

## Buy a rainbow Swatch, get a three-year jail term in Malaysia

MARK FRAUENFELDER / 10:13 AM THU AUG 10, 2023



Image: Swatch

The Swiss watchmaker Swatch produces a variety of rainbow-themed wristwatches. The Malaysian government announced today that anyone who buys or sells one could face up to three years in jail. According to an [NBC News report](#), the government has deemed LGBTQ-themed Swatch products as "potentially harmful to morality."

The Malaysian Interior Ministry's official Facebook page made the announcement today, saying rainbow Swatches may harm ... the interests of the nation by promoting, supporting, and normalizing the LGBTQ+ movement that is not accepted by the general public in Malaysia."

From [The Guardian](#):

Malaysia's law enforcement unit at the interior ministry **raided Swatch stores at 11 shopping malls** across the country in May, including in the capital, Kuala Lumpur, for timepieces bearing what it called "LGBT elements".

Anyone who "prints, imports, produces ... or has in his possession" such items faces a jail term of up to three years, the ministry said in a statement on Thursday. Any individual wearing or distributing the watches could also be fined 20,000 Malaysian ringgit (£3,425), according to the ban notice.

"The Malaysian government is committed to preventing the spread of elements that are harmful or may be harmful to morals," the ministry said in a statement.

In response to the raid Swatch filed a lawsuit against the Malaysian government in June, arguing that the watches "did not promote any sexual activity but were merely a fun and joyous expression of peace and love."

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