Identification Guide: Chinese Mechanical Movements

Chinese mechanical movements were previously exclusive to replica watches but are now gaining widespread use in legitimate brands such as Fossil and Kenneth Cole.

These movements do not have a caliber number stamp on the back of the movement, which can make for difficult identification for replacement purposes. Although the caliber number is not present, the caliber numbers the Chinese vendors use for these movements has become fairly standardized. For example, DG2812 from any vendor should be an automatic movement with three hands and date. This is the most commonly used Chinese movement seen in replica Rolex Datejust models.

Identification Steps:

1. Identify the characteristics and functions of the movement
2. Automatic or manual wind
3. Diameter and thickness in millimeters
4. Number of hands - 2/3/4
5. Number of eyes - 1/2/3/4, position(3/6/9/12 o’clock), function
6. Any other unique characteristic
   a. Date/date/month/year position
   b. Moon/sun dial
   c. Large date
   d. Exposed balance
   e. Skeleton
   f. Etc.
7. Identify the movement build from the back side of the movement
   a. If two Chinese movements have the same size and function but are not the same mechanical build, THEY CANNOT INTERCHANGE
      i. The dial feet, hand size, and calendar/eye positions will differ – creating a challenging project requiring more resources
      ii. For example, DG2812, TY2806, and ST6D are all similar size, 3 hand, date at 3 o’clock automatic Chinese movements, but they cannot interchange.
   b. Confirm that visible bridges (especially the balance bridge), jewels and wheels are oriented the same as the original movement
8. Match the functions and the mechanical build, and you have a perfect match

Caveats:

- Do not judge a movement build by the rotor, as rotor design is ornamental with these movements
- Calendar date discs may be glued on top of an original disc. If the characteristics and build are the same but calendar spacing is off, look for a glued disc on top of the original disc – the top disc will have to be removed and applied to the new movement – verify the calendar spacing as there may be challenges if the top disc is damaged.