

# CanadianPMX™

## THE PRECIOUS METALS EXCHANGE

### Canadian Coin & Currency *Coin facts & trivia*

#### **Interesting facts about precious metals:**

- All of the gold mined in the history of the world could fit inside a room just over 20 metres cubed, weighing approximately 165,000 tonnes.
- The largest gold nugget, called the “Welcome Stranger,” was found just under the ground near a tree root in Moliagul, Australia on February 5, 1869, with a net weight of 72.02 kg and a current value of about \$4-million.
- Of the 100,000 people who set off for the Klondike during the Gold Rush of 1896-1899, only about 40,000 arrived and only about 4,000 of those actually found any gold.
- Gold and silver have been accepted as payment for goods and services for more than 5,000 years.
- Coins have been in circulation since about 600 BC with standardized weights and markings, usually with values about equal to the content of gold, silver or bronze.
- Some basic properties of gold (chemical element “Au,” with atomic number 79) include: a melting point of 1064 degrees Centigrade; a boiling point of 2808 degrees Centigrade; a solid density of 19.3g/cm<sup>3</sup> and it does not oxidize in air or water.
- Some of the basic properties of silver (chemical element “Ag,” with atomic number 47) include: a melting point of 961.78 degrees Centigrade; a boiling point of 2162 degrees Centigrade; a solid density of 10.49g/cm<sup>3</sup> and it has the highest electrical conductivity of any metal.

#### **Interesting historical facts about Canadian coins and currency:**

- Due to a shortage of currency in 1685, playing cards signed by the governor of New France passed as a form of currency (also referred to as “card money”), which could later be redeemed for silver coins. This is considered the first paper money in North America.
- Prior to the early 1940s, Canada’s Chartered banks were allowed to print their own bank notes in denominations of \$5 and higher. In some cases, banks issued unusual denominations of \$6, \$7, \$8, and \$9 to be able to use their own notes instead of government notes.
- Canada used the British pound system before adopting the decimal system in 1858.
- In 1858, the Province of Canada issued 20-cent coins. After Confederation, they were recalled and melted in 1870 when the 25-cent coin was chosen as the standard denomination.
- Between 1870 and 1923, Canada had a 25-cent bank note, often referred to as a “shinplaster”
- The first \$2 coin was issued in Newfoundland in 1865 and made of 22K gold. It became legal tender in Canada when Newfoundland joined Canadian Confederation in 1949.
- In 1935, the newly formed Bank of Canada issues its first bank notes in denominations of \$1 to \$1000. Chartered bank notes began to be replaced by Bank of Canada notes.
- Before 1935, Canadian bank notes were about 30 per cent larger in size. In 1935, the dimensions of the bank notes changed to their current size to save taxpayers on the cost of printing.
- 1935 banknotes were issued in both English and French before changing to a bilingual format in 1937.
- The 1937 series Canadian bank notes displayed artistic images of allegorical figures.
- Coins made of base metal began to circulate in the U.S. in 1965 and in Canada in 1968.
- The Gold Maple Leaf coin was first launched in September 1979 as a 1 oz. investment coin. It was .999 pure until 1982, when its purity was raised to .9999, setting a new benchmark for gold bullion coins.
- Canada’s smallest coin denomination is a ½-cent (in Nova Scotia and New Brunswick pre-Canadian Confederation). The coin is still considered legal tender today.
- Canada’s smallest coin (in physical size) is a 25-cent gold coin that weighs 0.5g and measures 11mm in diameter.
- The following lists all denomination coins in Canada – all are legal tender:
  - ½ cent

- 1 cent
- 3 cent
- 5 cent
- 10 cent
- 20 cent
- 25 cent
- 50 cent
- \$1
- \$2
- \$3
- \$4
- \$5
- \$8
- \$10
- \$15
- \$20
- \$25
- \$30
- \$50
- \$75
- \$100
- \$150
- \$175
- \$200
- \$250
- \$300
- \$350
- \$500
- \$2,500
- \$100,000
- \$1 million

**Some of the most valuable coins and bank notes:**

- In 2002, a 1933 U.S. gold double eagle \$20 coin sold at an auction for U.S. \$7.5 million – making world history as the highest price ever paid for a coin.
- The most expensive Canadian coin ever sold was in 2003, when a 1911 Canadian silver dollar was auctioned for \$1 million.
- In 2008, a 1911 Canadian \$500 bill sold at an auction for U.S. \$322,000, making it the most expensive Canadian bank note ever sold.
- In 2007, the Royal Canadian Mint produced the world’s first 100kg, .99999 pure gold bullion coin with a one-million dollar face value.
- Canadian 50-cent coins from 1921 were melted down in 1928. Surviving examples sell for \$25,000 - \$200,000.

**Some notable Canadian coins and bills currently available for purchase from Canadian PMX/Canadian Coin and Currency:**

- \$500 pre-Confederation note
- \$4 bill from 1900
- 1908 coin specimen set
- 20-cent coin from 1858
- 1935 \$25 bill

**Source: Canadian PMX  
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