



U.S. CURRENCY
EDUCATION
PROGRAM

Cashier Toolkit



A GUIDE TO IDENTIFYING
GENUINE CURRENCY



What is the Cashier Toolkit?

WHO WE ARE

Managed by the Federal Reserve Board, the U.S. Currency Education Program ensures the integrity of and trust in the U.S. dollar by providing information and training resources to the public. We work with our interagency partners to maintain global cash users' confidence in the U.S. dollar.

WHAT THIS IS ABOUT

This guide, published in 2021, is a training resource for cashiers (and other professionals) who need to learn how to authenticate Federal Reserve notes. The following information can be used to determine whether currency is genuine. If cashiers suspect that they have come across a counterfeit note, they should follow their company's counterfeit-reporting procedures or direct their manager to the counterfeit-reporting instructions at uscurrency.gov/report-counterfeit.

WHAT WE DO

- Educate cashiers and businesses about the security and design features of Federal Reserve notes.
- Provide free resources for training and educating cashiers on how to identify and authenticate genuine U.S. currency.

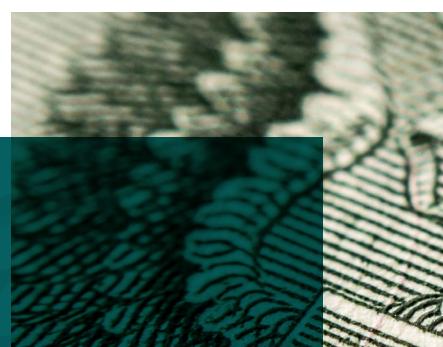
QUICK GUIDES

Print our [Quick Reference Card](#) at the end of this toolkit to place by cashiers' workspaces or keep for future reference.

JUMP TO QUICK REFERENCE CARD



Print the Quick Reference Card
for at-a-glance guidance on
authenticating U.S. currency.



Is that authentic currency?

**ALL U.S. CURRENCY
REMAINS LEGAL TENDER,
REGARDLESS OF WHEN
IT WAS ISSUED.**

DETAILS FOR CASHIERS

ABOUT SPECIFIC DENOMINATIONS

The U.S. government redesigns currency to enhance the security of banknotes, but it's not necessary to trade in your older-design notes for new ones. All U.S. currency remains legal tender, regardless of when it was issued. No matter how technologically advanced a note's security features are, your help continues to be the best line of defense against counterfeiting.



THE \$100 NOTE



THE \$50 NOTE



THE \$20 NOTE



THE \$10 NOTE



THE \$5 NOTE



Know the \$100 Note.



KNOW ITS FEATURES. KNOW IT'S REAL. THE \$100 NOTE INCORPORATES TWO DISTINCTIVE ADVANCED SECURITY FEATURES — The 3-D security ribbon and the color-shifting bell in the inkwell. Issued 2013. Click the following links to view the security and design features of older-design \$100 notes: [1996-2013](#), [1990-1996](#), and [1914-1990](#).



A 3-D SECURITY RIBBON

Tilt the note back and forth while focusing on the blue ribbon. You will see the bells change to 100s as they move. When you tilt the note back and forth, the bells and 100s move side to side. If you tilt it side to side, they move up and down. The ribbon is woven into the paper, not printed on it.

B BELL IN THE INKWELL

Tilt the note to see the color-shifting bell in the copper inkwell change from copper to green, an effect which makes the bell seem to appear and disappear within the inkwell.

C PORTRAIT WATERMARK

Hold the note to light and look for a faint image of Benjamin Franklin in the blank space to the right of the portrait. The image is visible from both sides of the note.

D COLOR-SHIFTING INK

Tilt the note to see the numeral 100 in the lower right corner of the front of the note shift from copper to green.

E SECURITY THREAD

Hold the note to light to see an embedded thread running vertically to the left of the portrait. The thread is imprinted with the letters USA and the numeral 100 in an alternating pattern and is visible from both sides of the note. The thread glows pink when illuminated by ultraviolet light.

OTHER SECURITY FEATURES

RAISED PRINTING

Move your finger up and down Benjamin Franklin's shoulder on the left side of the note. It should feel rough to the touch, a result of the enhanced intaglio printing process used to create the image. Traditional raised printing can be felt throughout the \$100 note and gives genuine Federal Reserve notes their distinctive texture.

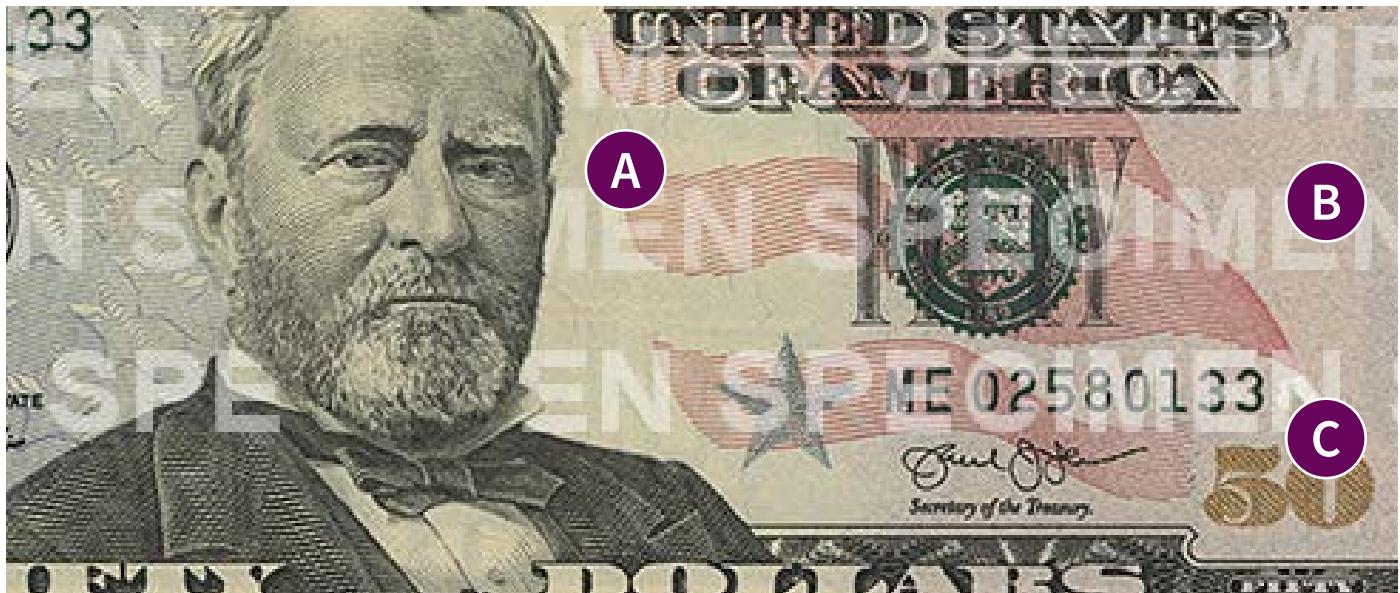
MICROPRINTING

Look carefully (magnification may be necessary) to see the small printed text THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA in Benjamin Franklin's jacket collar, USA 100 around the blank space containing the portrait watermark, ONE HUNDRED USA along the golden quill, and small 100s in the note borders.

Know the \$50 Note.



KNOW ITS FEATURES. KNOW IT'S REAL. THE \$50 NOTE HAS THREE KEY SECURITY FEATURES THAT ARE EASY TO CHECK — a security thread, portrait watermark, and color-shifting numeral 50. Issued 2004. Click the following links to view the security and design features of older-design \$50 notes: [1997-2004](#), [1990-1997](#), and [1914-1990](#).



A SECURITY THREAD

Hold the note to light to see an embedded thread running vertically to the right of the portrait. The thread is imprinted with the text USA 50 and a small flag in an alternating pattern and is visible from both sides of the note. The thread glows yellow when illuminated by ultraviolet light.

B PORTRAIT WATERMARK

Hold the note to a light and look for a faint image of President Grant in the blank space to the right of the portrait. The image is visible from both sides of the note.

C COLOR-SHIFTING INK

Tilt the note to see the numeral 50 in the lower right corner on the front of the note shift from copper to green.

OTHER SECURITY FEATURES

RAISED PRINTING

Move your finger along the note's surface to feel the raised printing, which gives genuine Federal Reserve notes their distinctive texture.

MICROPRINTING

Look carefully (magnification may be necessary) to see the small printed text FIFTY, USA, and 50 inside two of the blue stars to the left of the portrait, FIFTY repeated within both side borders of the note, and THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA in President Grant's collar.

Know the \$20 Note.



KNOW ITS FEATURES. KNOW IT'S REAL. THE \$20 NOTE HAS THREE KEY SECURITY FEATURES THAT ARE EASY TO CHECK — a security thread, portrait watermark, and color-shifting numeral 20. Issued 2003. Click the following links to view the security and design features of older-design \$20 notes: [1998-2003](#), [1990-1998](#), and [1914-1990](#).



A SECURITY THREAD

Hold the note to light to see an embedded thread running vertically to the left of the portrait. The thread is imprinted with the text USA TWENTY and a small flag in an alternating pattern and is visible from both sides of the note. The thread glows green when illuminated by ultraviolet light.

B PORTRAIT WATERMARK

Hold the note to light and look for a faint image of President Jackson in the blank space to the right of the portrait. The image is visible from both sides of the note.

C COLOR-SHIFTING INK

Tilt the note to see the numeral 20 in the lower right corner of the front of the note shift from copper to green.

OTHER SECURITY FEATURES

RAISED PRINTING

Move your finger along the note's surface to feel the raised printing, which gives genuine Federal Reserve notes their distinctive texture.

MICROPRINTING

Look carefully (magnification may be necessary) to see the small printed text USA20 along the border of the first three letters of the blue TWENTY USA ribbon to the right of the portrait and THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA 20 USA 20 in black in the border below the Treasurer's signature.

Know the \$10 Note.



KNOW ITS FEATURES. KNOW IT'S REAL. THE \$10 NOTE HAS THREE KEY SECURITY FEATURES THAT ARE EASY TO CHECK — a security thread, portrait watermark, and color-shifting numeral 10. Issued 2006. Click the following links to view the security and design features of older-design \$10 notes: [2000-2006](#), [1990-2000](#), and [1914-1990](#).



A SECURITY THREAD

Hold the note to light to see an embedded thread running vertically to the right of the portrait. The thread is imprinted with the text USA TEN and a small flag in an alternating pattern and is visible from both sides of the note. The thread glows orange when illuminated by ultraviolet light.

B PORTRAIT WATERMARK

Hold the note to light and look for a faint image of Secretary Hamilton in the blank space to the right of the portrait. The image is visible from both sides of the note.

C COLOR-SHIFTING INK

Tilt the note to see the numeral 10 in the lower right corner of the front of the note shift from copper to green.

OTHER SECURITY FEATURES

RAISED PRINTING

Move your finger along the note's surface to feel the raised printing, which gives genuine Federal Reserve notes their distinctive texture.

MICROPRINTING

Look carefully (magnification may be necessary) to see the small printed text THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA and TEN DOLLARS USA below the portrait and inside the borders of the note and USA 10 repeated beneath the torch.

Know the \$5 Note.



KNOW ITS FEATURES. KNOW IT'S REAL. THE \$5 NOTE HAS THREE KEY

SECURITY FEATURES THAT ARE EASY TO CHECK

— a column of three small numeral 5 watermarks, security thread, and large numeral 5 watermark. Issued 2008. Click the following links to view the security and design features of older-design \$5 notes: [2000-2008](#), [1993-2000](#), and [1914-1993](#).



A SMALL NUMERAL 5 WATERMARK

Hold the note to light and look for a faint image of three numeral 5s to the left of the portrait. The image is visible from both sides of the note.

B SECURITY THREAD

Hold the note to light to see an embedded thread running vertically to the right of the portrait. The thread is imprinted with the letters USA and the numeral 5 in an alternating pattern and is visible from both sides of the note. The thread glows blue when illuminated by ultraviolet light.

C LARGE NUMERAL 5 WATERMARK

Hold the note to light and look for a faint image of a large numeral 5 in the blank space to the right of the portrait. The image is visible from both sides of the note.

OTHER SECURITY FEATURES

RAISED PRINTING

Move your finger along the note's surface to feel the raised printing, which gives genuine Federal Reserve notes their distinctive texture.

MICROPRINTING

Look carefully (magnification may be necessary) to see the small printed text FIVE DOLLARS repeated inside the left and right borders of the note, E PLURIBUS UNUM at the top of the shield within the Great Seal, and USA repeated in between the columns of the shield. On the back of the note the text USA FIVE appears along one edge of the large purple numeral 5.

Tips to Spot Easy-to-Detect Counterfeit Notes

TAKE A QUICK GLANCE AT CURRENCY WHEN YOU RECEIVE IT.

- If it has foreign writing on it, it could be fake.
- If it has “For Motion Picture Use Only” or the word “Replica” on it, it could be fake.

The best way to determine whether a note is genuine is to rely on its security features. If you think you've received a counterfeit note, follow your organization's counterfeit-reporting procedures before notifying your nearest U.S. Secret Service field office.

Additional Cashier Resources

TRAINING COURSE

Take our online [training course](#) designed to help cashiers learn how to spot the security features in U.S. currency. The more you know, the less likely you are to accept counterfeit notes.

U.S. CURRENCY EDUCATION WEBSITE

Visit [uscurrency.gov](#) for more information and training resources on authenticating current and older styles of U.S. currency.

REPORTING A COUNTERFEIT

For more information on how to report counterfeit currency, visit [uscurrency.gov/report-counterfeit](#).

CASH ASSIST MOBILE APP

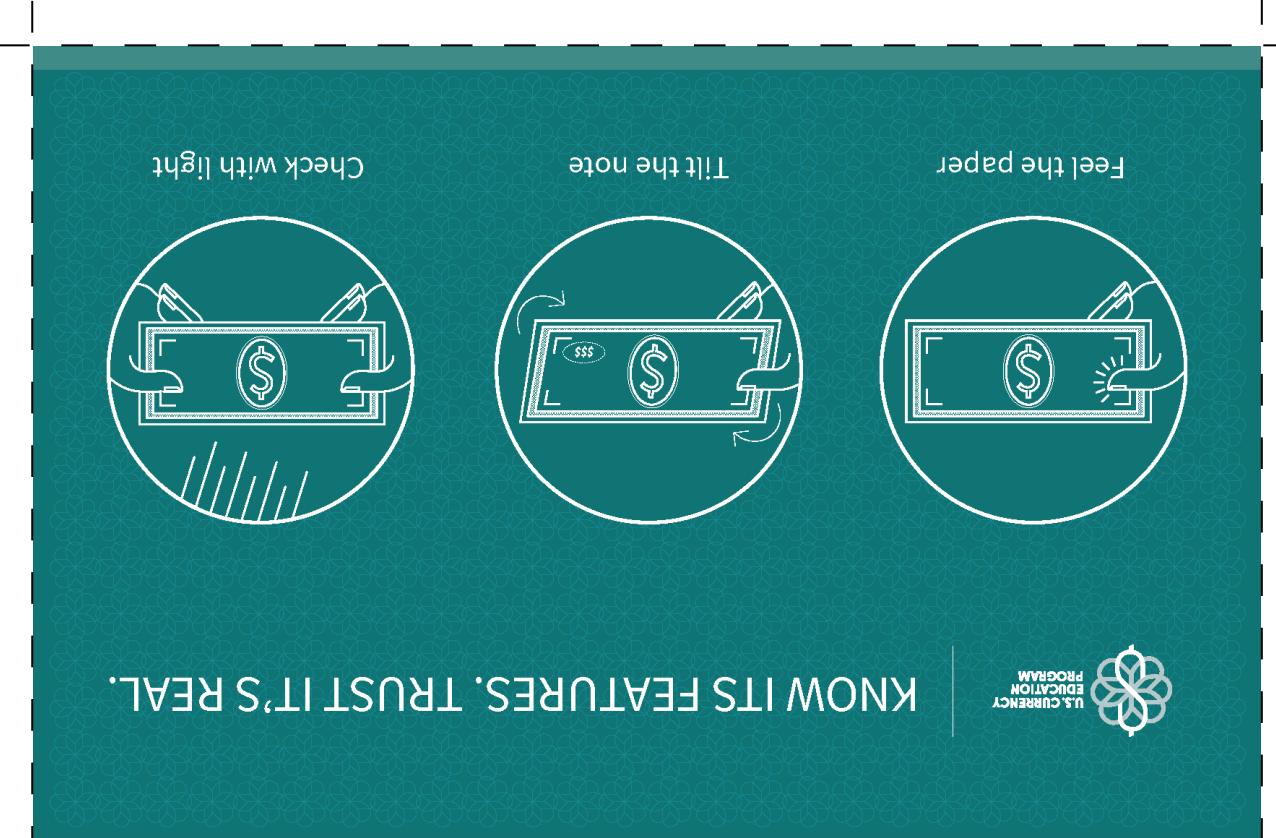
With [Cash Assist's](#) suite of tools, you can learn to quickly locate and understand the security features of the cash in your hands. Use your phone's camera, accelerometer, and more to help you make decisions.

Contact Us

If you have more specific questions, visit [uscurrency.gov/contact-us](#).

Stay connected to us on [Facebook](#), [Twitter](#), [LinkedIn](#), and [YouTube](#) for the latest news and updates.

Print and cut out this Quick Reference Card, fold it down the middle, and keep it handy for at-a-glance guidance on authenticating U.S. currency.



Feel the paper

Move your finger across the note. It should feel slightly rough to the touch as a result of the printing process and the unique composition of the paper.



Tilt the note

Tilt the note to see the ink in the numbers on the lower right corner change color. On the current style of notes, the color should change from copper to green.

- Color-shifting ink appears on denominations \$10 and higher.
- The current style \$100 note includes two additional security features you can check by tilting the note: a color-shifting Bell in the Inkwell and a 3-D Security Ribbon. The 3-D Security Ribbon contains images of bells and 100s that shift as you tilt the note.



Check with light

Hold the note to light to check that the watermark and security thread are visible from the front and back of the note.

- The security thread is in a different location on each denomination \$5 and higher.
- The watermarks on the \$10, \$20, \$50, and \$100 notes should match the portrait on the front of the note. The \$5 note has numeral 5 watermarks.

Visit uscurrency.gov for more information and training resources on authenticating current and older styles of U.S. currency.

Become familiar with your organization's counterfeit-reporting procedures, and follow those procedures if you are uncertain if the banknote you are handling is genuine U.S. currency. Procedures may include notifying your manager, notifying your loss-prevention representative, or calling your local law enforcement authority.