

If you're asking, "Should I sell my Rolex now or wait another year?" you're really weighing two things: what your watch could sell for today, and what you might gain—or lose—by holding it. In Los Angeles, I've seen that decision play out at consignment intake, during authentication checks, and across buy-offer conversations in Beverly Hills and DTLA. There's rarely one right answer for every Rolex. Model, condition, completeness, and your reason for selling all matter.

The 2026 market has shown signs of recovery after the sharp post-2022 correction, but a recovering market isn't the same as a guaranteed price increase for every reference. Instead of trying to call the exact top or bottom, start with your watch's likely net proceeds today, then compare that figure with the cost and uncertainty of holding it another year.

The short answer: sell for a reason, not just a prediction

If you need the money, no longer wear the watch, or have received a strong offer for a model with plenty of similar examples available, selling now may make sense. If you enjoy wearing it, don't need the funds, and can comfortably wait through market swings, holding may be reasonable. But "Rolex prices are going up" is not, by itself, a complete reason to wait.

A headline about a rising market usually describes an index, a category, or a group of watches—not the exact watch on your wrist. A stainless-steel sports model with a desirable configuration can behave differently from a precious-metal dress watch, a less sought-after dial, or a heavily polished example. Even two watches with the same reference number can attract very different offers if their condition and documentation differ.

What happened after the 2022 price slump?

During the pandemic-era boom, tight availability and intense buyer demand pushed prices for many popular Rolex models to extraordinary levels on the secondary market. Those peak asking prices were not a reliable promise of what every owner could actually receive. As demand cooled and more watches became available, secondary-market prices corrected after 2022.

The rebound has been gradual and uneven rather than a simple return to the boom. Market tracking in 2026 has pointed to improving momentum in parts of the Rolex market. For example, **Rolex secondary-market prices rose 1.7% in Q1 2026 vs the previous quarter**. That is a useful data point, but it should not be read as a 1.7% increase for every Rolex or as a forecast for the next quarter.

For an owner considering whether to sell now or hold Rolex, the broader timeline matters less than the watch's own path. A recovery in a broad index may support buyer confidence, yet the result for a specific reference still depends on how many comparable examples are listed, how quickly they sell, and whether buyers are willing to pay for that watch's condition and set.

How to read the Rolex price trend without overreading it

Market data is useful when it helps you ask better questions. It is less useful when treated as a personal appraisal or a promise about the future. Pricing sites and auction records may use different samples, time periods, and definitions of "price." One might show advertised asking prices, another completed transactions, and another an aggregated index. Those are not interchangeable.

WatchCharts is a watch-pricing platform that tracks market information and provides model-level pricing context. It can help owners look at historical movement and compare references, but its figures should be considered alongside real-world offers and recent comparable sales. **EveryWatch** is a watch-auction platform that can help you review auction listings and results. Auction prices may reflect a particular sale venue, buyer's premium, condition, and provenance, so they may not match a dealer's cash offer.

Broader business coverage can also help explain the environment. The *Los Angeles Times* may report on luxury spending and consumer trends, while Morgan Stanley's research can offer a wider view of the Swiss watch industry. These sources help frame the market; neither can tell you precisely what a specific buyer will pay for your watch this week.

A practical data-checking routine

1. Confirm the exact reference, approximate production period, dial, bezel, and bracelet configuration. Small differences can change the comparison set.
2. Look at several comparable examples, not just the highest current listing. Asking prices show what sellers hope to receive, not necessarily what buyers paid.
3. Check whether results are completed sales, auction results, or estimates. Note buyer's premiums and any disclosed condition issues.
4. Ask two or three reputable resellers or consignors for a current, itemized estimate. Compare the expected amount you would actually receive, not just the headline valuation.
5. Revisit the information after a few weeks if you are not in a hurry. A short observation period can show whether interest in your particular reference appears active or thin.

What determines your actual offer?

At intake, a watch is assessed as a complete object, not just a reference number. Authenticity comes first. After that, the condition of the case, bracelet, dial, hands, bezel, and movement all influence a buyer's comfort and the cost of preparing the watch for resale.

- **Condition and originality:** Deep scratches, over-polishing, replacement parts, or service needs can reduce an offer. A clean, original example is generally easier to present to a cautious buyer.
- **Box, papers, and accessories:** The original box, warranty card or papers, tags, and service records can strengthen the package and make its history easier to document. Their effect varies by model and buyer.
- **Demand for the specific configuration:** Popularity is not uniform across the Rolex catalog. Reference, size, metal, dial, and bracelet can all affect how quickly a watch finds its next owner.
- **Route to market:** A direct sale, dealer buyout, and consignment offer have different trade-offs. A buyout may be quicker and simpler; consignment may offer a higher potential payout but can take longer and involve fees or other terms.

When comparing offers, ask what is included and what is deducted. Find out whether the quote is conditional on inspection, whether service or authentication costs could be taken out later, how long payment takes, and whether consignment fees apply. A high preliminary estimate is not necessarily the best net outcome.

Certified Pre-Owned and credibility in resale

Credibility matters because buyers want confidence that a Rolex is authentic, accurately described, and supported by a clear transaction process. A credible seller should explain how the watch will be examined, how condition is represented, and what happens if an inspection reveals a discrepancy. For you as the seller, clear documentation can also reduce avoidable questions and delays.

Rolex Certified Pre-Owned (CPO) is an official program through participating retailers for eligible pre-owned watches. A CPO watch is authenticated and sold through that program with its associated certification and warranty. The program can support buyer confidence, but it is not a guarantee that every owner will receive a higher payout by selling through a CPO channel. Eligibility, retailer policies, and commercial terms matter. A watch sold to a retailer may be priced differently from one listed directly to a consumer because the retailer takes on costs, risk, and future obligations.

Ask any potential buyer to explain its authentication process and provide written terms. A professional should be comfortable discussing identity checks, inspection, payment timing, and how the watch will be handled. Don't hand over a watch based solely on a message or an impressive-looking estimate. Credibility is part of the value of a transaction, especially when the item is expensive and easy to misdescribe.

Sell now or hold Rolex: a decision framework

Your situation What may favor selling now What may favor holding

You need cash or have another use for the money.

A firm, acceptable net offer gives you certainty and access to funds.

Waiting may be hard to justify if the money has a more important purpose today.

You wear and enjoy the watch.

Selling can still make sense if the offer meets your goal or you want to change watches.

Keep it if enjoyment is worth more to you than uncertain future resale gains.

You own a popular reference and have a strong offer.

You can lock in a known outcome rather than speculate on another year.

Waiting may be acceptable if you are comfortable with volatility and don't need to sell.

Your watch needs service or has condition concerns.



A clear as-is offer can avoid service expense and uncertainty.

Compare the likely post-service value with the cost, time, and risk before deciding.

When timing the watch market can backfire

Timing the watch market sounds simple: sell before prices fall, or wait until they rise. In practice, you would need to predict not only broad demand but also the performance of your exact reference, the supply of competing watches, and the price a buyer will offer after inspection. Even a correct call on a general market trend can produce a disappointing result if the specific watch is difficult to sell or needs work.

Holding also has costs that are easy to overlook. You may pay for insurance, servicing, or secure storage. The watch may continue to lose condition through wear, or a future buyer may prefer a different configuration. On the other hand, a watch you love can provide value every time you wear it—something no index captures.

Try a simple [latimes.com](https://www.latimes.com) break-even calculation. Start with the net amount you could receive today. Estimate any expenses you expect over the next year, such as service, insurance, or transaction costs. Then ask how much the watch would need to appreciate for waiting to leave you better off. That number is not a prediction; it is a way to make the decision concrete.

How to prepare if you decide to sell

1. Gather the box, papers, warranty card, service records, spare links, and any other original accessories you have.
2. Write down what you know about the watch, including purchase history, service dates, and any repairs. Be candid about issues.
3. Photograph the watch in natural light, including the clasp, case sides, bracelet, and any visible wear. Avoid polishing or making repairs before getting advice.
4. Obtain more than one estimate and compare the net amount, timeline, payment terms, and inspection conditions.

5. Choose a secure, reputable transaction route and keep written records of the agreement and transfer.

So, should you sell your Rolex now or wait another year?

If a credible buyer has made an offer that meets your financial goal, selling now can be a sensible choice—even during a recovery. You do not have to wait for a perfect market peak that may never be obvious until it has passed. If you don't need the money and genuinely enjoy owning the watch, holding it another year is also reasonable, provided you accept that prices can move in either direction.

Use the 2026 recovery as context, not a promise. Track your exact reference with WatchCharts, review relevant auction information through EveryWatch, and compare both with current, written offers. Then weigh the net proceeds against your personal reasons for keeping or selling. The best answer to “sell now or hold Rolex” is usually the one that fits your needs—not the one that depends on guessing next year's market perfectly.

