

Ten Questions about U.S. Currency



1

Does the Federal Reserve print money?

No. The Bureau of Engraving and Printing, located in Washington D.C., and Fort Worth, Texas, prints money. Reserve Banks distribute it to the banking system, store it for depository institutions, and ensure enough is in circulation.



31%

2

What's the most common Federal Reserve note in your wallet?



3%



7%



5%



23%



4%



26%

The \$1 bill. Dollar bills represent more than 31% of the more than \$1.1 trillion Federal Reserve notes in circulation. The \$20 bill is most often used for spending and represents about 23% of the total currency in circulation. The \$100 bill is used as a store of value, is mostly held overseas, and represents about 26% of the total.

3

What's the lifespan of a Federal Reserve note?

15 years

4 years

8 years

4 years

5 years

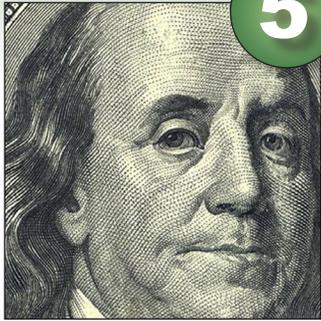
6 years



4

How many notes did Reserve Banks process and shred in 2012?

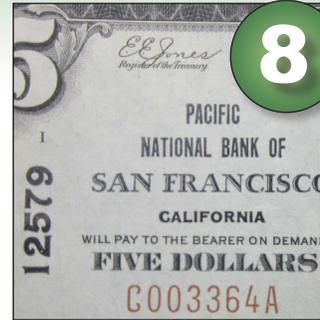
Reserve Banks processed 31.7 billion notes (worth \$581.4 billion) and shredded 4.6 billion notes (worth \$105.5 billion).



5

What's the highest denomination Federal Reserve note in circulation?

Today, the \$100 bill is the highest note in circulation. Following the passage of the Federal Reserve Act in 1913, Federal Reserve Banks began issuing Federal Reserve notes in 1914 in denominations ranging from \$1 to \$10,000. In 1969, notes greater than \$100 were retired due to declining demand.



8

Are Federal Reserve notes the only legal tender?

Federal Reserve notes comprise more than 99 percent of all U.S. currency in circulation; the remainder includes United States notes, national bank notes, and silver certificates, all of which remain legal tender.



6

What's the highest denomination note ever printed?

The \$100,000 Gold Certificate (Series 1934) is the largest note printed (December 18, 1934 through January 9, 1935) by the Bureau of Engraving and Printing. Issued to Reserve Banks only, against an equal amount of gold bullion held by the U.S. Treasury, these notes were used for transactions among Reserve Banks and not circulated publicly.



9

Why is U.S. currency green?

The term "greenback" was first given to 1861 Demand Notes because the backs of these notes were printed with green ink. It is believed that the green ink deterred counterfeiters who used photography as a means of reproduction. The early camera saw everything in shades of black

and white and, as a result, features printed in color lost their individuality when reproduced photographically.

With the introduction of Series 1928, the use of green was continued, most likely because of the strong tradition of using green color on U.S. currency, and the association has continued to the present day.



7

What happens to counterfeit notes?

On July 5, 1865, the U.S. Secret Service was created within the U.S. Treasury with the sole mission of suppressing counterfeit currency. Reserve Banks' high-speed processing machines identify suspect counterfeits as they count currency deposits received from banks. Counterfeits are turned over to the U.S. Secret Service for investigation. Less than 1/100th of one percent of the value of all U.S. currency in circulation is reported as counterfeit.



10

Do women appear on U.S. currency?

Martha Washington's portrait appears on the 1886 \$1 Silver Certificate. Pocahontas, the only other historical female on American currency, appears in the engraving "Introduction of the Old World to the New World," which is featured on several pieces of currency.