



CYCLOPS LENS

THE DATE MAGNIFIED

The Cyclops lens, which magnifies the date on many watches in the Oyster Perpetual collection, is a Rolex invention dating back to the early 1950s. One of the brand's signature technical and aesthetic features, this innovation makes the date considerably easier to read.

The Cyclops lens, which takes its name from the one-eyed giants of Greek mythology, was patented by Rolex in the early 1950s. It was introduced in 1953 on a Datejust. By magnifying the date in the window on the dial, it offers greatly enhanced legibility for many watches in the Oyster Perpetual collection.

A ROLEX EXCLUSIVITY

In 1955, given success of this innovation, Rolex felt the need to issue a solemn warning to the competition. “To all watchmakers: we draw your attention to the fact that the watch crystal with the specially shaped magnifying lens is a Rolex exclusivity protected in Switzerland and abroad. We will not hesitate to instigate legal proceedings against any counterfeiting,” stated a notice published in the press at the time.

After the Datejust, the GMT-Master and the Day-Date were equipped with the Cyclops lens as of their launch in 1955 and 1956 respectively. With its characteristic domed shape, the Cyclops lens became a salient aesthetic and functional feature. Its use was subsequently extended to all watches in the Oyster Perpetual collection with a date – with the exception of the Rolex Deepsea divers’ watch, for technical reasons.

FROM PLEXIGLAS TO SAPPHIRE

When the Cyclops lens was introduced, the lens and the crystal were a single piece, made of Plexiglas. From the 1970s, Rolex equipped its watches with a virtually scratchproof sapphire crystal. Since then, the Cyclops lens has also been made of sapphire, and is glued to the crystal. It also has a double anti-reflective coating that makes the date even easier to read.