

ExactSet Travel Clock

Computer clocks drift. Hotel room clocks drift notoriously. Hotel wake-up services sometimes fail. The surest solution I've seen is this new digital travel clock from Oregon Research. Several times a day it reads the EXACT time by radio from official transmissions and sets itself accordingly. Convenient for travel, it can be set to the four US time zones with a simple push button and a tiny display map. It has a lock switch that immobilizes the controls against suitcase impacts. Tapping the clock illuminates the display; a tap also turns off the alarm when it is ascending through its squeaky crescendo. It automatically adjusts to daylight savings. The clock unfortunately has microscopic instructions translated from Urdu and less-than-intuitive button controls, but the confidence it gives is worth the inconvenience. Unlike my previous travel clocks, between trips I keep this one active on my desk.

—Stewart Brand

Oregon Scientific ExactSet Travel Clock

\$50

From, for example:
weathertools.com
800/826-5708
www.weathertools.com/oregon/rm826.htm



Analog Atomic Wall Clock

Like most households we have lots of precise clocks and watches, but none of them are set to the right time (I think). With constant advancing or retreating because of travel or daylight savings, no timepiece is safe from being infected with inaccuracy. (Who has time to call for time?) Most clocks and watches linked to the exact time from Boulder, Colorado, are digital, but I'm an analog man. The 12" Atomic Wall Clock is large, analog, and self-correcting. (It's like having an atomic clock in your basement.) It's spooky to watch the hands whirl around until they find their spot as it adjusts itself in and out of daylight savings time, a chore worth at least its price. Someday all clocks and watches (and appliances!) will be this smart.

—KK

12" Radio Controlled Clock

\$50

From, for example:
Edmund Scientifics
800-728-6999
www.scientificsonline.com
or 877-627-9029
www.atomic-clocks.com; they have all kinds, including watches.

IWC Fliegerchronograph Watch

Designed decades ago for pilots, this big wristwatch is instantly readable at any distance in any light, including the middle of the night under covers four inches from my farsighted eyes. It tells day of the week as well as date. It's happy under water. Its chronograph precisely measures duration up to twelve hours, readable to fractions of a second. And it's "automatic," meaning that my activity enables its activity, batteries not needed. It is expensive—around \$3,400 street price. I made the jump because my \$40 Swatch was keeping my wife awake with its loud, slow tick. The IWC ticks so fast and quietly, you barely hear its whirl when you press it against your ear. It's a lifetime watch, though cleaning is needed every five years or so. I got the black ceramic case for its understatement. Magpie-eyed thieves don't even notice it.

—SB

IWC Fliegerchronograph Watch

Around \$3,400 from:
www.ashford.com
Cheaper on eBay at times.



Correlated History of Earth

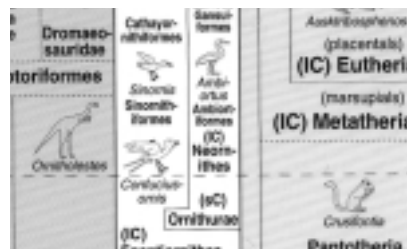
The long view. Or rather, views. Geological time and biological time run at such different paces that the two perspectives are not easily brought together. This crisp chart joins them with extraordinary clarity. It lays out the chronologies of continents skittering around the globe, of comet and asteroid impacts, and of life's increasingly diverse groups of living creatures and how they fit into geological time. And more. Ordinarily, combining such staggering amounts of information would yield mush and muddle. But this exquisitely printed, laminated poster manages to present 4.5 billion years of geology and biology as the unified whole that it is. Like a good map it teaches something at two feet away, or you can get out a magnifying glass and read down for details.

—KK

A Correlated History of Earth

Pan Terra
1999, 28 x 38 inches
\$25 postpaid
Pan Terra Inc.,
PO Box 556,
Hill City, SD, 57745
605/574-4760
www.wmnh.com/wmgsche.htm

Actual size



From the chart's Web site: "Included are plate tectonic maps, mountain building events (orogenies), major volcanic episodes, glacial epochs, all known craters from asteroid and comet impacts, over 100 classic fossil localities from around the world, fossil ranges of plants, invertebrates and vertebrate life forms, and major extinction events as revealed by the fossil record. Also evident on this chart are the "Cambrian explosion" of animal phyla and the juxtaposition of reptiles and mammals across the Cretaceous/Tertiary (K/T) boundary. Hundreds of illustrations add a striking visual dimension to the data."

