



OYSTER CASE

SYMBOL OF WATERPROOFNESS AND ROBUSTNESS

The Oyster case has greatly contributed to the reputation for excellence of Rolex watches. Symbol of robustness and waterproofness, this perfectly proportioned and elegant watch case is an immaculate blend of function and form, whether crafted in Oystersteel, 18 ct gold or 950 platinum.



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The Oyster case constitutes an important milestone in the history of modern watchmaking. Developed by Rolex and patented in 1926, it was the world's first waterproof case for a wristwatch thanks to its patented system of screwing down the bezel, case back and winding crown against the middle case. In 1927, Rolex demonstrated the effectiveness of this case by equipping a young Englishwoman, Mercedes Gleitze, with a Rolex watch for her swim across the English Channel. After more than 10 hours in the water, the watch continued to work perfectly, providing irrefutable proof that its Oyster case was waterproof.

HERMETICALLY CONSTRUCTED

Today, thanks to the case's hermetic construction (solid middle case, screw-down crown and case back, friction-fitted crystal and bezel), the watches in the Oyster Perpetual collection are guaranteed waterproof to a depth of at least 100 metres (330 feet) – 300 metres (1,000 feet) for the Submariner and Submariner Date divers' watches, and 1,220 metres (4,000 feet) for the Sea-Dweller. The Rolex Deepsea, moreover, is guaranteed waterproof to 3,900 metres (12,800 feet) thanks to a special case architecture, the Ringlock system. The back of its Oyster case is not screwed down but secured by a collar held tight against a highly resistant compression ring positioned inside the middle case, which alone bears the pressure exerted by the water at such depths.

A SOLID MIDDLE CASE

The Oyster's middle case (the central section of the case) is stamped and machined out of a solid block of Oystersteel, 18 ct gold or 950 platinum. It is extremely robust and forms the backbone to which all the other parts of the case are securely fitted. The majority of the Professional models feature a crown guard – these shoulders are stamped as an integral part of the middle case. The sapphire crystal is mounted on a gasket, then the whole is fitted against the flange of the case and hermetically secured by the bezel or, for watches with a rotatable bezel, a sealing ring.

SCREW-DOWN CASE BACK WITH ROLEX FLUTING

The back of the Oyster case is hermetically screwed down against the middle case – or, on the Rolex Deepsea, secured by a collar held against a compression ring positioned inside the middle case. It is edged with fine fluting, a legacy from the case back of the Oyster watch of 1926, which fits into a special tool, granting only Rolex-certified watchmakers access to the movement.



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TWINLOCK AND TRIPLOCK WINDING CROWNS

The Twinlock winding crown, patented by Rolex in 1953, comprises a double waterproofness system. The Triplock winding crown, introduced in 1970, features a triple waterproofness system, which includes an additional sealed zone; it was developed to reinforce the security of the Rolex divers' watches. The Submariner and Submariner Date, the Sea-Dweller and the Rolex Deepsea are all fitted with the Triplock winding crown, which today also equips several other Professional watches.

The Twinlock and Triplock winding crowns comprise around 10 components made of materials selected for their inherent qualities, including Oystersteel, 18 ct gold or 950 platinum for the crown, and polymers for the gaskets.

Once assembled, these winding crowns are screwed down firmly against the Oyster case, helping to ensure its complete watertightness.

STRINGENT WATERPROOFNESS TESTING

All Oyster cases are manufactured in the Rolex workshops. After the final control operations, every watch in the Oyster Perpetual collection is immersed in water and subjected to a pressure 10 per cent greater than that exerted at the depth to which it is guaranteed – 25 per cent more in the case of divers' watches, according to current standards.

All the Classic watches – in the Day-Date, Sky-Dweller, Datejust, Oyster Perpetual and Pearlmaster ranges – as well as the Explorer, Explorer II, Milgauss and Air-King Professional models, are equipped with the Oyster case and the Twinlock winding crown.

The Cosmograph Daytona, GMT-Master II, Yacht-Master and Yacht-Master II Professional watches are, along with the Rolex divers' watches – Submariner, Submariner Date, Sea-Dweller and Rolex Deepsea – equipped with the Oyster case and the Triplock winding crown.