

DT Vintage Watch Photo Guide / DT Rolex Vintage Watch Guide

[www.dtwatches.com](http://www.dtwatches.com)

ebook "DT Vintage Watch Photo Guide" (PDF version)  
also named "DT Rolex Vintage Watch Guide"

Author: Dickson Tai  
[www.dtwatches.com](http://www.dtwatches.com)



A tool book to start vintage watch adventure  
Many skills for authentication and valuation  
Hundreds of HD photos for demonstration  
Written by a vintage watch trader with over 30 years of experience  
**Enjoy Great Fun of Vintage Watches Collection!!**

USD12.80

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# DT Vintage Watch Photo Guide / DT Rolex Vintage Watch Guide

## Preface for English Version

This ebook was first written in Chinese in 2018. It was translated into English in Sep 2023. My first vintage watch was bought in 1989. I started selling on ebay and renowned watch forums since 1999.

[www.dtwatches.com](http://www.dtwatches.com) is my web shop. My Chinese blog is : <http://dtwatches.blogspot.com>

This ebook is a consolidation of my 30 years vintage watch experience focusing on:

1. How to start buying and playing vintage watch especially Rolex, Tudor, Omega, etc..
2. How to differentiate authentic original dial and repainted dial.
3. How to avoid buying in FAKE vintage watch.
4. How to select high condition vintage Swiss watch.
5. Numerous high definition photos for reference.
6. Simple and concise description for easy understanding.

Only USD12.80 per copy and let's starting an amazing Swiss vintage watch journey. 50 chapters total 1774 pages with over 5000 HD photos (including external Google photos). Definitely a good handbook for vintage watch lovers. Some examples:



Page 1

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## DT Vintage Watch Photo Guide / DT Rolex Vintage Watch Guide



Tons of HD photos and my 30-years-experience mixed together as an easy to understand reference guide book. SUPER fun to start an interesting and exciting voyage for collecting vintage Swiss watch.

USD12.80 is for 1 user copy of the full version. Buyers please DO NOT share, transfer and/or resell the reading copy right to a 3rd parties.

I perform my utmost best capacity to ensure correctness of my information. Should there be anything wrong, please pardon me. Writer bears no responsibility for such errors/mistakes accordingly.

Welcome to the wonderful world of vintage watches with my ebook! This book records my love and joyfulness with vintage watches over the past 30 years. And, I wish my readers / supporters enjoy the same excitement and happiness together with this ebook.

Dickson Tai

8 Sep 2023

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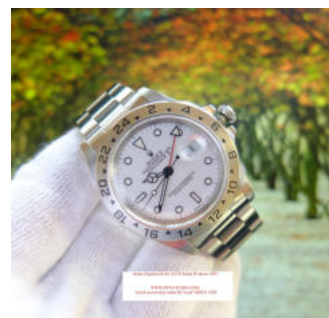
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### Chapter 35: Entry Level ROLEX Air King OYSTER PERPETUAL NO DATE

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34mm ROLEX Part 3----14XXX series

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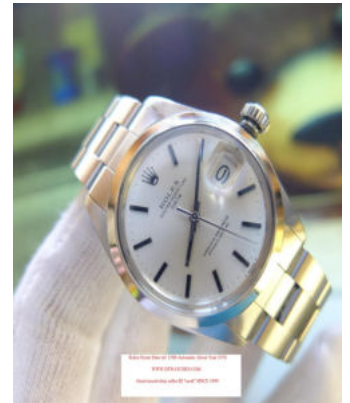
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### Chapter 37: Entry Level ROLEX OYSTER PERPETUAL DATE

34mm ROLEX Part 4----15XX series

Added Theme: Antique ROLEX official document / admire watch as a photographer / "Men wear watch, not watch wear men"

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### Chapter 43: ROLEX Gold Watch Part 1: 34mm and 36mm oysterdate

Added Themes:

- 1) Identify unmatched legs size variation (advance techniques in case evaluation)
- 2) Differences between T SWISS T and T SWISS MADE T dials

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Added Theme: How to authenticate a Rolex buckle (gold / GP / steel)?

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Play with what you love rather than following other's pace!

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Added Theme: How to authenticate a bezel

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\*\*\*\*\*



Chapter 1: Skills examining Dial, Case and Band

Demo: Rolex Precision oysterdate ref 6694 with matt black gilt gold dial



Photo 1: About 1978 matt black gilt gold dial ref 6694

ALL HD photos: <https://goo.gl/photos/mRTXisMCuzb8BqVc9>

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Commonly used jargons:

**Production year:** It is easy to track the production year of a Rolex. Google "Rolex production year" and you can find several unofficial charts showing the details. Please be noted that these are unofficial statistic. It is good for easy reference. BUT, it may NOT be 100% correct.



Photo 2: Take out the lug of the upper portion. The watch reference number can be seen.

A 10X magnifier is recommended for examining the numbers. Basic requirement: Clear and can be seen easily.

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Photo 3:

Taking off the lug at the power portion, the serial numbers can be seen

Same requirement: The clearer the image, the better it is.

This watch is 5.69 million which is dated about 1978



Example of clean and clear numbers and words.

Another supplementary photo for demo

About 2010, Rolex started a random serial system. Serial numbers are engraved inside the watch ring beneath the watch covers. At first, watch reference and serial numbers were kept at their respective positions. Later, Rolex only keeps engraving the watch reference numbers on the upper portion. The serial numbers disappeared.

**(Matt)**

Rolex dials are basically classified into TWO categories: Glossy (Lacquer) and Matt.  
This chapter focus on matt dial.

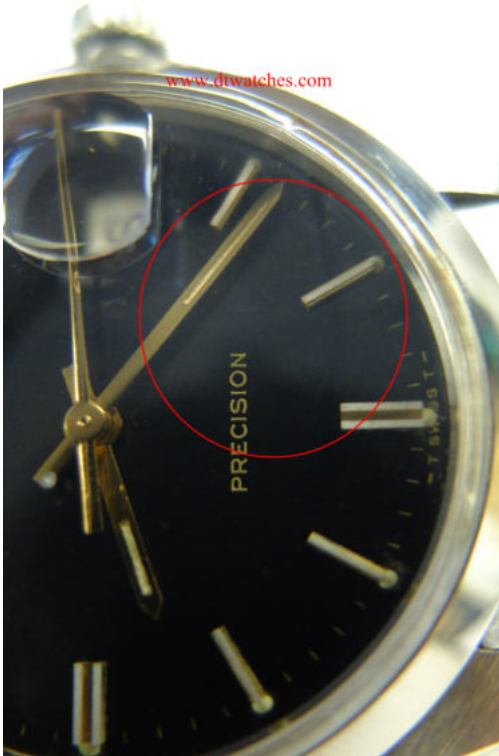


Photo 4

The ground color is a bit dull in reflection. It won't show a shiny surface.



Photo 5 (from another Rolex 6694; DT ref: 669480302 about 1981):

Under 10X magnifier you can see:

- a) the black ground color looks a bit dull in tone
- b) small pores on surface can be seen

ALL HD photos:

<https://photos.app.goo.gl/bQEFmJnx7TY61BQJ3>





Photo 6 (same as Photo 5):

Due to time aging, the oil and liquid element of the dial volatile. Degree of volatilization depends on how the owner used and stored the watch. This watch probably was used in a sunny environment and kept in a relatively dry place. The degree of volatilization of this watch is heavier than Photo 1 watch.

Watch of photo 1 is 1978. Theoretically should be more rough on surface than a 1981 watch IF used and placed under the same environment. However, the dial surface of Photo 6 shows rougher and with bigger pores.

All HD photos: <https://photos.app.goo.gl/bQEFmJnx7TY6lBQJ3>



Supplementary photo: This photo clearly shows the matt condition of the dial.

From another watch stock dt2280. All HD photos:  
<https://photos.app.goo.gl/SbLrpV2R7MLR7QA47>

Checking my HD photo details is highly recommended.

It is beneficial for pick high quality pre-owned watch.

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### Gilt Gold

Gilt dials are made of golden color paint and powder mixture. Then piling up to form the words. After baking, the words were hardened and formed the shape.



Photo 7: Requirement of the words of a quality matt gilt dial:

- 1) words can be seen clearly
- 2) one can feel the ups and downs of the words. Those words are NOT flat. They are neatly embossed on the dial surface. Words are a bit raised.

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Photo 8

"-T SWISS T-" & "PRECISION" are clearly seen. The lum dot is intact. A bit turning black due to aging. This is a reverse evidence showing that it was NOT relumed.

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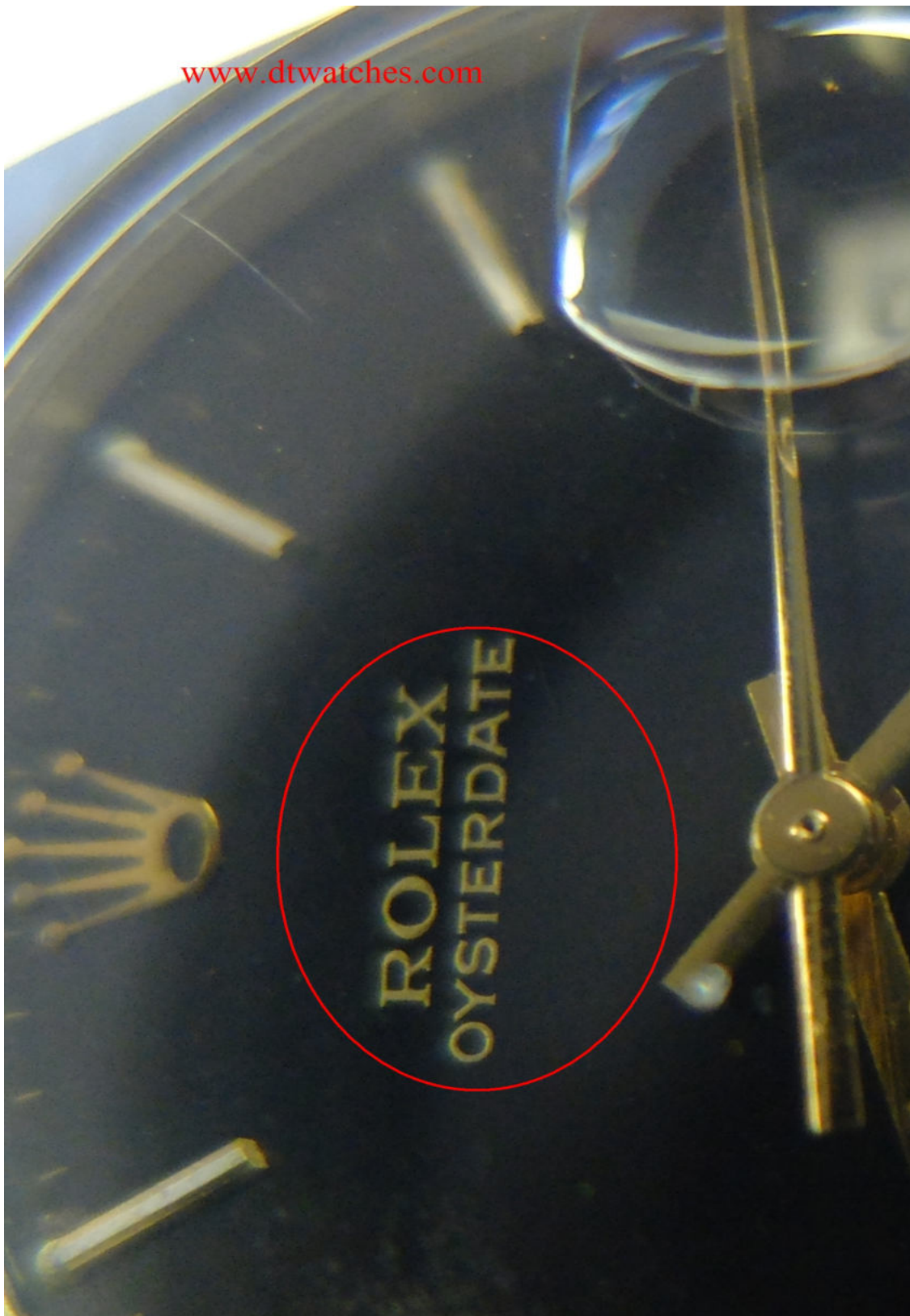


Photo 9: Ups and downs of the words neatly embossed with clear relief

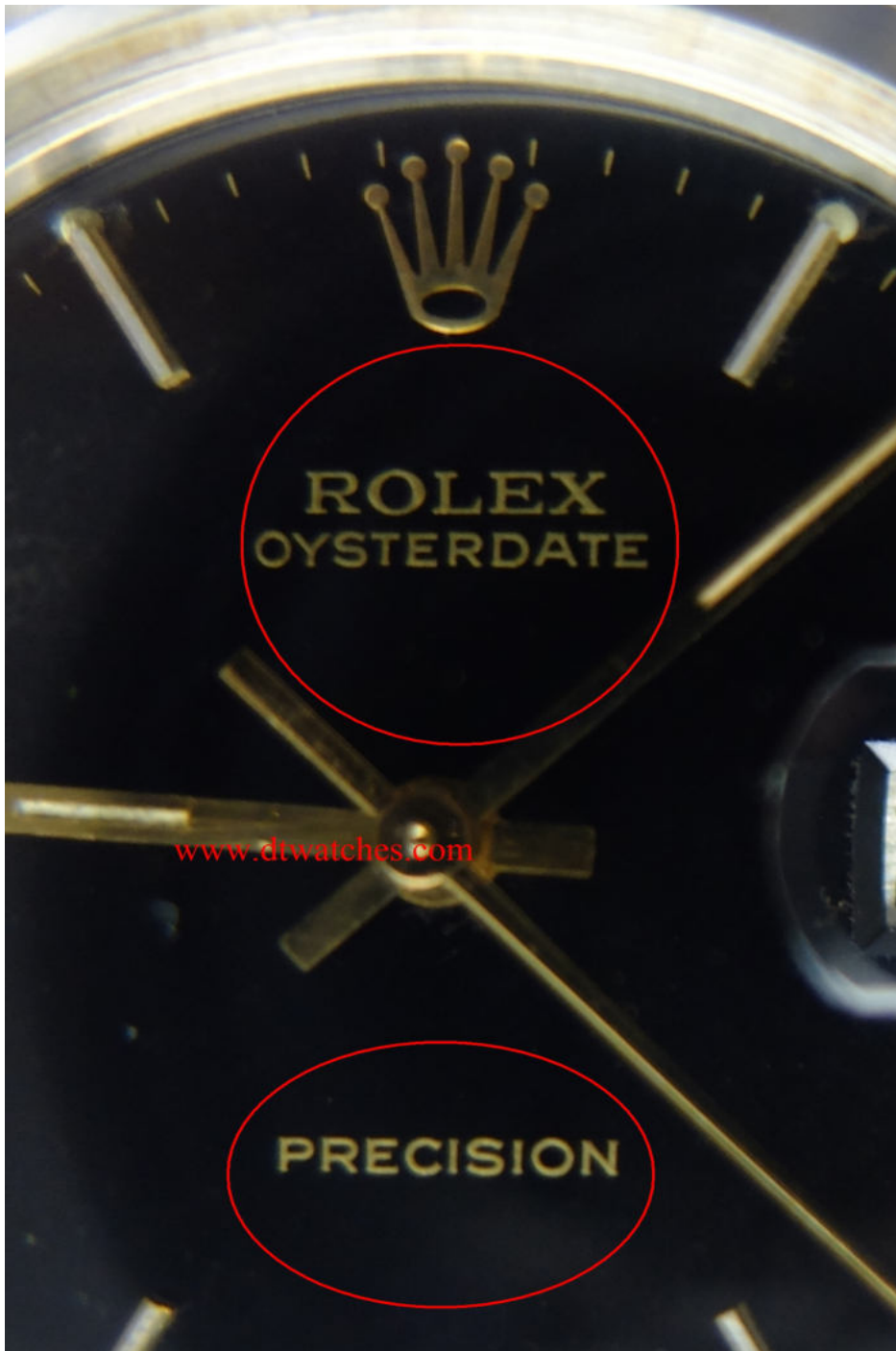


Photo 10

Please pay special attention to "R" and "O" of the word "ROLEX"  
The reflection of the light shows that the two sides of the "O" are raised.

It is NOT 2 dimensions. It is close to 3D.

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Photo 11

The above photo is an ordinary silver dial with black paint for reference and comparison. A high quality gild dial should be with words like the above showing embossed condition.

For the first chapter, I'd like to add more basic knowledge and techniques in how to choose and verify the condition of a vintage watch.

[How to determine the dial condition](#)



Photo 12 (same as Photo 1)

The overall first impression of a watch is of prime importance to me. DT rated it the most important.

After examining many HD photos and real watch through time and practice, one can develop a skill of what I called "Grading with One Glance (GOG)". The condition of the watch can be rated at one glance!

This is NOT a super-natural power. It is a sensational skill that can be trained. This ebook aims in helping watch fans to achieve such skill.





Photo 13 Checking the lum dots is another important matter. High quality involves:

- a) All dots should be intact and in good shape. (through time, some dots may become dark and/or losing some portion)
- b) Changing color is inevitable. It should be on the whole balanced and maintain a overall harmonious line. Sometimes, dots change to yellowish or milky in tone. That is normal.
- c) Due to moisture, dots may become black and look like moldy. If such happened, marks should be deducted.

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Photo 14. Carefully checking the raised 5 minute baton markers. See if they were:

- a) damaged
- b) oxidized
- c) with glue marks

Normally, 30 min and 45 min position are placed with larger marker for easy reading.

Sometime, some markers may peel off. Repairer used glue to stick it back on dial.

Have to check the peripheral and see if some glue marks left behind.



Check the 3 hands and see whether they match with the dial and the lum dots



Photo 15

Rolex 6694 only comes with two hands style. One is the sword style as per above photo  
Verify whether the 3 hands are authentic:

- Check the degree of oxidation. The above 3 hands are in good condition.
- the length of minute hand and the second hand usually reaches the sub marks (showing minute and second) between the raised baton markers. If the length exceeded that, place special attention. Too short or too long may mean replacement hands. (see the upper red circle of Photo 15)
- Check whether the luminous material on the front portion is intact. (red circles of Photo 15)
- check whether the color of the lum materials on hands matches with the lum dots color. If un-matched, the hands may be repainted or replaced. (red circles of Photo 15)



Photo 16

Pay attention to the lower right red circle. The second hand should be at least same length with the minute hand. Sometime, it may be a slight bit longer. If found that the second hand is shorter than the minute hand. Be careful.

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### Checking and determining the condition of watch cases

Knowing how to grade a dial is the 1st step. Now, proceed to check the case and band conditions. First impression (GOG) is also important for checking cases. Things to be noted:

- a) is the overall watch shape in balanced condition
- b) whether the 4 legs are board and long enough AND with good/sharp angles
- c) whether the 4 legs had been polished OR even over polished

It is common and normal that a pre-owned watch had been polished before. The critical point is whether it is in an unacceptable condition. I know that is a subjective matter. But, somehow an over polished case definitely reduce the fun of playing vintage watches.

For introduction, DT love to use the same photo to explain different matters. Normally, there are not many photos on online watch shops, watch forums or ebay auctions. If one have the ability to explore more and more usefull information from that a few photos, chances are high that he/she can pick up good quality items among a bulky selection.

DT as a seller, I normally shot 50-60 photos showing all aspects of a watch. Sometime, may hit over 100 photos! That's why I have thousands of photos to write this ebook photo guide.

### Checking the width of case legs using reflection lines



Checking the width of case legs using reflection lines



Photo 17 (same as Photo 1)

Reflection lines are useful to check the width of case legs and whether a case had been polished or not.

Line (1), (2) and (3) show the width of the leg from top end to the lower end. **The wider the better.** From (1) to (3) should be a smooth path steadily sloping down.

There is a reflection light zone between (1) and (2). **It shows an even and horizontal "line" not being bended or changing of shape.** This is a very positive sign showing that: a. that area was NOT polished; b. even if it had been polished before, the scale is very minimal.

I put a line (4) showing the reflection line of the band. Line 4 is parallel to the reflection light of the watch leg. Same rationale, line (5) and (6) are added. **The reflection line on the leg is nearly in perfect horizontal.** No oscillation no bending in shape. Comparing line (5) with line (6), both are parallel to each other.

Checking the thickness of a case by examining the case-band junction area



Photo 18

4 red circles marking the connection areas of the watch case with the end links of the band. Place special attention whether the watch legs are higher than the end links. **The higher the better.** This method applies to almost all Rolex oyster watches.

If a watch leg was polished, it must be started top down from the surface. This will reduce the thickness of the legs. The 4 circled areas of photo 18 clearly show that the watch legs are higher than the end links.

In general, polishers usually NOT directly polish the whole surface area from top to down. They tend to polish more the outer area. Hence, to avoid lowering the inner side. If the inner side is lower than the end link, it will be very ugly and easily to be seen. Polishers incline to polish from outer edge and sloping upward to the inner edge. Ascetically, the inner portion is a bit sloping down to the outer edge. Anyway, the change of shape will be told by light reflection honestly. Please check the next photo.





Photo 19

Comparing against photo 17, the reflection lines on both sides of photo 19 are clearly deformed.

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Checking the length of watch leg



Photo 20

Line (1) and (2) measure the length of watch leg from the band end link till tip of the watch leg. **Normally speaking, the longer the better.**

Examining line (2) , easily seen some portion of the leg is missing. Theoretically, line (2) should have no space with the lower end of the leg. The smaller the space, the better the condition. The red dotted line shows the changing shape of the reflection line.



Photo 21

Checking the same leg from another angle.

Based on photo 20 and 21, on the whole, this watch leg is in good condition,

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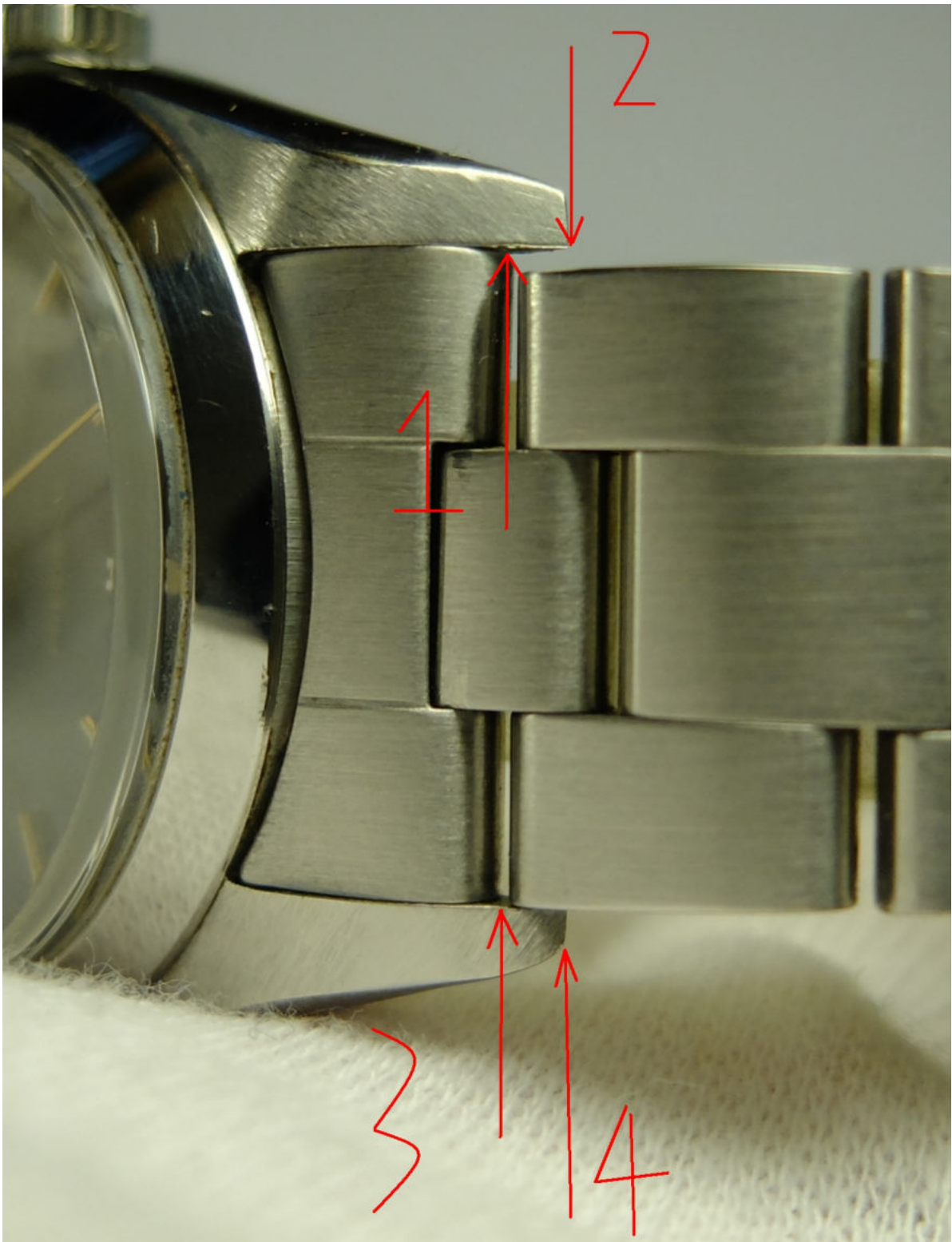


Photo 22

From this angle, we can check the length of two watch legs at the same time.

See whether they are balanced.

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Checking thickness and length of a watch leg by using the side hole



Photo 23

Rolex keeps drilling side holes to attach watch bands before 1995. By checking the distance (1) and (2), thickness of a watch case and length of a watch leg can be determined respectively.

If the surface of the leg was polished, the thickness (1) will be reduced. The side hole is a good tool to use.

(1) measure the distance between the watch leg surface to the top point of the hole. The longer the better. I have seen many over polished watches with just a mere 1/10mm to 1/5mm distance. Horrible!

(2) measure the distance between the hole to the lower end of the watch leg. The longer the better.



Checking thickness of a case and length of a watch leg by using the side hole



Photo 24

An example for comparison: The length of (1) in photo 24 is shorter than that of photo 23. Hence, could come to a conclusion that watch of photo 24 is relatively thinner. However, (2) of photo 24 is quite long enough.

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Checking the degree of case side polishing by using side hole



Photo 25 (same as 23)

Original side holes are produced by direct drilling at a 90 degree to the case after completion of the case. Hence, it is a perfect circle if bring the hole to eye level. Should the side case had been polished, the circumference of the circle will be polished.

Theoretically speaking, the circle will look like a cylinder shape. This can be easily seen under the light. Compare the holes of photo 25 and 26.

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Photo 26

Due to polishing, the circumference of the side hole "collapsed". Look like a funnel shape. The side case usually is a dome/curve shape, the larger the funnel "mouth" means the greater the degree of polishing.

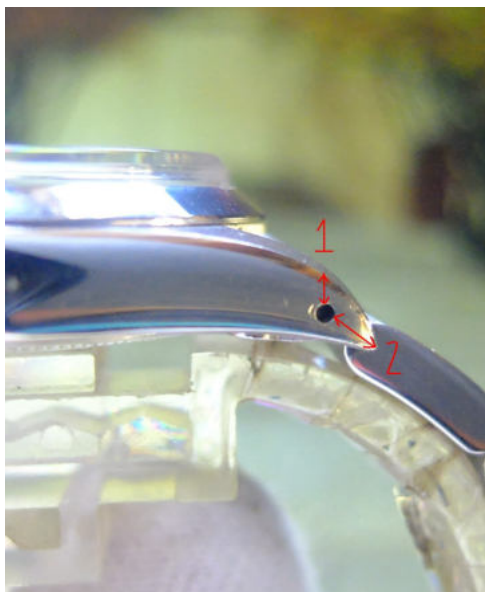


Photo 23

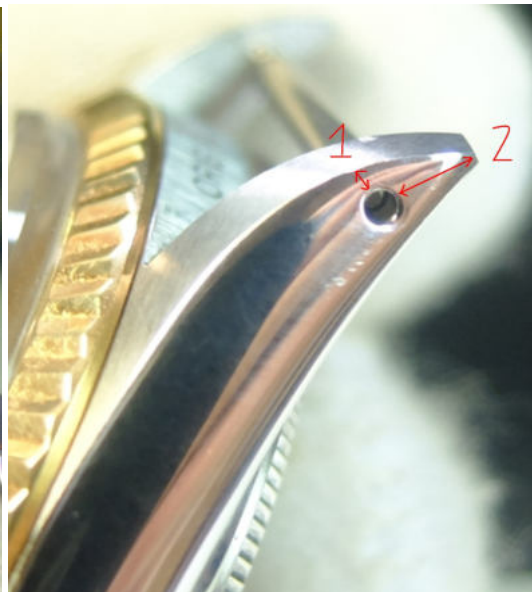


Photo 24

Putting both photos next to each other. Case condition of Photo 23 is definitely better than Photo 24.

- length 1 and 2 of the left are longer than the right one
- The side hole of the right watch is apparently more like a **funnel** shape.



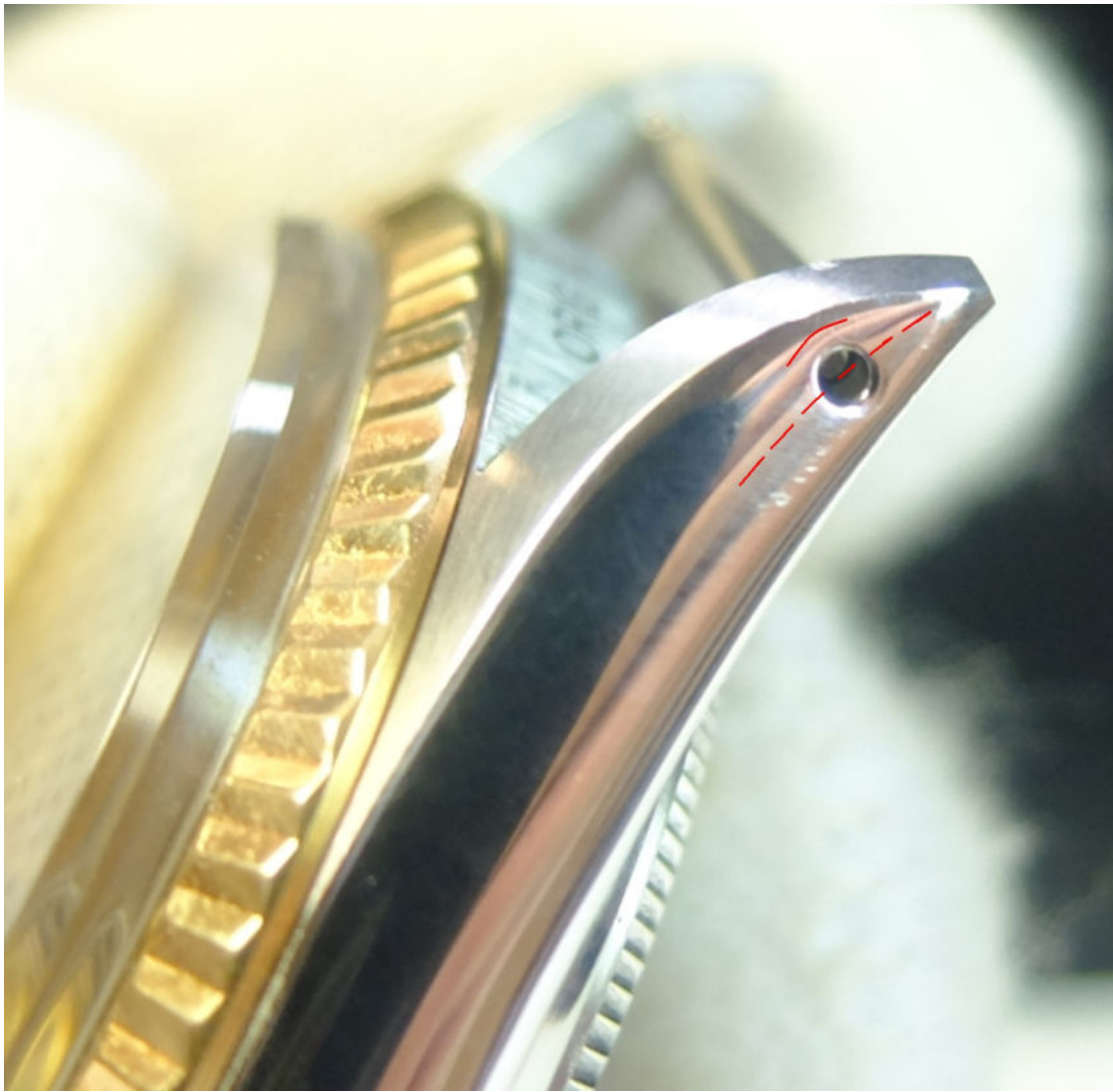


Photo 27

If it is a perfect circle and the side case had NOT been polished, the light reflection line will run straight through the middle line of the circle. AND, runs through to the lower end of the watch leg. We see that the reflection light line bended upward following the circle from photo 27. Due to polishing, the reflection light line CANNOT run till the end of the lower end of the watch leg.

I wish that this ebook is an easy guidebook with focus in HD photos and simple words explanation. Do not want the ebook overloaded with text. If wish to grasp more in depth with words, you can go to my BLOG listed below. Sorry! Chinese only. But, it is in simple wording. You can google translate it and still can get the basic meaning: <http://dtwatches.blogspot.com/2018/08/blog-post.html>

Checking the braised lines of the watch leg surface



Photo 28

Braised lines of the upper two watch legs of the demo Rolex 6694 of this chapter. The 4 legs hit watchers' eyes directly, they affect the overall first impression. Requirements of a sharp looking watch leg:

- a) the light reflection light should be horizontal and solid
- b) the braised lined should be delicately arranged in the same direction without crossing each other
- c) to be more exact, the braised lines are of the same angle
- d) requirements (b) and (c) are the pre-requisite factors leading to a horizontal light reflection line
- e) all the braised lines of the 4 legs should be of the same angle

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Photo 29

Braided lines of the lower two legs of the demo Rolex 6694. The lower left leg shows grate condition. But, the condition of the left one cannot be seen clearly. Have to check from another angle.

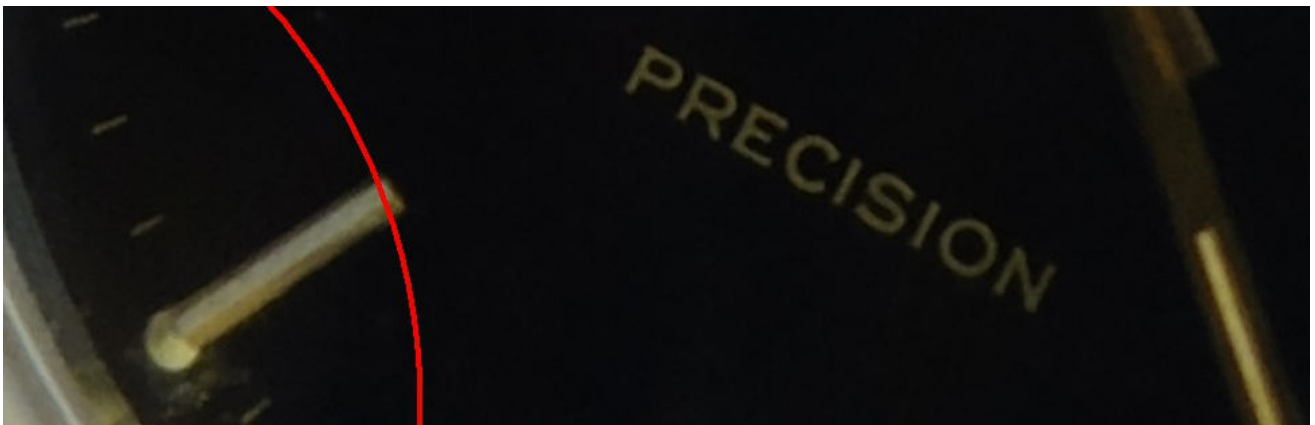






Photo 30 (same as Photo 20)

The dotted red reflection line is clearly deformed.

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Photo 31 (same as Photo 21)

The above two photo were seen before. This time, focus on the braised lines. The lower right leg had been polished. However, it is still in a neatly arranged situation.

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Supplementary photo: Original braided lines from a new old stock Rolex (from watch DT672308801). This photo shows how the original braided lines looks like in near brand new condition.

ALL HD photos of DT672308801: <https://photos.app.goo.gl/wr15NvG7N2nhmUG6>

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Supplementary photo: every braised line is of the same angle (DT672308801)



Supplementary photo: braised lines are neatly arranged with crossing each other (DT672308801)





Having preliminary learned examining dials, hands and cases, we proceed to check the bracelets.

Rolex 6694 uses 19mm width oyster bands. Basically in 3 style:

- 1) before 1950's to early 1960's: use rivet extendable band 7205
- 2) early to mid 1960's to 1977: use oyster folded 7835 band with 557 end links
- 3) starting from about 1977 till 2010: solid links 78350 with 557 end links

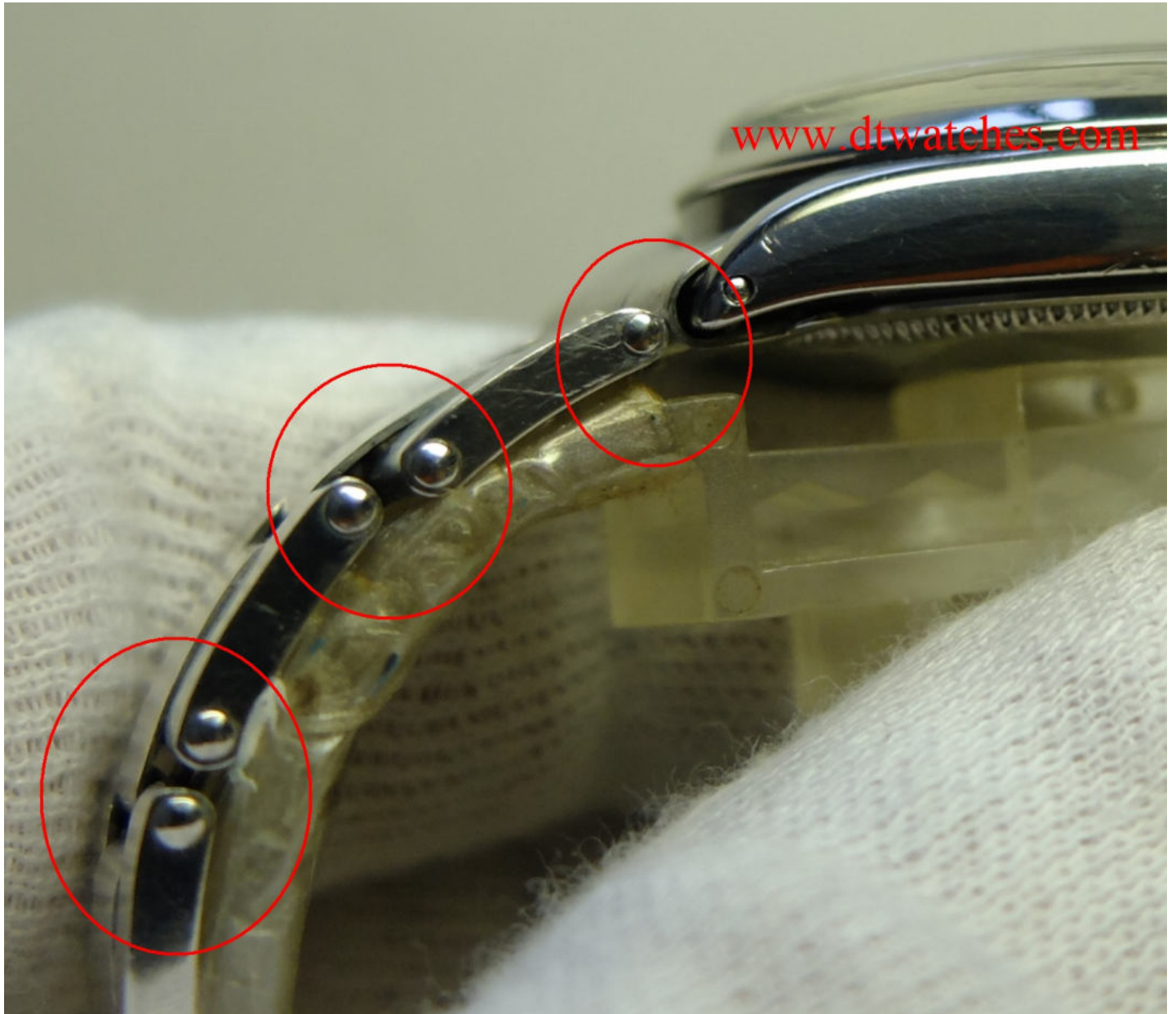


Photo 32 rivet extendable oyster band 7205



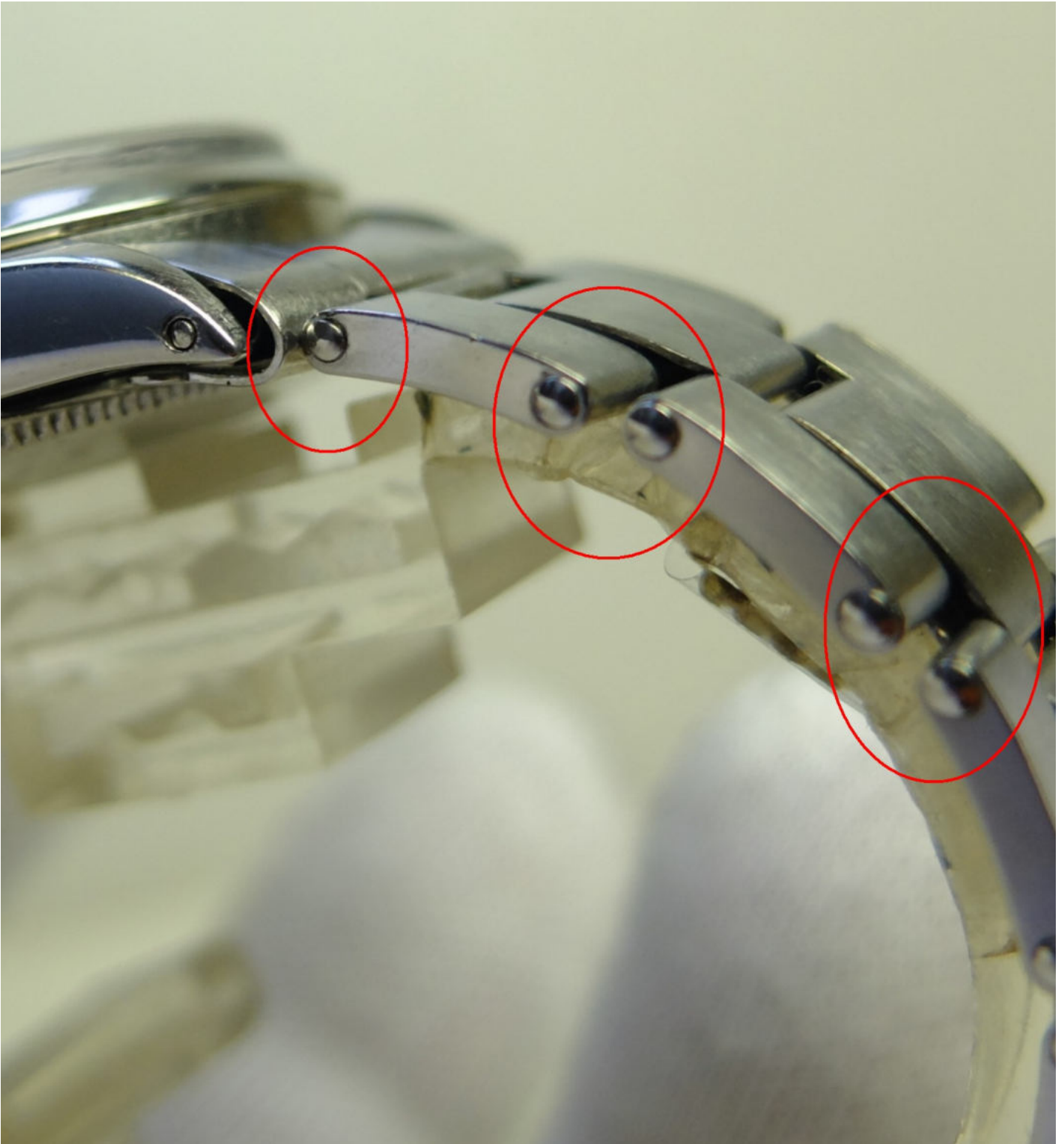


Photo 33

7205 band from another angle

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Photo 34 folded style 7835 oyster band

Band photo form another watch: DT6694033

<https://goo.gl/photos/NYXxX9H8CPb8QsNV9>

Please note the 4 areas A arrow points to, the links are formed by folding a steel sheet. The steel is divided into 6 portions, then bended inwards to form a single link. Like an egg roll cake.

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#### REVISION:

As mentioned previously, an experienced and well trained watch collector can extract more useful information from a single photo than those who are not.

- 1) Note the watch case side hole of photo 34. It is close to a perfect circle and no funnel shaped
- 2) Arrow 1 points where the light reflection line passing **IN** through the side hole. Arrow 2 points where the light reflection line passing **OUT** through the side hole. This is a perfect example of an unpolished side case. The light reflection line runs through the side hole and reaches the lower end of the watch leg.
- 3) Check the arrow 3 and 4, the space between these two arrows is the width of the leg. At the same time, we see a curved shade area below arrow 3 and 4. In some sense, this is also the light reflection line. The curved line shows no bending or change in shape. This implies that the leg surface is quite flat and board. In technical term, we call this a FAT leg.

Base on the side hole, we can check the distances:

- a) top surface to the top point of the hole ==> thickness of case
- b) end of the leg to the side hole ==> length of the watch leg

**Conclusion:** The case is thick. The watch leg is fat and long.





Supplementary photo: folded style 7835 oyster band

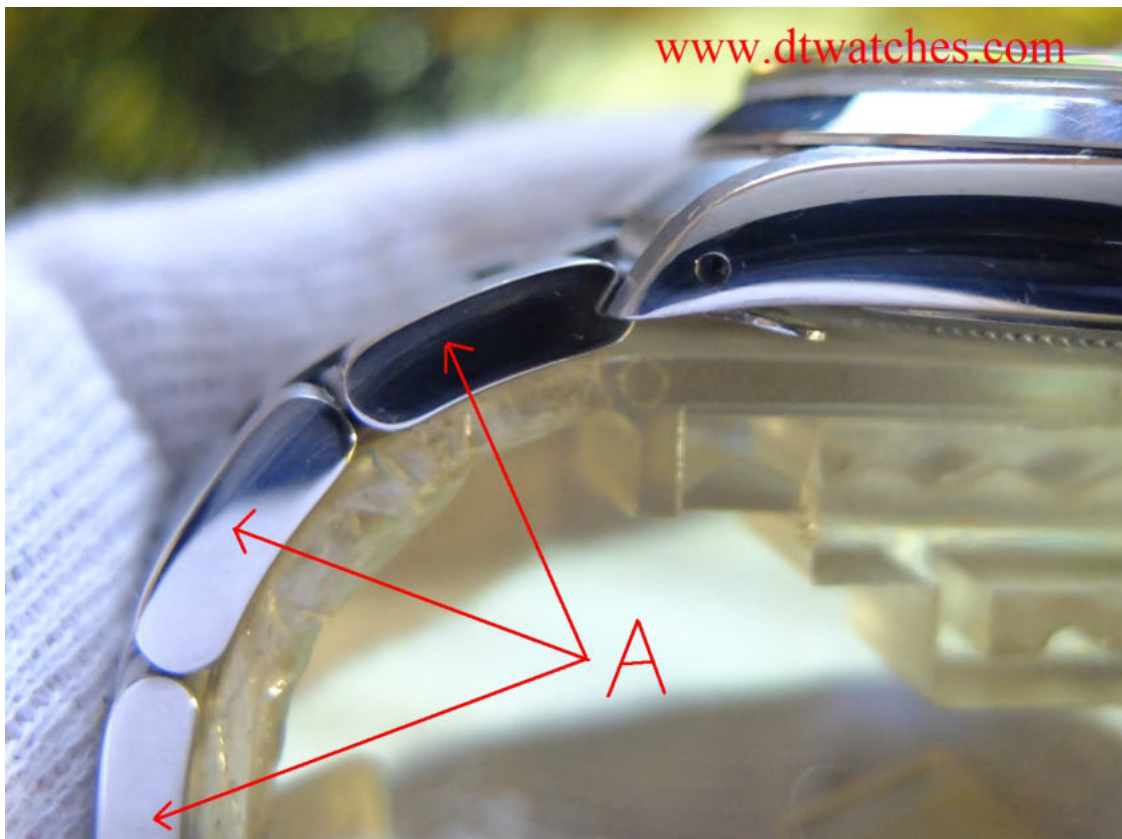


Photo 35 solid links 78350 oyster band

Note the 3 links arrow A point, the links are solid steel.



Photo 36

- A) Upper red circle: "557" engraved. This is the end link model reference number
- B) Lower red circle: "78350" engraved. This is the band reference number
- C) "19" below "78350" means 19mm indicating the width between the watch legs (double arrow red line)



Photo 37 marks on the buckle bridge

A) lower red circle "78350" is the band ref

B) upper red circle "K4" means the production year of the band

From about 1976-77, Rolex started using English words to mark the production year. A is the first one used. Then B and so on. You can GOOGLE search "Rolex claspcode" and relevant information can be found. "K4" is about 1986





Photo 38 early stage date marks on bridge.

Before 1976, the production time was directly engraved.

"3" on top means 3rd quarter. "64" means 1964

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Tightness and Straightness of a band

A high quality band should be tight and straight. Normally, we hold the band like photo 38 and view the result. A loosed band is of course cheaper than a tight and straight band.

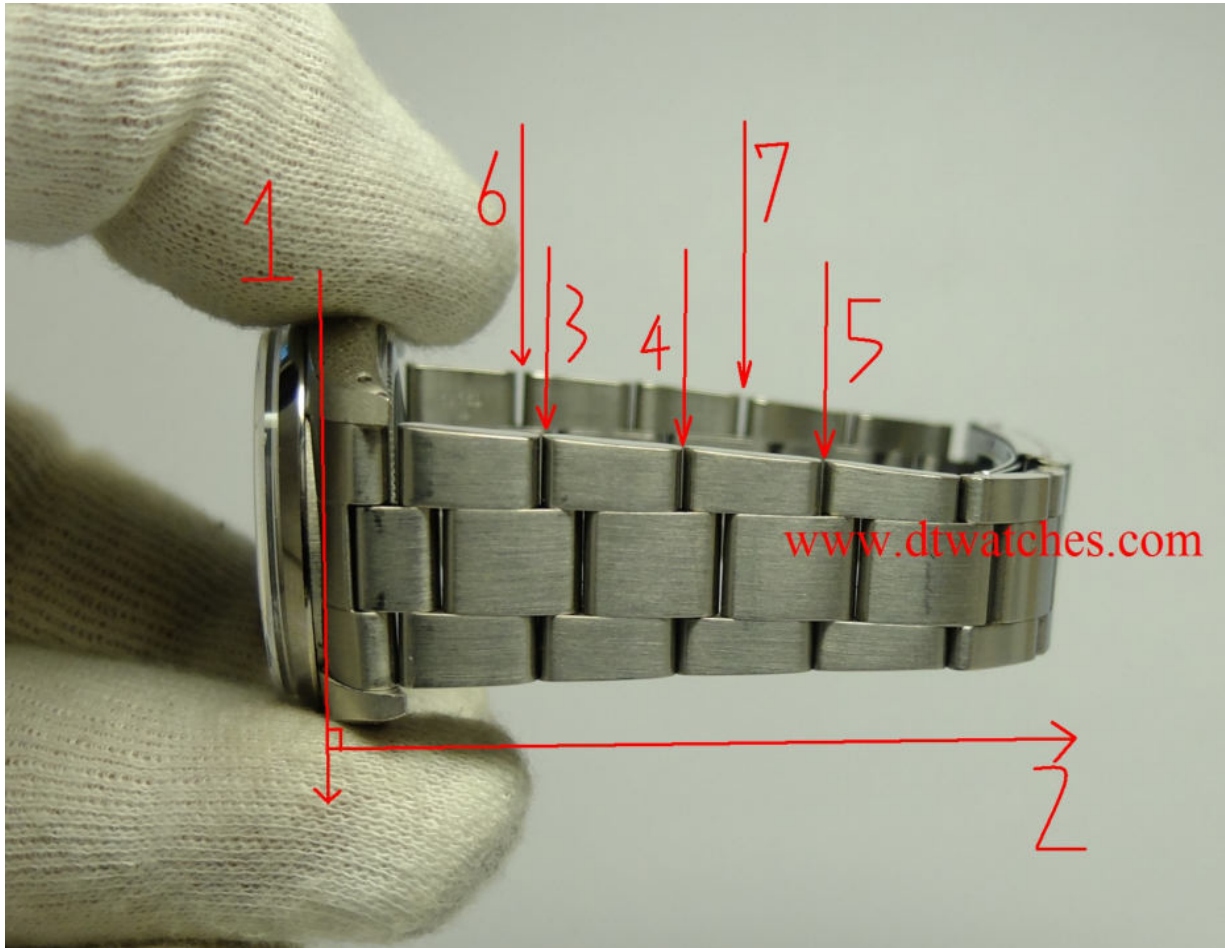


Photo 38 How to test a watch band

A) Hold the watch head and place it 90 degree to the table/ ground. See if the band can keep a near horizontal line parallel to line 2 which is 90 degree to line 1. If so, the band tightness and straightness is of great standard and vice versa.

B) Arrows 3,4 and 5 point to the gaps between links. The gap distance should be small. The smaller it is the better the tightness.

C) Arrows 6 and 7 point to the gaps of the opposite side of the band. The gaps there seems a bit larger than gaps 3,4 and 5!

On whole, the band of photo 38 is of great condition!

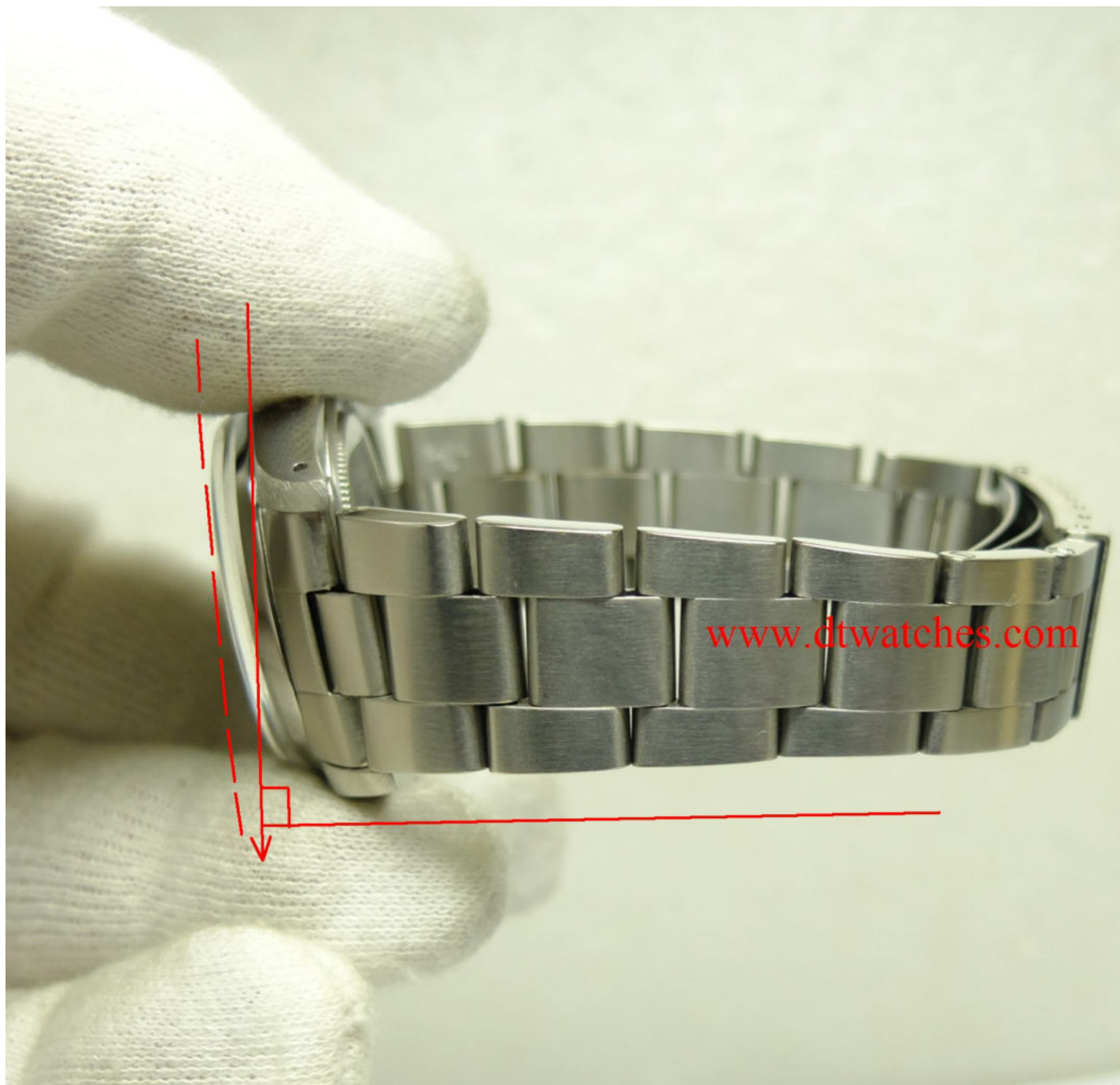
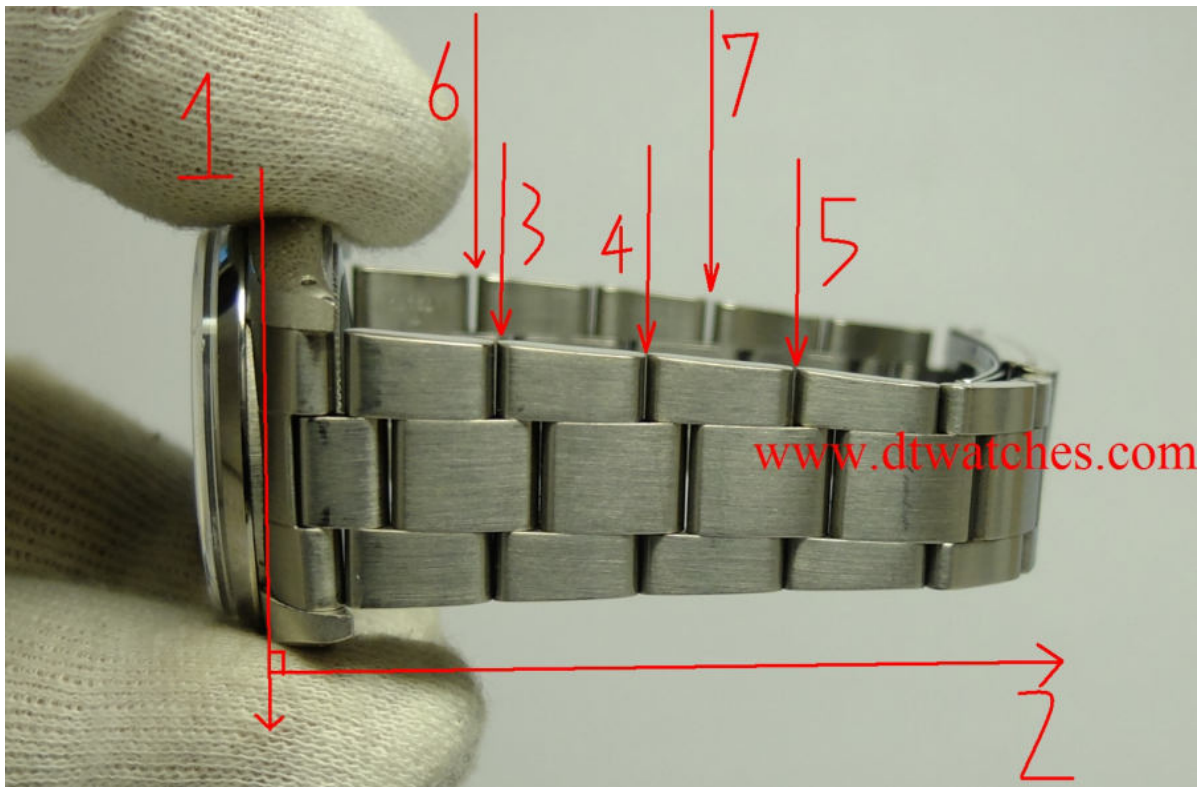


Photo 39 A band with less tightness and straightness

It is easy to identify the differences if there is comparison. From photo 38, you can see that I have to hold further back the watch head in order to keep the band horizontal to the table. Also, photo 39 shows that the gaps between links is larger than that of photo 38.



Two bands placed together. The better stands out automatically!



Band of Photo 38



Band of Photo 39

Tightness and Straightness of a band



Photo 40

next portion of the same band of photo 39

This time I add no lines. See if you can judge the band yourself.



Photo 41 Exercise in Grading a pre-owned Rolex:

Recall what I named "Grading at One Glance (GOG)", not only to tell the authenticity of a watch. Also helps extracting more useful information about the condition. To achieve GOG, one must examine as many HD photos and real items as you can. And, what's more important is to try commenting the condition by yourself.

Don't worry! This ebook could help!. Near 2000 HD photos with easy reference are waiting for you to explore. Here below is the 13 main points I get from two simple photos.

ROLEX model ref 1501 black dial white words. Production year unknown. No box no paper

1) The Rolex crown LOGO is intact. Oxidation is minimal. The first left crown pillar reflects light ==> may be a slight scratch. Just a slight matter.

2 & 3) The words at top / middle and bottom are neatly presented. Also, can feel the ups and downs embossed situation through the light reflection.

4) The 13 bars engine turn bezel is intact. No major scratches or damage. The darkness on bezel seems just dirt. Area between the 45 minute to 50 minute reflects light ==> may be a scratch on the bezel. No big deal.





Photo 41 Exercise in Grading a pre-owned Rolex:

- 5) All the 5 minute raised baton markers are intact. Seems little oxidation.
- 6) The watch legs connection areas with the band end links are tight and smooth. Note that the watch legs are higher than the end links. Indirectly tells that the case is in good thickness. And  $\implies$  no over polish.
- 7) All the 11 lum dots exist. Probably the 5min, 15min, 45min, 50min and 55min a bit peel off. Not sure just base on one photo. 40min, 45min, 50min and 55min lum dots become black. It is normal for vintage watch. It is only personal matter whether can accept or not.
- 8) Oxidation of the 3 hands is quite minimal. Acceptable.
- 9) Plastic cover, no major scratches, cracks or damage. Not sure whether the cover is original and authentic from this angle. From my experience, I feel that 80% is authentic cover.
- 10) The light reflection line at arrow 10 is a good indicator showing that the case had NOT been over polished. Actually, I would say near and close to no polishing ( just the arrow 10 area).

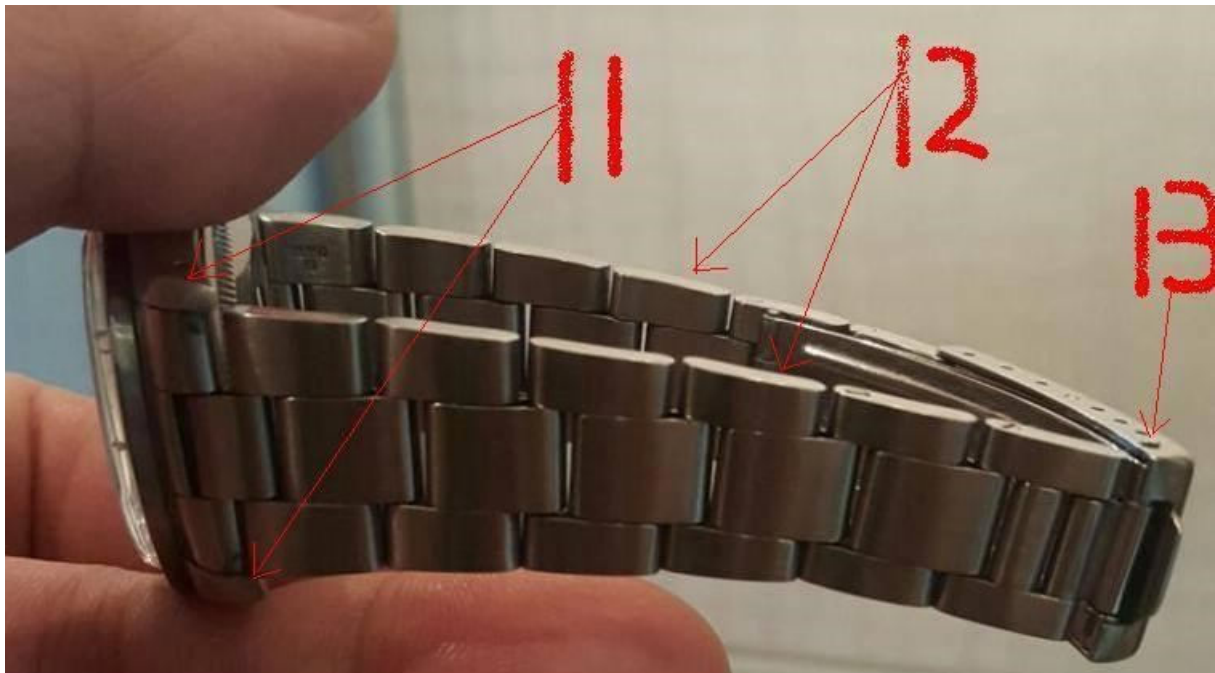


Photo 42 Exercise in Grading a pre-owned Rolex continue:

11) Not sure the degree of polishing from photo 42. BUT, light reflection line of the upper leg does tell me that the leg had been polished. The lower leg is a positive sign. Check the distance between the end of the leg to the end link of the band. That leg is long in technical term.

Bundling the findings of 6, 10 and 11, all evidences pointing to  $\implies$  the case is medium to high grade quality

12) the tightness and straightness of the band is medium. Not sure whether the band had been re-tightened (will talk about re-tighten watch band later in this book).

13) This is a rivet nail on the buckle. Normal setting of an authentic Rolex band.

April 2016, a supplier sent photo 41 and 42 to me. I have to decide whether to buy in or not just base on two low quality photos. I have to extract critical information for consideration. And, I explored 13 pieces important messages. Finally, I took in the watch. It is a happy ending. Below is a better presentation of the watch of photo 41 and 42. How you feel?



Photo 43 Bought in based on 2 smart phone photos

All HD photos: <https://goo.gl/photos/wcY4mZE7dLFnN9kz5>

Some words to say after completion of Chapter 1:

1. Rolex 6694 is the first Rolex model I bought. Hence, starting the ebook with such model bears special meaning to me.
2. Black gilt gold dials are widely loved by many watch fans. Rolex no longer produces hand winding oyster watch. Gilt gold T dials will become rare items in the future. Especially great condition dials. Hence, it is a good starting point for entry level watch players. Even for watch lovers with several years experience, such items are quite attractive. So, I purposefully pick this model as the first one comes out.
3. I have traded many black gold dial 6694. Sometime I brought it to Rolex Hong Kong for services. A problem always comes up. They tend to deny black gold dials is for steel 6694. And, asks me to change the dial. Some staff even said black gold dials were never used for steel 6694. I have no intention to find out the true answer. It is just an entry level Rolex. And, changing dials was allowed very long time ago in the 70's, 80's and 90's. So, I do not bother myself this matter. Having fun is of prime importance for a hobby.
4. Hope that this ebook brings up more and more FUNs for all readers. Let's start our venture to explore lovely vintage watch world.

End of Chapter 1

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