



History of Watches

There are various theories regarding the origin of the word "watch" as some believe the term relates to a watchman who needed to keep the time for their surveillance, while others believe that sailors used the term for their shifts on board, but the fact remains that people wanted to quantify time and wanted to understand how its meaning related to their world.

Water clocks, which used a simple in- and outflow method to measure time, already existed in Egypt and Babylon over 3 000 years ago. Of course centuries later the advent of the mechanical clock in England and the Chinese astrological clocks refined mankind's obsession with pre-

dicting time accurately.

Many churches across Europe had giant clocks that functioned through weight displacement and then spring-driven clocks, which appeared in 15th-century Germany, finally gave way to the pocket watch in the 16th century. (This invention actually made a comeback in 2013 thanks to the low-key Italian brand Panerai launching an oversized ceramic model at this year's Salon International de Haute Horlogerie (SIHH) in Geneva.)

As usual, practicality won the day, and so in the very early 1900s the wrists of upper-class women were adorned with watches. Men's wristwatches soon followed. During World War I, they became a necessity for soldiers in the trenches. ■

Daniel Scheffler



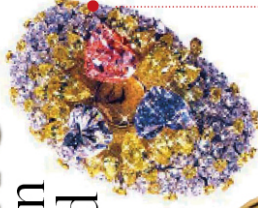
Watchmakers mount gems on the back of a watch (top) and enamel the back of a watch

Giorgio Magini / Getty Images; Gallo Images

The 3 most expensive watches in the world



Patek Philippe Reference 1527 at \$5m



Chopard 201 Carat watch at \$25m



Henry Graves Super Complication pocket watch at \$11m

Watches as an investment

THE RARITY of a watch and the complexity of its circuitry, combined with how well it has been maintained, often mean that investors bought watches as an alternative to gold and more volatile stock. Watches are delicate works of art, and some have been crafted by near-centennials whose value and respect for true craftsmanship is timeless.

Watches, if selected carefully, will always retain their value and in fact increase in value. The criteria for buying a watch as an investment are as follows:

- Regular maintenance is key. It should be done by a certified watchmaker or manufacturer every three to four years. This includes a complete dismantling, cleaning and re-oiling.
- Exclusive, limited-edition and rare watches are intended to be collected and will always increase in value as they are extremely difficult to come by. These pieces are numbered individually and will have certification to prove their prestige.
- Precious metals in a watch may make the initial investment high, but these metals will retain their value for resale purposes. ■

The most coveted brands

Need a cheat sheet for what's hot on the watch scene? The most coveted and famous watch brands are IWC, Piaget and Patek Philippe, as they are the greatest watchmakers and have a traditional approach to watchmaking where quality is assured. The most exclusive an extensive advertising budget. ■

Feel like a comedy show? Stand a chance to win a trip to Sydney, Australia for you and one friend.

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