

Talking watch

Watch that informs about time through sound, when required. The sound produced by the watch is a synthesized sound that resembles a human voice. The speakers are loud enough for the user to hear the time. Some talking watches also have the feature to set alarms and dates. The time and date are announced when a user presses a certain button. The physical features of a talking watch include its material, which can be plastic or metal depending on the manufacturer's design; the watch usually also has a larger dial as well as LED lights and colors to illuminate the hands, numbers/dots, and the background of the face, creating a good contrast between all elements to facilitate people with low vision. The talking watch is available in both analog and digital types, and the internal technology of the watch is based on quartz crystals that are battery operated. The talking watch can either have one language or multiple language options, male or female voice option as well as both 12 and 24-hour formats. Talking watches are water resistant and therefore can be also used in extreme weather.

- **Product Classification**

- APL (WHO Assistive Product Priority List): 45 (Watches, talking/touching)
- ISO 9999:2022: 222803 (Clocks and timepieces)

- **Possible configuration variants**

None specified.

- **Possible accessories or optional components**

- Setting of alarms and dates.

- **Product goals**

Activities or functions the product is mainly intended to support, according to WHO ICF Classification:

- Carrying out daily routine [\[d230\]](#).

- **Indicated impairments**

Difficulties the product is mainly intended to address, according to the WHO ICF Classification:

- Seeing [\[b210\]](#) (blindness or severe low vision).
- Fine hand use [\[d440\]](#).

- **Contraindicated impairments**

Difficulties for which the product may be inappropriate:

None specified.

- **Indicated environments**

Specific environments in which the product should be used:

None specified.

- **Contraindicated environments**

Environments in which the product may be inappropriate:

- Meeting rooms or classrooms when a meeting or a class is in progress (the volume may be loud enough to be heard by the other people in the room).

- **Other indicated factors**

Other factors or situations the product is intended to address:

- Knowing the time.

- **Other contraindicated factors**

Other factors or situations in which the product may be inappropriate:
None specified.

- **Points to be considered in product selection**
 - Check the battery quality and life (talking watches are battery-operated quartz watches: it may be difficult for some users to keep changing the battery of their watch frequently after every few months)
 - Check whether a comprehensive operating and user manual is available for the watch, containing instructions on how to properly use and maintain their watches, in the user language or in one of the most popular and widespread languages; a braille or audio recorded version of the manuals may be very useful in some cases.
 - Check whether the operating manual also includes instructions for people who repair the watch when needed.
 - A talking watch should be able to work in all kinds of weather and temperature, especially in territories where rain is frequent or there is extreme cold due to year-round snowfall.
 - A talking watch should be resistant to water and shocks.
 - Consider whether a talking watch is really the most efficient solution, or a smart phone having built-in feature of announcing time to users might be more useful; phones with voice recognition features may also allow users with sight impairment to ask their phone about the time and get a voice response.
 - A technological advancement of present times is the emergence of smart phones that have a built-in feature of announcing time to users. As the phones also have a voice recognition feature, a user with vision impairment can ask their phone to tell the time, which will respond by announcing the time. With the increased use of smart phones all over the world, the use of talking or touching watches and even other watches is decreasing.
- **Points to be considered in product fitting**
 - Users need to learn the methods of operation of the talking watch so they must be trained to use it effectively.
- **Points to be considered in product use**
 - Users need to learn to re-set the watch for local time zones.
- **Points to be considered in product maintenance / follow-up**
 - A user manual, preferably in braille, should be provided to users when they buy the watch, so they could learn instructions for setting up and using the watch safely. Instructions, such as how to maintain the watch, how to keep it clean and safe, usage patterns that prolong battery life, and when to go for battery replacement, should be clearly communicated.
- **Examples of products available on the market**
 - Live product search in the EASTIN website <https://www.eastin.eu/en/searches/products/list?iso=222803>

Source

This Fact Sheet was compiled in 2021 by an international team of experts, to provide the initial knowledge base for a project ("An online system to assist the selection of assistive product") supported by the World Health Organization in 2020-2021 within the GATE Initiative (Global collaboration on Assistive Product). Fact Sheets were compiled for each of the 50 types of products included in the WHO APL (Assistive Product Priority List).

The team was composed of Renzo Andrich (Italy, group leader), Natasha Layton (Australia), Stefan von Prondzinski (Italy), Jerry Weisman (USA), Silvana Contepomi (Argentina) and Hasan Minto (Pakistan).

The project led to a prototype online tool called ASPREX (ASsistive PProduct EXplorer). At the end of the project, it was transferred to a WHO collaborating center (the Global Disability Hub in the UK), in view of possible future developments.