

A 1.7% rise can sound modest, especially after the dramatic price swings Rolex buyers and sellers have watched over the past several years. But in the resale market, a small quarterly gain may still be a useful signal: prices could be stabilizing, buyer interest may be improving, or certain models may be finding firmer footing after a long correction.



Here's the example to keep in perspective: **Rolex secondary-market prices rose 1.7% in Q1 2026 versus the previous quarter.** That does not mean every Rolex gained 1.7%, or that a seller will receive 1.7% more from every buyer. The figure is an overall market indicator. Your watch's value still depends on its reference, condition, completeness, service history, and current demand.



For owners considering a sale, trade, or insurance update, the practical question is not simply "Are Rolex prices up?" It is "Is my specific watch performing better, and what can I realistically expect in today's market?"

What a 1.7% increase does—and doesn't—tell you

A market-wide increase is a temperature check, not a personal valuation. Different Rolex references can move at different speeds. A popular stainless-steel sports model may attract stronger competition than a less-traded

configuration, while precious-metal and dress models may follow their own demand patterns.

It also matters what the number measures. A pricing index, a collection of asking prices, completed auction sales, and dealer purchase offers are not interchangeable. An advertised price is what a seller hopes to receive; a completed sale is evidence of what a buyer actually paid. A cash buy offer will usually be lower than a retail asking price because the buyer must account for inspection, servicing, resale time, and business costs.

Market measure What it can show What to keep in mind Price index Broad direction across a defined group of watches May not reflect the performance of a particular reference Dealer or marketplace listing Current asking prices and available inventory An asking price is not proof of a completed sale Auction result A documented transaction, often with sale details Buyer's premium, condition, provenance, and venue can affect comparison Dealer offer A practical indication of what a buyer may pay now Offers can differ based on risk, overhead, and resale channel

From the post-2022 slump to a possible recovery

The Rolex resale market surged during the pandemic-era boom, when abundant liquidity, constrained retail availability, and heightened interest in luxury goods pushed prices for many sought-after references to extraordinary levels. Those peak prices were not a dependable baseline. They reflected an unusually heated moment, and buyers who entered at the top learned that pre-owned values can move down as well as up.

As the market cooled from its 2022 highs, many Rolex watches came off peak secondary-market prices. The pace and size of the correction varied by reference, but the broader reset was a reminder that scarcity narratives and strong past performance do not guarantee future appreciation. Higher borrowing costs, changing consumer priorities, and a larger supply of watches offered for sale all contributed to a more selective market.

The recovery story in 2026 should therefore be read as a timeline, not a straight line:

1. **Before and during the boom:** Demand accelerated, especially for highly recognizable Rolex sports models, and resale premiums expanded.
2. **After the 2022 peak:** Prices corrected from exceptional highs as buyers became more price-sensitive and listings took longer to convert.
3. **During the reset:** The market increasingly rewarded realistic pricing, excellent condition, and complete sets rather than broad assumptions that every Rolex would hold a premium.
4. **In Q1 2026:** A reported quarterly gain of 1.7% suggests a positive move in the aggregate, but it is not enough on its own to establish a sustained rebound.

A few quarters of firmer data would provide more evidence than one quarter alone. So would healthy transaction volume: prices rising while watches actually sell is a stronger signal than listings simply being marked higher. For owners, the lesson is to treat the latest uptick as encouraging context—not a promise that the old peak is returning.

How to follow Rolex prices without confusing the signals

Several data sources can help explain the market, but each has a different job. **WatchCharts** is a watch-pricing platform that tracks estimated values and market trends. Searching "**watchcharts rolex prices**" can be a useful starting point for understanding the direction of a reference or category over time. As with any index, check what is being measured, the date range, and whether the estimate reflects the exact configuration you own.

EveryWatch is a watch-auction platform that can help users examine auction listings and results. Auction data adds transaction context, but one result should not be treated as a universal price. A watch with unusual provenance, an uncommon dial, or exceptional condition may sell differently from a standard example.

Market reports can add a wider view. The phrase **“morgan stanley watch report”** is often used by people looking for industry analysis on the watch market. Reports associated with major financial institutions can offer useful context about brands, retail dynamics, or broader trends, but they are not a substitute for a current appraisal of one individual watch. The *Los Angeles Times* and other general-interest publications may also cover shifts in luxury demand and the resale economy; those stories help explain the larger environment, while specialized transaction data is usually needed to assess a specific reference.

A practical way to compare sources

- Look up the exact reference number, not just “Rolex Submariner” or “Rolex Datejust.”
- Compare similar dial, bezel, bracelet, metal, and production variations.
- Separate asking prices from confirmed sales wherever the source allows.
- Check several recent observations rather than relying on a single headline or auction result.
- Use a professional inspection to account for condition and originality, which databases may not capture fully.

What the change could mean for your Rolex

If you own a Rolex, a positive market reading may improve the backdrop for selling—but your result depends on the watch in front of the buyer. In Beverly Hills and DTLA resale intake, the first conversations tend to center on the same practical details: Is the watch authentic and original? Does it run properly? Has it been polished? Are the box, papers, tags, links, and service records included?

A complete set can make a watch easier to document and more appealing to some buyers. Missing papers do not automatically make a watch unsellable, but they can affect buyer confidence and the verification process. Condition matters too. Heavy polishing, bracelet stretch, aftermarket parts, or a service need may reduce the offer relative to an otherwise comparable example.

Before you request an offer

- Find the reference and serial information, and avoid sharing sensitive serial details publicly.
- Gather the box, warranty card or papers, extra bracelet links, receipts, and service documents.
- Do not attempt a home polish or replace parts to “improve” the watch before an evaluation.
- Take clear photographs and describe any damage, service needs, or modifications accurately.
- Compare more than one reputable offer, paying attention to payment terms and return or consignment conditions.

If you are not in a hurry, consignment may allow time to seek a stronger retail buyer, though it can involve fees and a longer wait. A direct purchase can be more straightforward and faster, but the offer reflects the buyer’s costs and risk. The best route depends on whether your priority is speed, convenience, or maximizing the final sale price.

Certified Pre-Owned and why credibility matters

Rolex Certified Pre-Owned has brought additional attention to authentication and documented resale. The program is distinct from simply buying a watch described as “certified” by an independent seller. Buyers should

confirm [latimes.com](https://www.latimes.com) what a certification actually covers, who performed the checks, whether the watch's identity and components were reviewed, and what warranty or return terms accompany the sale.

Credibility is central because a Rolex's resale value depends not only on the model but also on confidence in its authenticity, condition, and history. A credible seller should explain the inspection process, disclose known issues, and provide clear paperwork and terms. Authentication is not just a formality: it helps protect both the buyer and the seller from problems that may arise from counterfeit, altered, or improperly represented watches.

Certified Pre-Owned programs can support buyer confidence, but they do not guarantee a particular resale price or make every watch a better investment. A certification premium, where present, may reflect the program's service, warranty, and retail experience—not a promise of future appreciation. For a private owner, documented servicing and a transparent, reputable sales channel can also strengthen a transaction.

Is this a good time to sell?

A 1.7% quarterly increase is a positive sign for the Rolex secondary market, but it is not a universal green light. If you already planned to sell and your model is currently in demand, a firm market may help. If your only reason to sell is the expectation of a quick return to 2022 peak prices, the data does not support that conclusion by itself.

Start with a reference-specific estimate, then compare it with actual offers for your watch's condition and completeness. Decide whether you value speed or the possibility of a higher eventual sale price. And if you are considering selling only because of a short-term chart movement, remember that a watch's personal value—wear, collecting interest, and replacement cost—may matter more than a single quarter's index change.

The bottom line

Rolex resale prices rising 1.7% in Q1 2026 versus the previous quarter points to a market that may be recovering from the post-2022 correction. It is a useful data point, not a prediction. Track trends through tools such as WatchCharts and EveryWatch, use reports and news coverage for broader context, and evaluate your own watch based on its exact reference, condition, originality, and documentation.

For a realistic answer to "What does that mean for my watch?", combine market data with an in-person assessment and more than one credible offer. In resale, the strongest price is not just the one shown in a chart—it is the price a verified buyer is prepared to pay for your specific Rolex today.