



by Tej
Mellachervu

**Hi all,
I'm the owner of Crigglestone Dental Care,
based just outside Wakefield. We are a family
practice seeing both NHS and private patients.**

First article to kick off topic is an absolute passion of mine. I have been interested in watches ever since I was a kid, always wanting to have the latest Casio game watch on my wrist. My interest grew slowly and I started to take a keen interest in my father's watches which were mainly Seiko, ingenious design and innovation for a good price.



I remember fondly a turning point in high school, when during a business studies class I opened the Sunday Times magazine and within it were 2 names I had never heard of, but which opened my eyes to a new world of watches outside Rolex.



These were Audemars Piguet & Vacheron Constantin. I never knew anything about them except they must be very exclusive and high end.

Anyway, as a teenager in high school, lack of any access to funds meant I meandered along wearing my Seiko but longing for something more.

The struggles of Dental School meant my passion took a backseat, and was confined to gazing at watches in magazines only, if only I had some spare cash available to me. I sauntered through University alternating between a Casio G-shock and one of my father's old Seiko watches.

'It's about time!'



Everything changed after I qualified in 2001 from Leeds. My mother bought me an Omega Seamaster, the one James Bond wore in the movies, and it was at the time the 'in' watch. I babied this watch but wore it daily however. I had now finally acquired my first proper Swiss watch, and joined the club so to speak!



Nearly 2 years of wearing the Omega, and I was beginning to get a little bored. I was never going to sell the Omega as it was a gift, however every guy needs a 2nd watch right?

So then came another icon, which was known as the Steve McQueen Tag Heuer Monaco, a lovely square cased chronograph with striking blue dial.

Over the years my passion only intensified, and out went the Tag Heuer and in came a series of watches which were also traded in for other watches, IWC, watches from Vacheron, Audemars and even a Patek Philippe.

Today I just wanted to go over a few 'basics' and hopefully stimulate your interest in the wonderful world of watches.

Why own a timepiece?

For some it's merely as a functioning tool, to tell the time. For others it's a piece of jewellery, and yet for others it's a status symbol. Many never wear them but simply collect them, as a form of investment to be sold at a future date perhaps. These are usually treasured and never leave the confines of a safe. For a few the pure mechanics involved is what does it for them.

Brief history of timepieces

-Been around since middle of the 16th century initially as pocket watches for many years

-Usually made as one off pieces by master watchmakers for kings & noblemen

-All were mechanical watches requiring mechanical winding every few hours

-Watch houses eventually based them selves in Switzerland in places like Geneva & Schaffhausen

-In the 1960s Japan invaded the watch market with various digital watches, which almost destroyed the Swiss market in the 1970s & 80s

-Effective marketing strategies publicised the glorious history & mechanical marvels of the Swiss watches

-Now days true connoisseurs will only look at mechanical or automatic watches from the big houses from Switzerland

The top brands

The fundamental difference between the brands is based on a whether or not they have a genuine history, the various complications available, & whether the movement inside the watch is outsourced or a genuine in-house movement.

The complications

-Basic complication such as a chronograph, will measure time in seconds-1/100th of a sec

-More advanced complications such as a Perpetual calendars, will tell the day, date, month, and moon phase & even years including leap years mechanically with no adjustment of the watch needed.

The big daddy of them all, a grande complication, includes a perpetual calendar with stopwatch functions etc..extremely expensive and often go wrong.

What you should look for?

First rule is buy a watch that you love and can see wearing all the time, remember watches are not generally good investments!

Apart from the outer case, enquire as to the type of movement inside the watch.

Research the brands history, is it just a fabricated history?

You can often negotiate good discounts from Authorised dealers.

Many dealers stock some used watches, worth checking out.

I hope today has given you a brief insight into the world of watches and should give you some guidance when choosing your next timepiece. Thanks for reading! ■

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