

CHECKLIST: HOW TO BUY A WATCH

_____ Step 1: Figure Your Size

If you already know your watch size, you can skip this step. If not, there are two measurements you need to know when shopping for a watch:

_____ Measure your wrist size where you want to wear the watch — this is higher for some men than others. Simply loop a tape measure around your wrist and round up to the nearest whole inch.

Wrist Size: _____

_____ Select a “watch size.” This refers to the diameter of the watch face. Typically, the larger your wrist size, the larger a watch face you can wear. Most jewelers and manufacturers measure in millimeters, not inches:

- o Small faces: under 28mm; usually reserved for women’s watches
- o Regular faces: 29-38mm; ideal for most men
- o Large faces: 38mm and above; anything much larger than 44mm starts to look absurd no matter how large your wrist is

Not all jewelers or manufacturers organize their stock by band size. The watch size (face diameter) is the important measurement; bands can always be replaced or altered. Most retail jewelers and watch stores will adjust your band for you as part of the sale.

_____ Step 2: Identify the Watch You Want

_____ Select a basic band material:

- o Leather — “softer,” more classic style
 - o Metal — more aggressive and contemporary style
 - o Plastic — cheapest option; for sports/outdoors watches only
- Note that leathers and metals should both match throughout your object. You may want both a black and a brown leather band, or both a gold-tone and a silver-tone metal band, for full matching options.

_____ Select a face color:

- o Black or white/ivory — simplest, most traditional faces
- o Dark colors (blue, green, brown etc.) — more casual options; still generally business-acceptable
- o Bright colors — casual/sports wear only

_____ Select a movement (mechanism):

- o Quartz — cheapest movement; requires electric charge
- o Automatic — precision movement; purely mechanical power
- o Kinetic — an automatic movement wound by the wearer’s own motion

_____ Select a crystal (the clear cover over the watch face):

- o Sapphire — the hardest and most scratch-resistant option; usually expensive
- o Mineral glass — affordable and scratch-resistant, but can shatter on impact
- o Plexiglass — soft and cheap, but not scratch-resistant

_____ Select any additional meters or hands beyond the basic time

The combination of material, band, movement, and crystal should narrow your watch choices down lightly. You're much better-prepared for shopping if you can tell salespeople that you want "a steel dive watch with a black face, sapphire crystal, and a stopwatch dial" than if you say that you want "a nice watch."

_____ Step 3: Pick Your Source

_____ Select a type of store:

- o Department stores (Sears, Macy's, etc. — low prices, but limited selection/quality)
- o Chain jewelers (Jared's, Chalmer's, etc. — limited selection, but usually decent quality and good service)
- o Brand stores (Rolex, Timex, etc. — selection limited by brand, often expensive but best for service/returns)
- o Independent jewelers/watchmakers (expensive, but often best source for high-quality pieces)
- o Pawn and antique shops (random selection; can sometimes find a great piece, but quality is hard to establish and service/returns are usually non-existent)
- o Online — easy to shop from specific brands' websites; beware of second-hand online sales through eBay etc.

_____ Step 4: Go Shopping

_____ Head to your target store or stores (see step 3)

_____ Identify the watches that fit your selected description (see step 2)

_____ Within that selection, find the ones that fit your measurements (step 1)

With the information in this checklist, you should be able your selection down to just a few watches. Find the one that suits you best at the price you like — or move on, if you need to, and use the same information to shop elsewhere, until you find a purchase you like.