

Please read and then save this file or print for future reference, this information is useful and reading it before using your vintage watch is important.

Information on your watch may have been moved to the sold pages on the website:

The biggest problem after shipping is hands touching so use care the first time you set the watch to be sure they all clear. If they do not or at some future time they touch be sure to read the section on correcting this. This may be the most common cause for a watch stopping prematurely.

Your watch was timed to be within a few seconds per day before shipping. We will not ship a watch that is off more than (30) seconds per day for railroad grade watches under 90 years old, one minute per day over 90 years old and 1.5 minutes per day for others, vintage wristwatch may gain or lose a little more, unless you have been contacted and accept the timing.

Pocket watches do not have hack movements so it is impossible to set the time to the precise second*. Timing machines and atomic clock timers give excellent indication of the timing but that does not always translate into accurate time over thirty hours or more. Shipping and environmental factors may change the timing slightly requiring some local adjustment of the regulator.

If you insist that a pocket watch be absolutely accurate you may want to consider quartz. While many railroad grade watches kept time within a few seconds per week, many did not even when they were new. And, even the ones that did where checked, adjusted and serviced by skilled technicians on a schedule that is not practical for most people today. Remember that these watches are probably seventy years old or more. Another major factor is that these watches were serviced and picked up locally, so were not subjected to the abuse that goes along with having to ship them.

You probably know this, but just in case, lever set watches are set by removing the front cover by turning counter clockwise and pulling out, not up, on the small lever, usually located at the 1:00 or 11:00 and sometimes by the 5:00. Then turn the crown to set. It is best, but not critical to turn the crown clockwise "always on repeaters"; mechanical watches must be wound by turning the crown clockwise. Note! Size 18 pocket watches have much heavier mainsprings and consequently will feel much harder to wind than smaller pocket watches.

Pulling the stem out sets stem set watches; you will hear a light click as the stem moves into the proper position. The pull strength required by stem set watches has a very wide range from very easy to very hard. Sometimes a light pressure down on the crown is needed for the winding mechanism to engage fully in the winding position. This can be corrected by adjusting the sleeve in the case neck, but I have found the potential for setting problems to develop when doing this make it unadvisable so long as only a light pressure is needed.

If you are not sure if your watch is lever set or stem set remove the front cover and look for the lever, if it is not there it is a stem set watch. I have found over the years that people new to setting pocket watches sometimes can hold the watch in such a way, with the cover off, that their thumb inadvertently pushes down on the small second hand and pushes it down on the pinion so that it then touches the dial.

If you have any questions, please call us or email us before resorting to the use of force to wind or set the watch.

Your watch was checked thoroughly before shipping, this includes a face up, face down and stem up (pocket position for pocket watches only) timing check, and was running and keeping time within the standards for this caliber movement. Please remember, while reasonably accurate, many vintage watches will not hold quartz accuracy. + Or – a minute or so a day is the best some of these old watches can do.

If your watch is not keeping reasonably accurate time, it may need to be adjusted at the regulator. Shipping and altitude can affect the movement slightly.

If your watch is not running, keeping good time or stops there are things you can check which are usually the causes after shipping.

Before trying to adjust the hands put the movement in the setting position and gently move the hands counterclockwise away from the point of contact. Place the hands in a position where they will be easiest to make any of the recommended adjustments.

1. The hands are touching, if the watch stops when the minute hand and the hour hand are crossing they are probably touching. The best way to correct this is to remove the bezel and using the eraser end of a pencil apply a little downward pressure to the back side of the pipe on the minute hand. You should see the arm of the hand rise slightly.
2. If the watch stops when the hour hand is in the area of the small second hand, they are probably touching. This can be a more difficult adjustment. First, after moving the hour hand slightly, look to see if the small second had has moved up on the pinion. If it has use the eraser to push it back down – **Always be very gentle** – If this is not the problem you will have to apply a little pressure to the underside of the hour hand to raise it slightly, too much and it may start to touch the minute hand. This may be something your local jeweler could do for you if you cannot do it yourself. Be sure to identify the problem before taking the watch to a jeweler.
3. Sometimes a watch will become over banked during shipment from rough handling, this can usually be corrected by very lightly moving the balance wheel or escapement, use something like a thin sewing needle or unused fine arts and crafts style paint brush to do this and be very careful to use very little pressure, using too much can result in a broken roller jewel. You may not want to do this yourself and a local jeweler should be able to do this for a very small fee.
4. The movement has shifted inside the case, this can cause the stem to put enough pressure on the movement to cause it to stop running, look to see if the case screws line up with the case marks or simply loosen the case screws, don't remove them, if this is the problem the watch will probably start running, line the movement and stem up and tighten the case screws
5. If none of these are the problem, you may have to send the watch back for adjustment.
6. If your watch is running very fast (more than a couple of minutes per day) there are three possible causes.
 - a. The movement has been exposed to a magnetic force and the hairspring, mainspring or arbor has become magnetic. This can also cause the watch to stop or run very fast.
 - b. A small amount of lubricant has somehow gotten onto the hairspring (very unlikely)
 - c. The second coil of the hairspring has been caught up in the regulator fingers (this can happen after shipping but is not likely). This can correct itself after a few windings if the coil is not caught to firmly.
 - d. The hairspring has a coil on top of the center wheel; you need to look closely to see this. If this is the case call me and I'll walk you through the adjustment. It is easy but the first time it is best to be coached,

[Type text]

It is unlikely that you will have a problem, your watch was carefully checked and packaged and things usually are just fine, but vintage watches are prone to the problems listed above when shipped. We pack the watches expecting they will have a rough ride because of the automated handling equipment used by all carriers.

Even the best covers can be tricky to start at times, I find that by turning the cover counterclockwise until I hear or feel the cover drop into alignment before I start to screw it on works best. Problems with bezel or back covers getting cross-threaded are common, even with very good covers. I recommend that everyone have a case **ball and knife. As soon as you notice a cover may be cross-threaded stop trying to install or remove the cover (whichever you are doing at the time). At this point use your case ball to move the cover in the opposite direction of what you were doing at the time of the snag. Do not use much force, if the cover does not come loose easily these are the things you can do to remove the cover without damaging it.**

- 1. Press down on the portion of the cover that is highest on the case threads, you may hear the cover snap into place so that it now can be screwed the rest of the way on, this works best on the back cover.**
- 2. Using a case knife, insert it at the place where the cover is the most open on the threads, pry up gently as you work your way around the cover, it will usually pop up out of the cross-threaded position.**
- 3. It is a good idea to clean the threads periodically. Using a Q-tip and something like Goo-Be-Gone (lighter Fluid) run over all of the threads on the case.**
- 4. Then use very light oil, like penetrating, put a little on the Q-tip and run over all the threads.**

*** A note about railroad time. The qualifying watches are actually railroad standard watches, not railroad watches (a term used by railroad workers by not actually official). Railroad time was usually the Naval Observatory time telegraphed to the railroads but many used their own clocks. The required time was +/- 30 seconds per week. Watches were checked by the inspector at the start of every duty tour and adjustments were made as required. A service was required every year to eighteen months. Many inspectors did not set the watches to the second as this required using the tweezers to move the second hand something many, including myself, prefer to avoid.**