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How To Detect Counterfeit Money

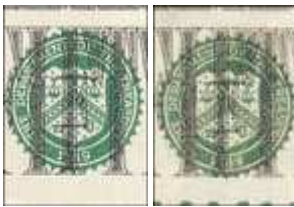
Portrait

The genuine portrait appears lifelike and stands out distinctly from the background. The counterfeit portrait is usually lifeless and flat. Details merge into the background which is often too dark or mottled.



Federal Reserve and Treasury Seals

On a genuine bill, the saw-tooth points of the Federal Reserve and Treasury seals are clear, distinct, and sharp. The counterfeit seals may have uneven, blunt, or broken saw-tooth points.



Border

The fine lines in the border of a genuine bill are clear and unbroken. On the counterfeit, the lines in the outer margin and scrollwork may be blurred and indistinct.



Serial Numbers

Genuine serial numbers have a distinctive style and are evenly spaced. The serial numbers are printed in the same ink color as the Treasury Seal. On a counterfeit, the serial numbers may differ in color or shade of ink from the Treasury seal. The numbers may not be uniformly spaced or aligned.



Paper

Genuine currency paper has tiny red and blue fibers embedded throughout. Often counterfeiters try to simulate these fibers by printing tiny red and blue lines on their paper. Close inspection reveals, however, that on the counterfeit note the lines are printed on the surface, not embedded in the paper. It is illegal to reproduce the distinctive paper used in the manufacturing of United States currency.



Raised Notes (Washed)

Genuine paper currency is sometimes altered in an attempt to increase its face value. One common method is to glue numerals from higher denomination notes to the corners of lower denomination notes.

These bills are also considered counterfeit, and those who produce them are subject to the same penalties as other counterfeiters. If you suspect you are in possession of a raised note:

- Compare the denomination numerals on each corner with the denomination written out at the bottom of the note (front and back) and through the Treasury seal.
- Compare the suspect note to a genuine note of the same denomination and series year, paying particular attention to the portrait, vignette and denomination numerals.

