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Worth It or Not: A Shopping Guide

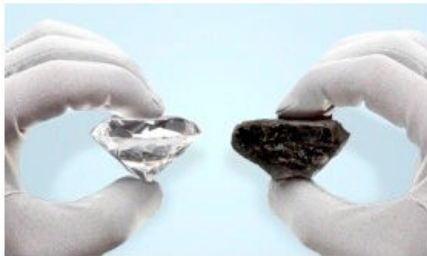
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We've all been there, standing in the aisle of a store, spending way too much time weighing the small differences between two similar products. Are the knives with the carbon steel blades really worth the extra \$30? Will the more expensive weed wacker stay sharp longer? When it comes to a croquet set, is \$220 too much, too little, or just right?



BlueMax Sunrise System Model 200

Light-Emitting Alarm Clocks

Worth It

The light on the BlueMax Sunrise System Model 200 by Full Spectrum Solutions (\$129) is intended to simulate dawn, helping the body wake up more naturally. The clock can begin emitting light between 15 and 90 minutes before the desired wake-up time and gradually gets brighter. Heavy sleepers have an optional backup alarm sound. The Model 200 also comes with a choice of light bulbs to mimic morning or midday light.

Not Worth It



Philips Wake-Up Light

The good-looking Philips Wake-Up Light (\$170) offers five optional sounds: birds, chimes, African jungle, standard beep or digital FM radio. But its basic display doesn't show the date, and the timing of the light can't be customized; it goes on a half hour before your desired wake-up time. The company says 30 minutes is ideal for people who want to feel rested and energized every morning.