# IPC Section 254: Delivery of coin as genuine which, when first possessed, the deliverer did not know to be altered.

Section 254 of the Indian Penal Code (IPC) addresses a specific scenario involving the delivery of an altered coin: where the person delivering the coin was initially unaware of its alteration but subsequently discovers the alteration before delivering it. This section highlights the importance of good faith and transparency in financial transactions, even when dealing with coins that have been tampered with. The following explanation will explore the intricacies of Section 254, analyzing its key components, the prescribed punishment, and its relationship with other relevant sections of the IPC.  
  
\*\*Detailed Explanation of Section 254:\*\*  
  
The core elements of Section 254 can be broken down as follows:  
  
1. \*\*"Delivery of coin as genuine:"\*\* This phrase implies that the coin is presented or represented as a legitimate, unaltered piece of currency. The delivery must occur under the pretense of the coin being in its original, unaltered state. This doesn't necessarily require explicit statements of genuineness; it can also be inferred from the context of the transaction. For example, using the coin for payment implies a representation of its unaltered status.  
  
2. \*\*"which, when first possessed, the deliverer did not know to be altered:"\*\* This clause introduces the crucial element of initial ignorance. The section specifically addresses situations where the person delivering the coin was initially unaware of its alteration. This distinguishes it from situations where a person knowingly delivers an altered coin, which would fall under Section 250 (Delivery of coin, possessed with knowledge that it is altered). This clause emphasizes the importance of the deliverer's \*mens rea\* (criminal intent) at the time of initial possession. The prosecution must prove that the accused was genuinely unaware of the coin's altered state when they first acquired it.  
  
3. \*\*"the deliverer subsequently discovers such alteration":\*\* This is the pivotal point of the offense. The deliverer, at some point after acquiring the coin, becomes aware of its alteration. This discovery triggers a legal and ethical obligation to disclose the alteration to the recipient.  
  
4. \*\*"delivers the same as genuine":\*\* This highlights the deceptive act. Despite discovering the alteration, the deliverer proceeds to deliver the coin as if it were genuine and unaltered. This act of concealment, the deliberate omission of crucial information that would influence the recipient's decision to accept the coin, constitutes the offense.  
  
\*\*"altered":\*\* This term, as used in Section 254, encompasses any unauthorized modification to the coin's characteristics, potentially with deceptive intent. This could involve:  
 \* \*\*Diminishing weight:\*\* Reducing the weight, and therefore the value, of the coin, often by clipping or filing.  
 \* \*\*Altering composition:\*\* Changing the metallic composition of the coin, potentially substituting a precious metal with a base metal.  
 \* \*\*Altering appearance:\*\* Modifying the visual features of the coin to deceive, such as plating it with a different metal.  
  
\*\*Punishment under Section 254:\*\*  
  
Section 254 prescribes a punishment of imprisonment for a term which may extend to six months, or with fine which may extend to one thousand rupees, or with both. This relatively lesser punishment compared to other counterfeiting offenses reflects the specific circumstance of the deliverer's initial ignorance. However, it underscores the importance of honesty and disclosure in financial dealings, even when dealing with altered coins.  
  
\*\*Difference from other related offenses:\*\*  
  
\* \*\*Section 250 (Delivery of coin, possessed with knowledge that it is altered):\*\* This section deals with knowingly delivering an altered coin. Section 254 specifically addresses the situation where the deliverer was initially unaware of the alteration.  
  
\* \*\*Section 252 (Possession of coin by person who knew it to be altered when he became possessed thereof):\*\* This section deals with knowingly possessing an altered coin. Section 254 deals with delivering a coin initially believed to be genuine but later discovered to be altered.  
  
\* \*\*Sections related to counterfeiting (e.g., Sections 231-238):\*\* These sections deal with creating entirely counterfeit coins, while Section 254 pertains to delivering altered coins initially believed to be genuine.  
  
  
\*\*Illustrative Example:\*\*  
  
A person receives a coin as change from a shopkeeper. They initially believe it to be genuine. Later, they realize the coin has been clipped. If they then use this clipped coin to purchase something from another vendor without disclosing its altered state, they are liable under Section 254.  
  
\*\*Evidentiary Considerations:\*\*  
  
\* \*\*Proof of initial ignorance:\*\* Demonstrating that the accused was genuinely unaware of the alteration when they first received the coin.  
\* \*\*Evidence of subsequent discovery:\*\* Establishing that the accused became aware of the alteration before delivering the coin.  
\* \*\*Proof of delivery as genuine:\*\* Showing that the accused delivered the coin without disclosing its altered state.  
  
  
  
\*\*Conclusion:\*\*  
  
Section 254 of the IPC emphasizes the importance of transparency and good faith in financial transactions, even when dealing with altered coins. It criminalizes the act of delivering an altered coin even when the deliverer was initially unaware of its altered state, but subsequently discovered it and chose to remain silent. This section serves as a deterrent against deceitful practices and emphasizes the responsibility of individuals to disclose crucial information in financial dealings, ensuring fairness and preventing economic harm. The provision caters to a specific niche within the broader framework of offenses relating to altered currency and promotes honest financial interactions within society.