard	Switzerland	Independent
Maurice Lacroix	Switzerland	DKSH
MontBlanc	Switzerland	Richemont
Mühle Glashütte	Germany	Independent
Nomos	Germany	Independent
Oak & Oscar	Switzerland	Independent
Oris	Switzerland	Independent
Pequignet	Switzerland	Independent
Pierre Michel Golay	Switzerland	Franck Muller
Pinion	UK	Independent
Rado	Switzerland	Swatch
Ralph Lauren	Switzerland	Richemont
Raymond Weil	Switzerland	Independent
Rodolphe	Switzerland	Franck Muller
Schwarz-Etienne	Switzerland	Independent
Sinn	Germany	Sinn
Tutima	Germany	Independent
Union Glashütte	Germany	Swatch
Ventura	Switzerland	Zeon Ltd. Herald Holdings
Vortic	USA	Independent
Yema	France	Montres Ambre

4.4 Middle Range

Brand	Country	Group
Calvin Klein	Switzerland	Swatch
Casio	Japan	Casio
Century	Switzerland	Independent
Certina	Switzerland	Swatch
Citizen	Japan	Citizen
CodeX	Switzerland	Citychamp
CWC	Switzerland	Independent
Diesel	USA	Fossil
Dreyfuss & Co.	Switzerland	Citychamp
Eterna	Switzerland	Citychamp
Frédérique Constant	Switzerland	Citizen
Fugue	Switzerland	Independent
Glam Rock	USA	Independent
Gucci	Switzerland	Kering
Hamilton	Switzerland	Swatch
J&T Windmills	UK	Independent
Junghans	Germany	Independent
MeisterSinger	Germany	Independent
Michele	Switzerland	Independent
Mido	Switzerland	Swatch
Movado	Switzerland	Movado
Qeelin	France	Kering
Roberto Cavalli	Switzerland	Franck Muller
Salvatore Ferragamo	Switzerland	Timex
Seiko	Japan	Seiko
Shinola	USA	Independent
Tissot	Switzerland	Swatch
Versace	Switzerland	Independent
Wittnauer	Japan	Citizen
Zodiac	Switzerland	Fossil

4.5 Basic Range

Brand	Country	Group
Accurist	Switzerland	Independent
Alba	Japan	Seiko
Alessi	Japan	Seiko
Armani	Switzerland	Fossil
Bering	Denmark	Independent
Balmain	Switzerland	Swatch
Braun	UK	Zeon Ltd. Herald Holdings
Bulova	USA	Citizen
Burberry	Switzerland	Fossil
Caravelle New York	Japan	Citizen
Delance	Switzerland	Independent
Endura	Switzerland	Swatch
Flik Flak	Switzerland	Swatch
Fossil	Switzerland	Independent
Gc	Switzerland	Independent
Glycine	Switzerland	Independent
Hugo Boss	Switzerland	Movado
Jacques Lemans	Austria	Independent
Karl Lagerfeld	USA	Fossil
Kenneth Cole	Italy	Binda Italia
Lacoste	USA	Movado
Lorus	Japan	Seiko
Michael Kors	USA	Fossil
Mondaine	Switzerland	Mondaine
Nautica	Switzerland	Timex
Onitsuka Tiger	Japan	Seiko
Orient	Japan	Seiko
Poljot	Russia	Independent
Pulsar	Japan	Seiko
Raketa	Russia	Independent
Relic	USA	Fossil
Rossini	China	Citychamp
Rotary	Switzerland	Citychamp
Skagen	USA	Fossil
Smalto Timepieces	Switzerland	Franck Muller
Sturmanskie	Russia	Independent
Swarovski	Switzerland	Swarovski
Swatch	Switzerland	Swatch
Timex	USA	Timex
Tommy Hilfiger	USA	Movado
TW Steel	Switzerland	Independent
Victorinox	Switzerland	Independent
Vostok	Russia	Independent

5. Conclusion

This paper has provided insights into the important wristwatch components as well as segregated the most noteworthy watch brands into five categories based on the price and popularity. It has also provided all novice buyers with criteria for selecting and purchasing the desired watch.

Having purchased the desired wristwatch please read the instructions carefully and consult the professionals if necessary. It is vital to understand how to use the watch features correctly as well as noting the maintenance guidelines. This includes servicing intervals, date and time adjustments, storage and cleaning suggestions, and how to wind the watch correctly if it is either mechanical or automatic timepiece. Such strategy will help the buyer take best care of their new purchase without damaging the wristwatch in the process.