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## Timex Trains and Travels, Mr Jones Decides

Posted by Greg May Nov 30, 07:22 PM to gear : -

Watches, for us, do much more than tell time. Some of them offer **fun looks**, others **fitness tracking**. Today, we have a watch that makes those tough decisions for you, and two that offer a wealth of information in different ways. Sure, you could burn off the turkey, stuffing, and pie by **hiking** or **cooking** but we suggest something involving a few more gadgets. Because, really, what good is time if you can't measure it to the nearest second, calorie, degree, or heartbeat?



If it's information that you're after, Time offers the **Ironman Race Trainer Kit**, a nifty watch that comes with a USB two-way receiver/transmitter that connects to your PC running Vista, XP, or OSX 10.4+, a normal-looking watch, and a separate digital heart rate monitor that straps around your chest. You can purchase the watch and strap separately from the Data Xchanger USB dongle should you not wish to have computer access to the information, but that destroys a good bit of the fun.

The chest strap is a bit awkward, but seems fairly accurate and stable even when exercising. And the watch offers all of the usual features and then some- Indiglo night-light, automatic training zones and many timer options to help structure your workouts, lap/split times, and counters like calories burned and peak heart rate. The display is fairly large, and the watch manages to feel pretty sturdy without being too heavy- but women might not like the fairly utilitarian styling on the model we tried (a slightly different women's model is available though). This is a watch for fairly serious runners, joggers, bikers, marathon folks, and the like, and **offers a very reasonable price point of \$140** or so. But we didn't love the interface either on the watch or via PC. The software, unfortunately unintuitive and unattractive, is ANT+Sport interoperable but uses web-based Timex Trainer by TrainingPeaks. We also thought the watch itself and the system lacked some of the flexibility of the **Suunto we've tried out before**, but it is quite a bit less costly. Water resistant to 100 meters and with a user-replaceable battery that can run for up to 3.5 years, Timex's Race Trainer is definitely a good way to monitor your physical activity.



But for those who think exercise is for sissies, who are too busy climbing mountains and fighting panthers to think about jogging... well, Timex has you covered too. The very cool **Timex Expedition WS4** takes up a lot of wrist space, but assumes that you won't have or need a computer out in the jungle or backcountry or Tibetan hut. This thing is extremely rugged, and we liked the bright orange wrist strap that made us feel like we couldn't lose the watch if we tried. Bright light from the Indiglo system and 50m water resistance rounded out a package that offer unique features that we weren't sure we needed but ended up saving our lives more than once. And that's only a slight exaggeration.

Offering a compass, altimeter, thermometer, and barometer, we tried it out in several conditions and were impressed by the accuracy and enjoyed the easy-to-read display and good overall feature set. Temperature seemed to be a couple of degrees off, and altimeter readings required a couple of calibrations before we were satisfied with the results. The compass was extremely useful though we had to figure out our declination angle before first use, but was more accurate than **some competitors we've tried!** Our main issue with the watch was that you can't quite get the information displayed precisely how you would like- it would have been nice to be able customize the display a bit more with the desired data in the appropriate spot. The WS4 grabbed attention with it's rectangular face, certainly, and was just plain fun to use. **At \$170**, it's perhaps a bit too pricey for your average city explorer, but any gadget lover will enjoy information at their fingertips. Both Timex timepieces are available online and in stores.