



Why the insider's 'vintage' G-Shock of choice is the £200 DW- 8300

The Casio G-Shock DW-8300 'Stargate' (AKA the 'Gundam' or 'Heavy Metal') is a watch from 1995 with a cult following...

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Since its inception in the mind of Casio's head of watch design, Kikuo Ibe, in 1981, the G-Shock has become a gateway to watch collecting. While the latest releases generate plenty of interest, some accruing high resale values, nearly 40 years of production means that "vintage" G-Shocks are very much a thing. And if the watch can also tie into one or more pop culture references, so much the better.

The original DW-5000C was neither small nor skinny, embodying the "triple ten" development concept of ten metres' fall resistance, ten bar water resistance and ten-year battery life, but the watches of the mid 1990s seriously piled on the pounds. The December 1995 model, DW-8300, added a huge metal case front surrounding the classic rectangular digital display. Safeguarding this was an enlarged set of resin bumpers, taking the dimensions up to 56.7 x 53.3 x 19.7mm. Casio's European distributor dubbed this watch the "Heavy Metal" for obvious reasons.



Yet despite its hulking appearance, the watch is both comfortable and stable on the wrist due to a pair of resin wings that protrude down from the underside edge of the top and bottom of the case and grip the wrist as the strap is fastened. Type DW-8300 into Google and the other nickname for the watch becomes apparent. It seems that the props manager for the TV series *Stargate SG-1* felt that the “Heavy Metal” looked both futuristic enough to be standard equipment for Stargate Command personnel as well as tough enough to withstand instantaneous travel across the cosmos.



If *Stargate SG-1* is the cultural link for the West, the DW-8300 inherits another nickname from its 1994 predecessor, the DW-6400, that is: “Gundam”. Predating Casio’s G-Shock range by a couple of years *Mobile Suit Gundam* is a Japanese anime series that still runs today. Featuring giant fighting robotic exosuits, *Mobile Suit Gundam* created a new genre in anime and spawned numerous copycat films and series. The DW-6400, although not an official collaboration, was said to look like the head of a “mecha” (robot) and the subsequent DW-8300, with its similar looks, inherited the name. As you might have expected, Casio went on to produce official branded watches to celebrate later anniversaries of the series.



Whether as a Stargate troopers' trusty companion or the head of a machine, these outsize Casios are huge fun. The other appeal is the price; despite their “collectible” status these watches can easily be found for £200, often far below.

Even with collecting on a budget, however, condition is everything. You need to be sure that your DW-8300 has no missing LCD segments or bleeds to the screen and that the strap is flexible and without splits. The original box is a nice touch, but if you are going to use and abuse this digital behemoth, hardly necessary.