Yes, I’ve got two watches on — why don’t you?

A little over a year ago, I made the conscious decision to wear both a traditional watch on my left wrist and a smartwatch on my right wrist day in and day out. And I’m here to tell you with a straight face that this best-of-both-worlds solution has no downsides. If you’re into watches and tech or even remotely watch-curious, you should consider doing the same.

It’s easy to be a little bit anachronistic, admiring the simplicities of the past while wanting the bleeding-edge intricacies of the future. I find myself bouncing back and forth on these all of the time. I want the latest technology in my digital camera, but part of me feels an itch to go back to shooting film. I like the convenience of streaming music on Spotify, but I spend money on vinyl records to own a proper sonic keepsake. The same is the case for my love of wristwatches. For years, I’ve admired traditional watches, fancy handmade mechanicals and inexpensive quartz movements alike, but I’m still drawn to smartwatches and all of the functional advantages they offer.

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The Apple Watch is a great work of technology and engineering, but its masterstroke comes from all of the stuff you can do

with it: timers, alarms, notifications, activity and fitness tracking, and digital watchfaces you can change on the fly. Traditional watches have some of those features, like timers and alarms, but I don’t feel like I have to do much extra with a regular watch to appreciate their form and function.

Shapes, sizes, textures, and materials are much more varied with traditional watches

Once I combined these two devices by wearing them at the same time every day, I quickly learned how perfectly they complement each other. It starts out as simply as how I’m going to dress for the day. I often swap out which traditional watch I’m using every few days or even on a daily basis depending on my mood or what I’m wearing. Sometimes I want something that blends in with my outfit (which is usually black, some gray, and occasionally white), and sometimes I want my watch to be a statement piece that really pops from my monochromatic wardrobe. You can sort of do that with an Apple Watch on its own since there is a litany of strap options and watchfaces available, but it’s not the same as traditional watches that have wholly different shapes, sizes, textures, and materials from one to another.

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For example, all of us that wear Apple Watches or other smartwatches are often familiar with battery anxiety. My 44mm Series 6 dies in about a day and a half, but it rarely phases me. It’s barely a minor inconvenience because, while it’s

charging, I've still got my regular watch on the opposite wrist. In fact, I rarely ever charge my Apple Watch overnight, which is the usual routine for many people. I let it track my sleep – because why not – and just plop it on the charger at any point in the day when it buzzes about a low battery. This practice may sound chaotic to some, but to me, it helps me mostly not care too much about the battery life of one more device in my life. If it dies, it dies. I'll get to charging it soon enough and have no problem being a bit blasé about it.

Accessorizing is just a whole lot of fun

These casual feelings have also helped me not get too bent out of shape over the inevitable dents and dings my watches pick up. In fact, when I bought my Apple Watch from Mitchell, I was aware that it already had led a very Pacific Northwest life – it had a bunch of small scuffs and a long scratch across its screen, which I assume happened while running away from a bear trying to steal Mitchell's fancy trail mix or something. Buying a well-loved timepiece for a good deal is a great way to help you overcome that initial anxiety of putting the first scratch on it, and since my wrists have a tendency to make unscheduled appointments with the door frames in my house, it's just best that I don't fret. Patina and wear and tear are cool anyway, right?

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Just like when you go out looking your best and nobody

comments on how cool or pretty or handsome you look that day, if you're doing this for other people, you're doing it wrong. You have to do it all for yourself because that's the opinion that matters most. You'll think wearing two watches will paint you as some weirdo, but even if and when people actually notice enough to make a comment, it's so low on their list of concerns that they probably won't give it much more thought or attention after that. You can give them a long explanation, sort of like I'm doing here, as to all the advantages of wearing two watches, but most conversations will play out like this:

"Oh, are you wearing two watches?"

"Yeah, a regular watch and a smartwatch."

"Why?"

"I like it."

"Oh okay, cool."

And whether they think it's actually cool doesn't really matter. It matters that *you* think it's cool, or that *you* like the way it makes you feel about yourself, or that *you* like being able to tell the time with a small flick of either wrist because it's helpful when you're working on something and you've got your hands full but you gotta know the time because someone's asking or… — I digress.

On the off chance that someone asks you about your duo of watches and they actually do care, it's probably because they're into this stuff, too, and it will instead spark a beautifully nerdy conversation about watches or tech or both. In my experience, this is more likely than any snide remarks or perplexed stares of confusion.