

Simple Steps to Identifying Counterfeit Currency

Presented by the Idaho Springs Police Department in
Cooperation with the Idaho Springs Chamber of Commerce

Transitions



Transitions



Some Facts

- In 2013 the US Secret Service seized \$89 million in counterfeit bills.
- \$100 and \$20 Bills are the most frequently counterfeited. 20's pass easily but 100's are generally of higher quality.
- Counterfeit money remains a war strategy
- Even banks pass counterfeit bills.

Look and Feel

- U.S. Bank Notes are printed on special paper which is comprised of 75% cotton and 25% linen. The linen provides durability and a degree of stiffness.

Look for the Obvious



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- What is the most obvious indicator that these bills are counterfeit?



Look for the Obvious

- Counterfeit bills, especially those hastily made, often have obvious flaws due to haste or equipment malfunction.



Portrait Watermark

Hold a \$20 Bill or higher denomination to a light and you should see a hologram photograph of that denomination's president in the lower right corner. The \$5 Bill will instead have the number 5 and a series of 5's to the left of Lincoln's head.



Color Shifting Ink

Notes larger than \$5 use color shifting ink to print the number showing the denomination in the lower right hand corner.

For genuine currency the color of the number will shift as you manipulate the bill, fluctuating from copper to green or green to black. The numeral will also have a degree of reflect-ability.



Detecting Fake Color Shifting Ink



The Collar!



- The ridges of the President's collars will feel ridge like as the ink here is raised. Rub your finger tip or fingernail perpendicular to the ridges. If the paper is flat and smooth it is likely the bill is counterfeit.

Watermark

Bills larger than \$2 now have a watermark. \$5 bills printed after 2008 will ~~not have the president's image but a~~ large numeral 5. This is important to determine if a lower denomination bill has been bleached and higher value currency printed on the paper.

The watermark is formed by pressing the paper making the watermark location thinner than the rest of the bill.



Low Tech



High Tech

Compact scanning devices are said to be able to detect magnetic ink used in U.S. Currency.



High Tech



Security Thread

The security thread is incorporated in all bills \$5 and above. Like the watermark you hold the bill up to the light to see it. The thread (which is more a ribbon) will have “USA” and the denomination spelled out.

Each thread will be in a different location and under UV light display a different color.



Old Bills

There are still some old bills around from prior to 1996 when security features were added. It is perfectly acceptable to refuse old bills. Bills that are that old and still in circulation have a greater chance of being counterfeit. You can have any patron simply bring the bill to a bank to exchange it.



What to do if someone passes you a bad bill?

- DO NOT jump over the counter and pin subject to the ground or use force to detain. The passer may be a victim themselves.



Passed a bad bill?

- If you can, call the police but remember you are not expected to take the law into your own hands or take a bad bill.
- If the subjects leave the store abruptly they may very well know they have bogus bills
- Call police, then call your neighbors



BE A GREAT WITNESS!

Take note of the suspects physical appearance, dress, mannerisms, clothing, speech and consumption of candy corn, candy canes, candy . . .
. . Oh, you get it.



References and Credits

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