

How to Spot Rare Coins in Your Coin Jar

Even in the age of the debit card, most of us have a full piggy bank just sitting around and waiting to be smashed open. Did you know that you might have more than only a few bucks rattling around in there, though? Many people have rare coins just sitting around but might not know about it. How are you supposed to distinguish them from the more common ones? Read on to learn some helpful tips that will help you see if you've got rare coins in your coin jar.

Age

Contrary to popular belief, the age of coins is actually one of the more uncommon signs of rarity, but it can still be a useful beginning guide. Generally, age is a more significant factor as long as it's old enough to not be widely circulated anymore. For example, you can probably feel confident that your 1969 penny isn't particularly rare or valuable. On the other hand, if you find an 1804 Draped Bust quarter amongst your collection, you can be sure that's actually worth something more than the metal it's made from. It's not a binding rule, but definitely look for the oldest coins in your jar and do a little research. You never know what you've got until you really look!

Coin Grade

Coin grade is made up of a variety of factors, including coin condition, aesthetics, strike sharpness, luster, and more. As could be expected, the higher the grade, the rarer, and more valuable a coin will be. Dig around your coin jar and look accordingly – but really look. Devoted coin collectors and coin dealers have a close eye, and you'll need to adopt that yourself if you really want to know what's what about your collection. Keep an eye out for any coin that is particularly shiny, clean, undamaged, and well-struck (or well-stamped). Of course, just because some of your coins fall into this category, doesn't mean they're immediately rare. It does give them a better chance, though, as commonly circulated coins tend to be a bit more battered than those that aren't.

Metallic Content

You are more than a sum of your parts, and so are your coins... but it definitely plays a role in their value and rarity. Today, most of our coins are made from lesser metals like bronze, copper, and steel, but older coins were usually made of much more impressive materials like silver and gold. Find a coin made from precious metal, you seriously up the collectability

quotient (and the value!) in your favor. You can't always immediately tell the difference but look to the edge for some clues. If the edge has a solid silver stripe and the coin is pre-Great Depression era, it has a good shot of being made from silver. As for potential gold coins, always give them a good listen. Real gold will give a high-pitched ringing sound while a fake will sound much duller and more subdued.

Double Dies

Double dies are a frequent point of topic in the coin collecting community, and they're something you should be paying attention to should you find one in your coin jar! A double die is a coin that has some, or all its design doubled due to a hub malfunction. It's similar to traditional error coins in that it's an accidental flaw, but it's also significantly rarer because of the creation process. If you combine this with a coin that also has a high shine, has few dents, and is relatively old, you've probably got a real winner on your hands.

Coin Errors

It seems counterintuitive because we've mentioned well-struck coins in good condition tend to be rarer than their counterparts, but coins with errors also tend to be pretty rare and valuable. After all, people love something a little unique! It might be a little challenging to see some errors, especially if you're a new collector, so be sure to give it a good look before tossing any coin off to the side. Even small errors in design and strike could end up making your coin a rather rare find!

Demand

Even an old coin with a unique design and good condition isn't all that rare or valuable if the market has managed to be flooded with them. Demand always has high importance in determining how expensive and unique something is, and coins are no exception. This demand will fluctuate naturally over time as interests change, coins go out of circulation, and as the market composition changes, so you should keep yourself in the loop whenever possible and study up a bit before you do a deep dive into the piggy bank.

Read through everything and think you might have actually spotted something rare? One of the best next steps you can take is to reach out to a reputable coin dealer. They'll more closely evaluate it, give you a little bit more background on the coin, and give you a quote for what it's worth. If you don't have a coin dealer near you, no worries! You can always consult fellow

collectors, go to your next coin show, or, better yet, reach out to us on CoinsForSale.com for a convenient quote on your find's value.

Meta Description: It's spring cleaning time, so maybe it's also time to clear out that change jar you've been holding onto. Curious if any of your spare change has value, though? Read on to learn how you can quickly spot rare coins in your coin jar.