

## "I Will Not Be On Time"

I want to warn you up front. A couple of times a year, you can count on me NOT being on time. In Spring, when we jump to Daylight Savings Time, I am late for meetings by an hour or arrive at lunch just as friends are calculating the tip. I miss the first 2/3 of many movies.

This time of year, I get angry sitting alone in a restaurant wondering why others are so inconsiderate. At fault is my digital watch, unnecessarily difficult to reprogram to and from standard time. After the death of my dependable big-hand, little-hand analog watch, which dutifully provided the time by politely pointing, I bought a cheap digital version.

Don't get me wrong, this mega-watch does more than I could ask from any \$29 item content to live on I my arm. It gives me the EXACT time, showing me 13 minutes, 20 seconds past in big numbers, not just by it pointing ambiguously between 2 and 3.

At any moment I can know the current time in Bangkok. It has a stopwatch, so if I accidentally hit the timer, I know how long it takes, within a hundredth of a second, to make it stop. It gently rouses me from a nap by jingling robotically or vibrating like a joy buzzer.

I'm not unappreciative, but useless functions come at the expense of simplicity. Sure it stores 100 phone numbers, but I don't call people from my watch. Even with its pulse rate monitor, I'm resist checking how hypertensive I am at various times during the day.

Worse, it's pressurized to 150 meters. I am a poor swimmer, personally unable to survive in more than 6 feet, so water-resistance is an advantage only to rescuers who will know, by checking the stopwatch, how long I have been without air. I'll pass on the calculator or fetal heart monitor. I just want to know the time.

So, biannually, I press reset buttons randomly, hoping something good will happen. At present, my watch is displaying the number 67, which I assume is maybe the current time in Thailand. To avoid future problems, I'm henceforth buying two identical watches, one spring, one fall. Sadly, my new car has a digital clock too, sharing its display with the radio. Now I can never tell if I'm tuned to my local public station or if it really is 9:09. I've yet to figure how to reprogram it, but I'll tell you right now, I cannot afford to own two identical cars.