



1



2

- 1 Technische Zeichnung, Normblatt für Zifferblätter, 1952, Auftrag: Uhrenfabrik W. Moser Baer AG, Sumiswald, CH, Donation: Schweizerische Bundesbahnen SBB, Bern, CH. Abbildung: Museum für Gestaltung / ZHdK.
- 2 Elektronische Armbanduhr, Stop2Go, 2013, Produktion: Mondaine Watch Ltd. Zürich, CH, Donation: Mondaine Watch Ltd. Zürich, CH. Abbildung: Museum für Gestaltung / ZHdK.

The Official Swiss Railways Clock isn't just a symbol of the railway system's punctuality; it is also an engineering achievement as well as a highly efficient means of visual communication. Passengers rushing by automatically adjust their pace to the big red circular second hand when entering a station.

Hans Hilfiker (1901–1993) worked at the SBB as an engineer and deputy head of the construction department. At the beginning of his tenure there, in 1932, he developed a public clock for the Bahnhofplatz outside Zurich's main railway station, his debut as a creative engineer with a feeling for corporate design. In 1944, the SBB standardized their clock faces and synchronized their timekeeping. As the timetable uses only whole minutes, station clocks could be driven by a shared system, receiving each minute an electric impulse from the central master clock via the telephone network. In 1943, Hilfiker began testing for the SBB an electrically operated station clock with a red second hand. In 1952 he designed the clock face launched in 1955, which to this day remains unchanged. Recalling the red signaling disk used by train

crews, the second hand indicates to rushing passengers the time left for boarding as a circle segment. When the hand reaches twelve o'clock, it pauses for a second and a half—the minute hand then jumps forward and sets the trains in motion. The SBB uses the station clock with its red second hand in thousands of locations, and it is legally protected as a registered trademark. In 1986, the SBB granted watchmakers Mondaine in Zurich the license to transfer the Official Swiss Railways Clock to the wrist as the "Official Swiss Railway Watch," which since 2013 also features electronically controlled second-hand movement. Apple was so taken with the clock as a global design icon that it integrated its circular second hand into the world clock on its iPads in 2012. Meanwhile, the familiar clock at every Swiss station continues to faithfully attest to the punctuality of the SBB. (Renate Menzi)

SBB Bahnhofsuhr, 1944
Design: Hans Hilfiker, Ingenieur und SBB Mitarbeiter
Herstellung: Uhrenfabrik W. Moser Baer AG, Sumiswald, CH
Produktion: Schweizerische Bundesbahnen SBB, Bern, CH
Material/Technik: Leichtmetall mit Hammerschlag-Lackierung (Gehäuse)
87 x 28 cm
Donation: Schweizerische Bundesbahnen SBB, Bern, CH

Eigentum: Museum für Gestaltung Zürich / ZHdK

<https://www.eguide.ch/en/objekt/sbb-bahnhofsuhr/>