

Expert ADVICE

Pros and Cons of Buying Watches Over the Internet



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	Online Store	Physical Store
PROS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Generally less expensive • Broad selection • Global presence • No pushy salespeople • Regular sales and markdowns 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Get to try it on • Easily compare models/brands • Quick answers to questions • Immediate gratification • Faster after-sales service • Personalized buying experience
CONS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Returns can be a hassle • May not be authorized • Answers to questions may take days • Popular models more likely to be sold out • Can't inspect watch or try it on • Language barriers • Screen colors often not accurate • Hyperbole is prevalent—why is this a “professional” watch anyway? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Generally more expensive • Narrower selection • Watch may have been tried on by numerous people

These days, shoppers can find just about anything they can imagine online. It's often cheaper than buying from local stores, as well as more convenient, since a simple click can ensure your order. But when it comes to buying watches, is online always better?

This pros and cons graph was taken from aBlogtoWatch, a popular website for watch aficionados.

Of note in the con section is the mention of authorized sellers. There are several gray market internet sellers, which means they offer their own warranty instead of the manufacturer's warranty. This problem is getting a bit better because authorized dealers are increasingly allowed to sell online. However, there are still many gray market sellers out there who claim to be authorized. This is when people commonly get ripped off. If you buy a new watch and only the seller is standing behind it, and if it is defective, will they stand behind their warranty and repair it? What are the qualifications

of the repairer? And will they repair it with genuine parts? Even if the seller is authorized, the timepiece must be mailed back, which adds to the cost and takes additional time.

There are many sophisticated watch buyers who know what they are buying, and they usually know what they're getting online. But most people who are looking to buy a watch need to be educated to some extent. Watches can be finicky. At World Class Watches, most of our timepieces are mechanical. Many people have only previously owned battery-operated watches, but mechanical timepieces are a completely different animal. People who don't know much about watches but who are interested in purchasing a

mechanical watch can greatly benefit from the help of a knowledgeable seller.

World Class Watches has a final distinctive advantage in that I am a certified watchmaker as well as store owner. I can service what I sell. It's rare to find a watchmaker with a retail arm. It's an advantage I have over not only internet sellers, but also other retail stores.

We are here to do anything it takes to make the watch-buyer happy. Customers can see the watch for themselves, try it on, and assess how it feels on their wrist before they make a purchase. Is it too heavy? Too small? You can only hope for the best when you buy online, but with World Class Watches, you are guaranteed a quality watch-buying experience. ■