

Counterfeit Detection

Copper and Nickel Silver and Gold Coins

Presented by
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Genuine
Serifs of MM are parallel
and extend left.



Counterfeit
Added MM is too large
and has no serifs. Digits
in date are not crisp.



Genuine PCGS 67



Counterfeit



Counterfeit

Learn How to Diagnose a Counterfeit Coin From Mike Faraone

Greedy, dishonest people have been trying to dupe collectors by counterfeiting coins for a long time. Within the past couple years, counterfeit coins, especially those from China, have received increased notoriety. Unfortunately, despite efforts to reduce its incidence, counterfeiting remains a big problem in the rare coin industry.



Avoiding the purchase of a counterfeit coin would seem simple. We are instructed to only buy graded coins, and never buy coins from an unknown source. Yet despite these warnings, the PCGS grading department encounters counterfeit coins on a daily basis.

According to PCGS Grader and Counterfeit Expert Mike Faraone, the key to counterfeit detection is diagnostics. In other words, most coins have peculiarities that the experts need to see in order to determine that a coin is genuine. If these diagnostic characteristics are not present, the chances are very good that the coin is counterfeit.

In this booklet and accompanying video, Mike gives you some important keys to look for, and offers clear comparisons between genuine coins and counterfeits. It is Mike's hope that you use this information to sharpen your knowledge of how genuine coins differ from their counterfeit counterparts, and to help you avoid purchasing a coin that may look genuine, but is actually a fake.

For additional information, order the *Official Guide to Coin Grading and Counterfeit Detection* from PCGS.



**1856 Flying Eagle 1C
Genuine PCGS PR65**

Genuine has broken "cusp" on 5. Cusp is bisected by an imaginary line extending from left vertical of 5. Interior of "O" in OF is rectangular, versus oval on most 1857s and all 1858s.



**1856 Flying Eagle 1C
Altered**

The cusp is unbroken and is not bisected by an extended vertical line.



1909-S Indian 1C
Genuine PCGS EF45
 Serifs of MM are parallel.



1909-S Indian 1C
Struck Counterfeit
 Roughness in fields/devices,
 rim spikes and depressions.



1909-S VDB 1C

Genuine PCGS 64BN — Serifs of “S” mintmark (MM) are parallel and vertical. One of four MM positions. All 1909-S VDBs have a diagonal center line in the “B.”



1909-S VDB 1C

Struck Counterfeit

Wrong MM position, tilted left. The center of “B” is not diagonal.



**1914-D 1C
Genuine**

Serifs of MM are parallel
and extend left.



**1914-D 1C
Counterfeit**

Added MM is too large
and has no serifs. Digits in
date are not crisp.



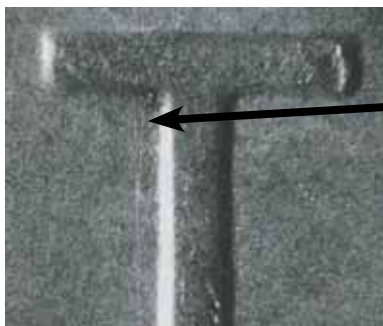
**1914-D 1C
Struck counterfeit**
Very rough fields
and devices.



Genuine 1922 No D 1C PCGS 63RB
The second "2" is stronger than the first and the first "T" in TRUST is stronger than remaining letters.



**1922 No D 1C
Struck counterfeit**
Raised "Lint" mark on devices.
Roughness of fields and devices.



1955 DDO 1C
Genuine PCGS 64BN
 Crisscross die lines from "T" of CENT.
 Edge is beveled on obverse.



1955 DDO 1C
Struck Counterfeit — One of eight known counterfeit die pairs. This counterfeit has tooling marks on the shoulder and a spike from the first "5" in the date.



1972 DDO 1C
Genuine PCGS 65RD
A rim spike above "D"
in UNITED.



1972 DDO 1C
Struck
Counterfeit
Rough fields and
a raised lint
mark on collar.

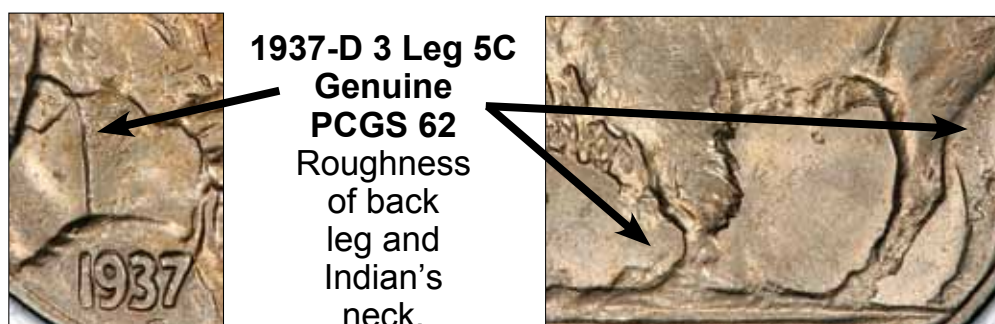




1916 DDO 5C
Genuine PCGS AU55
 Doubling on the date and
 feathers.



1918/7-D 5C
Genuine PCGS 64
 The date area – most have
 a die crack from the hair
 above the braid.



1937-D 3 Leg 5C
Not Genuine
 Altered by removing
 the front leg.

Counterfeit Detection – Silver Coins



1795 H10C
Genuine
PCGS 63



1795 H10C
Counterfeit
Roughness in
fields/devices
and has
depressions.



1916-D 10C

Genuine PCGS VF30

One of four MM positions.

All have triangular center to D.

The serifs are parallel to
the "E" in ONE.



1916-D 10C

Not Genuine

Added MM has wrong
position and tilt.



1942/1 10C

Genuine PCGS AU58

Notice date area and die line connecting fasces to the branch.
2 and 1 in date are equal die depth.



1942/1 10C

Counterfeit

Note appearance of date. 2 lies on top of 1,
verses equal die depth of genuine.



**1916 25C
Genuine PCGS 65**

Lower left gown fold is flatter than the 1917.

1916s can be identified even if the date is worn away.



**1917 Type 1 25C
Genuine**

Lower gown fold is rounder than 1916.





1917 Type 1 25C
Struck counterfeit
 Notice the strength and
 waviness of the lines
 in pedestals.



1918/7-S 25C
Genuine PCGS AU58

Notice the date and die dot to the left of the right star. Some specimens have a die crack from the rim through the "T" in LIBERTY.



1932-D 25C
Genuine PCGS 65
 MM sits in "well." Serifs
 extend left, past upright of "D."



1932-D 25C
Not Genuine
 Added MM has no serifs
 and sits on surface.



1932-S 25C
Genuine PCGS 64



1932-S 25C
Not Genuine — Added MM.



1921 50C
Genuine
PCGS 64
 Base of the 2
 has a slight curl
 with a hook at
 the end.



1921 50C
Not Genuine — Altered date.



1799 \$1
Genuine PCGS 65



1799 \$1
Counterfeit
Depression in "R" of
LIBERTY.



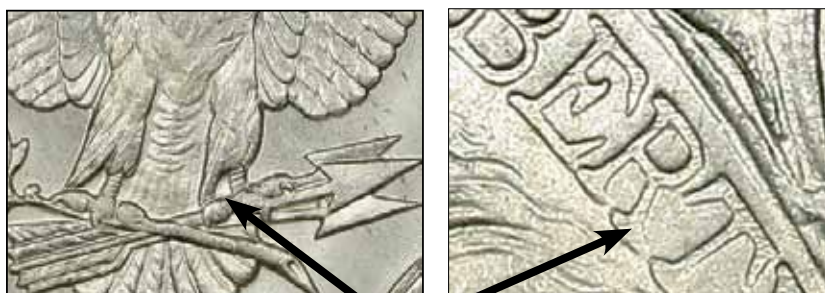
1799 \$1
Counterfeit
Another struck counterfeit; numerous depressions
with rough fields and blurry devices.



1893-S \$1
Genuine PCGS 64
 Genuine has "rabbit ears"
 in the "R" and a die line in
 "T" of LIBERTY.



1893-S \$1
Not Genuine
 Added MM.
 Diagnostics are
 not present on an
 1893-P Dollar with
 added MM.



1894 \$1

Genuine PCGS 65

Genuine has a die line in recessed area above arrow shaft
and die line in right foot of "R" in Liberty.



1894 \$1
Not Genuine
Altered date.



**1896-O \$1
Counterfeit**

Contemporary counterfeits with
repeating depressions.



1896-O \$1



1900-O \$1



1902-O \$1



1896-O \$1



1900-O \$1



1902-O \$1



**1874 T\$1
Genuine PCGS 67**



**1874 T\$1
Counterfeit**



**1874-CC T\$1
Counterfeit**

Notice roughness of fields with numerous depressions.

Silver Commemoratives



**1936 Cincinnati 50C
Genuine PCGS 66**



**1936 Cincinnati 50C
Counterfeit**
Two depressions in the
hair above the part.



1928 Hawaiian 50C
Genuine PCGS 66



1928 Hawaiian 50C
Two Separate Counterfeits

Left has depressions in the wave by the "A" in AMERICA.
The right has a spike at the neck.



**1921 Missouri 50C
Counterfeit**

Rough fields and
prooflike (PL) surfaces.



**1937 Antietam 50C
Counterfeit**

Depressions on arches of the
bridge, the lower upright of the "D" in
UNITED, and two depressions
on General Lee's cheek.



1915-S Pan-Pac 50C
Genuine PCGS 67

Most have strong die polishing
lines around the date.



1915-S Pan-Pac 50C
Counterfeit
Depressions with
PL fields.

Chinese Coins



**1904 China-Hupei \$1
Genuine PCGS 65**



**1904 China-Hupei \$1
Counterfeit
Matching depressions.**



**1904 China-Hupeh \$1
Counterfeit**



**1904 China-Hupeh \$1
Counterfeit**
Matching depressions.



Counterfeit Detection – Gold Coins



1849 \$1
Genuine PCGS 63
Die cracks are usually a genuine characteristic.



1849 \$1
Counterfeit
This counterfeit has numerous depressions with devices that are not crisp.



1854 T2 \$1
Genuine PCGS 65
 Crisp die clashes are usually a genuine characteristic.



1854 T2 \$1
Counterfeit
 Rough surfaces and blurry devices.



1861 \$2 1/2
Genuine PCGS 62
 Nice sharp devices.



1861 \$2 1/2
Counterfeit
 Very rough, "blurry" devices.
 Fields are PL and rough.



1911 \$2 1/2
Genuine
PCGS 65
 Die polishing
 lines in crescent.



1911 \$2 1/2
Counterfeit
 Tooling marks
 in back of neck,
 blurry devices.



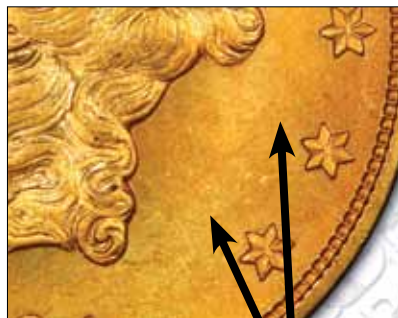
**1908 No Motto \$10
Genuine PCGS 67**



**1911 \$10
Counterfeit**
Has numerous depressions,
PL fields, blurry devices.



**1904 \$20
Genuine PCGS 66**



**1904 \$20
Counterfeit**

Some tooling marks in the obverse field,
with depressions on the reverse.



**1926 \$20
Genuine PCGS 66**



**1926 \$20
Counterfeit**

This counterfeit has a depression above the date between the rays. Reverse has raised tooling lines on the rays above "WE" in IN GOD WE TRUST.

Gold Commemoratives



**1903 Louisiana Purchase – McKinley \$1
Genuine PCGS 67**
Crisp devices and fields.



**1903 Louisiana Purchase – McKinley \$1
Counterfeit**
Blurry devices with rough
fields and depressions.



**1915 Pan-Pac \$2 1/2
Genuine PCGS 67**

Crisp date with
die polishing lines
around/through date.



**1915 Pan-Pac \$2 1/2
Counterfeit**

Blurry devices
with rough
fields and
depressions.



**1917 McKinley \$1
Genuine PCGS 67**
Fine die lines
in the area below
the steps.



**1917 McKinley \$1
Counterfeit**
Blurry devices with rough fields and depressions.



**1926 Sesqui \$2 1/2
Genuine PCGS 66**



**1926 Sesqui \$2 1/2
Counterfeit**

Blurry devices with rough fields and depressions.



The Standard for the Rare Coin Industry