

I am new to the hobby. What Metal Detector should I purchase?

By Lee Wiese

This is a question that most of us have asked ourselves and continue to be asked by others interested in joining the hobby. I like many of you have been metal detecting for a while but still find it hard to come up with the best detector for certain types of detecting (coins, jewelry, relics, beach, prospecting) in part because new detectors are constantly becoming available from manufactures.

So again, why is it so hard to answer this question? The detector companies have not made this question easily answered take a look at **TABLE ONE** on the next page. In table one there are 88 detectors from seven detector manufacturers. On the left side of the table a range of detector pricing in \$100 dollar increments is shown for the three groups of detectors: *Multi-Function*, *Water* and *Prospecting*. Placed in each column next to a price range is a detector model (number or name). Also on the left side of the table next to the price range is a RED ARROW pointing downward with the words PRICE, FEATURES, and TECHNOLOGY. Keep in mind: **FEATURES** plus **TECHNOLOGY** equal **PRICE**. This is not a complete list of detectors in the market place but a good representation of what's available.

Why it is so hard to answer the question: "What metal detector should I purchase?"

By looking at **TABLE ONE** you can see there are **many** *Multi-Function* detectors available per given price range and in most cases they will have the same or similar features and capabilities. Also there is a good deal of price spread per detector company - as the price goes up for a given company's detectors so do the number of features and usually performance capability. Features certainly can add to overall performance but can also make the detector much more complex to setup, to operate, and to learn for the average person. *Multi-Function* detector enhancements come in the form of adding a display, more features by using software and hardware switches, and the ability to change to different size or functional coils. (Note: *Multi-Function* detectors can be any combination of coin, jewelry, relic beach, & prospecting detectors.

The criteria used to select your first *Multi-Function* detector may follow along this line of reasoning. You should first decide how frequent you will use the detector; don't spend big bucks and have an expensive detector in the closet.

- a) If you are going to use the detector for vacation plus an occasional weekend keep your decision focused on a price range of \$100-\$400 or lower and compare the feature sets between manufactures to find the best detector fit for you.
- b) If you are going to get into the hobby and use the detector more frequently you might place your attention on detectors in the \$500-\$800+ price ranges. Greater research on your part must take place by comparing feature sets between detectors and companies to identify a match for your detecting needs.
- c) If you are very serious about the hobby you may want to look at detectors in the \$800 - \$1,900 ranges. You will find a large number of technological driven detecting features. These detectors tend to be more complex, the learning curve much longer but over time the quality of targets recovered can be very good to excellent.

Water detectors are driven more by TECHNOLOGY (See RED ARROW) than features. There are detecting features but they tend to be limited to a certain feature set among the detector companies. The decision to purchase a *Water* detector is a bit easier since there are fewer available choices. The major decision factors for a *Water* detector are price, company, and whether you want a Pulse Induction (PI), Very Low Frequency (VLF) or a Multi-frequency technology detector.

Prospecting detectors are usually design specifically to look for Gold. The decision to purchase a *Prospecting* detector will hinge on frequency of use, performance required and price. Usually Gold *Prospecting* is the major and only reason to purchase this type of detector. Some of the Multi-function detectors have a prospecting mode and in with these *Multi-Function* detectors you get to try your hand at prospecting.

In summary give consideration to the following before laying out cash for your first detector. How **frequently** am I going to use the detector? What **type** of detecting (coins, jewelry, relics, water, prospecting) am I going to use the detector for? How much money should I **plan** to spend?

Once you have answered these questions move forward with your research. Compare detector specifications between companies, seek out a metal detecting club in your area and ask questions, ask a friend in the hobby, visit metal detecting forums on the web and ask questions, visit your local metal detector dealer and seek out their advice. Remember everyone

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you ask will be bias toward their specific detector and company. I hope this provides some insight into the complexity of answering the question: *"What metal detector should I purchase?"*

Table One		Hobby Metal Detectors					
Multi-Function *	Bounnty Hunter 26 Models	Tesoro 12 Models	Teknetics 15 Models	Garrett 12 Models	White's 14 Models	Fisher 17 Models	Minelab 17 Models
List Price Range							
0\$ - \$99.99	Gold Digger Junior - BHJS						
\$100 - \$199.99	Prospector Fast Tracker Tracker II Tracker IV Quick Silver Commando Lone Star Lone Star PRO Discovery 1100 Pioneer® EX	Compadre	Digitek Eurotek Alpha 2000	ACE 150 ACE™ 200	Coinmaster® XVenture	F11	Go-Find 20 Go-Find 40
\$200 - \$299.99	Quick Draw II Quick Draw PRO Gold Discovery 2200 Pioneer® 202	Silver Umax Mojave	Eurotek Pro Delta 4000 Minuteman	ACE 250 ACE™ 300	Treasure Master	F-2 F22	
\$300 - \$399.99	Land Star Sharp Shooter II Titanium Discovery 3300 Pioneer® 505		Liberator	ACE 350 ACE™ 400	Treasure Master Pro	F-44	Go-Find 60
\$400 - \$499.99	Land Ranger Pro	Cibola	Gamma 6000 Patriot			F-4	X-Terra 305
\$500 - \$599.99	Camo-LS	De Leon Golden Umax Vaquero	Omega 8500		M5 M6	F-5	
\$600 - \$699.99	Platinum Time Ranger	Outlaw -3 Coils Tejon	G2 Plus				X-Terra 505
\$700 - \$799.99			T2			F-70	
\$800 - \$899.99		Cortes	T2 LTD		MXT™ Pro	F19 Series	
\$900 - \$999.99						CZ-3D	X-Terra 705
\$1,000 - \$1,099.99				GTI 2500	Spectra VX3		
\$1,200 - \$1,299.00						F-75	
\$1,300 - \$1,399.00					Spectra V3i Std		
\$1,400 - \$1,499.99						F-75 LTD	Safari
\$1,600 - \$1,699.99					Spectra V3i Wireless		
\$1,800 - \$1,899.99							E-Trac
\$3,200 - \$3,299.99							CTX 3030
Water							
\$600 - \$699.99				AT PRO			
\$700 - \$799.99		Tiger Shark Sand Shark PI		Sea Hunter Mark II	MX Sport		
\$800 - \$899.99				AT MAX	Surf PI Dual Field	1280X-10"	
\$1,700 - \$1,799.99						CZ-21-10"	
\$1,900 - \$1,999.99							Excalibur II
Prospecting							
\$500 - \$599.99						Gold Bug	
\$600 - \$699.99						Gold Bug Pro	
\$700 - \$799.99		Lobo		AT Gold	GMT	Gold Bug DP	Gold Monster 1000
\$800 - \$899.99						Gold Bug II	
\$1,000 - \$1,099.99					TDI™ SL 7.5 or 12		
\$1,100 - \$1,199.99							X-Terra 705 Gold Pack
\$1,200 - \$1,299.99							Eureka Gold
\$2,400 - \$2,499.99				ATX			
\$4,000 - \$4,999.99							SDC 2300
\$6,200 - \$6,299.99							GPX-4500
\$6,900 - \$6,999.99							GPX-5000
\$12,000 - \$13,000							GPZ 7000

Updated: 06-25-2017

Metal Detecting Hobby Talk @ <http://www.mdhtalk.org>

Due to space limitation not all detector-manufacturing companies have been listed in the above table. Data for this table came from manufacturer's web sites and select retailers.

* Multi-Function detectors can be any combination of (coin, jewelry, beach, prospecting and relic detectors)