

My Dude Watch

Automatic vs Quartz: The Honest Breakdown

No fluff. No snobbery. Just the facts.

If you're new to watches, this is one of the first decisions you'll face:

Automatic or Quartz?

Some collectors get emotional about it.

Some get snobby about it.

We're not doing that here.

Let's break it down the honest way.



How Each One Works

⚙️ Automatic (Mechanical)

An automatic watch is powered by motion.

Inside the case is a mechanical movement made of gears, springs, and levers. When you move your wrist, a rotor spins and winds a mainspring. That stored energy is slowly released to power the watch. No battery.

Just engineering.

If you stop wearing it, it will eventually stop running once the power reserve runs out.

Quartz

A quartz watch is powered by a battery.

The battery sends electricity through a small quartz crystal. The crystal vibrates at a precise frequency, and that vibration regulates the movement of the hands. It's extremely accurate and requires very little maintenance.

When the battery dies, you replace it.

Simple.



Pros & Cons

Automatic – Pros

- Mechanical craftsmanship
- Smooth sweeping seconds hand
- No battery replacements
- Emotional connection / heritage appeal
- Often higher perceived value

Automatic – Cons

- Less accurate than quartz
- Needs servicing over time
- Can stop if not worn
- More sensitive to shock
- Usually more expensive



Quartz – Pros

- Extremely accurate
- Affordable
- Low maintenance
- Durable and shock resistant
- Set it and forget it convenience

Quartz – Cons

- Battery replacements required
- Seconds hand "ticks" instead of sweeps
- Less mechanical romance
- Some collectors see it as less prestigious



Cost of Ownership

This is where most people don't think clearly.

Automatic Costs Over Time

- Servicing every 5–10 years (can range \$150–\$500+)
- Potential regulation adjustments
- Higher upfront cost

Long-term, automatics can cost more to maintain.

Quartz Costs Over Time

- Battery replacement every 1–3 years (\$5–\$25 typically)
- Rarely needs full servicing
- Lower purchase price in most cases

Quartz is generally cheaper to own.

But cheaper doesn't automatically mean worse.



Who Each Is For

Automatic Is For:

- Someone who appreciates mechanics
- Someone who enjoys wearing a watch daily
- Someone who likes tradition and heritage
- Someone who doesn't mind occasional servicing

Automatic watches feel alive.

They reward engagement.

Quartz Is For:

- Someone who wants grab-and-go reliability
- Someone who rotates watches frequently
- Someone who prioritizes accuracy
- Someone who doesn't want maintenance hassle

Quartz watches are tools.

They just work.



Accuracy Reality Check

Let's be honest.

A typical automatic might gain or lose 5–20 seconds per day.

A typical quartz watch might gain or lose 10–20 seconds per month.

That's not a small difference.

If pure accuracy matters most to you, quartz wins. No debate.

The “Collector Pressure” Myth

Some people will tell you:

“Real watch guys wear mechanical.”

That’s nonsense.

Quartz revolutionized the entire industry for a reason. It’s reliable, affordable, and precise.

There is no moral superiority in a movement type.

Only preference.



MDW Verdict

Here’s the honest take:

If you want romance, engineering, and a connection to watchmaking history —

Go automatic.

If you want accuracy, simplicity, and practicality —

Go quartz.

If you’re building a well-rounded collection?

You probably want both.

Because they serve different purposes.

At My Dude Watch, we care about value and honesty — not hype.

Choose what fits your lifestyle, not someone else’s ego.

Final Thought

The best movement is the one that makes you want to wear the watch.

That’s it.

No fluff.

No snobbery.

Just watches.

— My Dude Watch

