

Expert ADVICE

Caring for Vintage Watches



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Vintage watches are akin to vintage cars; whereas the mechanical make-up hasn't changed dramatically over the past decades, other improvements with regards to parts and design have made newer models more robust. But just as everyone loves a vintage car, there's nothing like a vintage watch. And—similar to an older car—taking care of a vintage timepiece is paramount in keeping its value.

Santa Fe's World Class Watches owner David Perlowin is a Swiss-trained watchmaker who brings knowledge and experience to caring for timepieces both old and new. "There are few watches that maintain or increase in value over time," Perlowin explains. "It has a lot to do with the manufacturer—like Patek Philippe and Rolex—and the model within those brands."

Perlowin explains that the Sport Rolex, for example, is best treated at a place

like World Class Watches instead of sending it to Rolex because the company often replaces the outdated parts, such as dials and hands, that made the watch so valuable in the first place. World Class Watches has a Rolex factory parts account, and can service your Sport Rolex without ultimately devaluing the piece.

Regardless of the rarity of your watch, it's important to have even the newest model regularly serviced in order to keep it performing optimally. A mechanical watch should be serviced—which means being completely disassembled, cleaned, lubricated, and parts replaced as necessary—every five to seven years. Even if it's been sitting in a drawer untouched, a watch should regularly be evaluated, as the mechanical lubricants can dry out or gum up, causing stress when it's rewound.

Should you drop your watch or bang it on a hard surface, it should immediately be looked at; unseen damage like a loose screw can cause injury to the watch over time. Additionally, any signs of moisture or

fog should signal a watch check-up, as rust can greatly harm a beautiful timepiece.

Regarding changing the battery in your watch, batteries used to contain mercury and thus last much longer than current battery models. Today, a watch battery needs to be changed on average every 16 months. When the second hand starts to jump in three to five second intervals, this is a good indicator your battery might be failing.

And while battery changes are the most common cause for why a watch stops, in older vintage models, it is often because the movement and gaskets need to be replaced. This is yet another reason why regular service is important.

World Class Watches sells pre-owned Rolex watches that have been serviced with genuine factory parts, setting the business apart from almost any other pre-owned seller. New watch brands available are Ball, Eterna and Luminor. From service to retail, Perlowin's expertise makes him uniquely sought after in the realm of world class watches. ■