

## Concept Illustration ... U.S. paper currency

Trivia can be interesting! Did you know these facts about U.S. currency (Federal Reserve Notes)?<sup>1</sup>

- The Bureau of Engraving and Printing, a Division of the United States Treasury, prints Federal Reserve Notes in denominations of \$1, \$2, \$5, \$10, \$20, \$50, and \$100. Since 1946, no \$500, \$1,000, \$5,000, and \$10,000 denominations have been printed.
- Regional Federal Reserve Banks issue the currency and are identified by coding on the face of each bill: A1 = Boston; B2 = New York; C3 = Philadelphia; D4 = Cleveland; E5 = Richmond; F6 = Atlanta; G7 = Chicago; H8 = St. Louis; I9 = Minneapolis; J10 = Kansas City; K11 = Dallas; L12 = San Francisco.
- The newly designed bills have several security features, some of which are readily visible. Examples: (1) A watermark depicts the same person as the portrait and is visible from both sides when held up to a light. (2) The same technique reveals a vertical security thread containing "USA" in the strip. (3) The numeral in the lower right corner looks bright green when examined head on, but shifts to dark green when the bill is held at an angle.
- The circle on the right side of the back of the \$1 bill contains symbolism representing the 13 original states. The burst of light above the eagle's head contains 13 stars. The right claws hold an olive branch with 13 leaves and the left claws hold 13 arrows. (The eagle's head is turned toward the olive branch.) The shield has 13 stripes. The ribbon held in the eagle's beak contains the Latin motto: *E Pluribus Unum*, which has 13 letters and means "out of many, one."
- The unfinished pyramid in the left circle on the back of the \$1 bill symbolizes striving toward growth and perfection. The eye inside the triangle represents the eternal eye of God. The Roman numerals at the base of the pyramid are "1776," the founding year of the United States.
- The average life of the \$1 bill is 18 months. The \$50 and \$100 bills—handled less often—have average lives of 5 and 8 years, respectively.
- Beginning in 1934 all U.S. paper currency was inscribed with "The United States of America Will Pay to the Bearer on Demand One [Five, Ten, etc.] Dollar [s] in Lawful Money." In 1964 the inscription was replaced with "This Note is Legal Tender for Debts, Public and Private."
- The Federal Reserve estimates that only 3/100ths of 1 percent of total currency in circulation is counterfeited. Authorities seize about 75 percent of all counterfeited money before it is circulated.
- If you accept a counterfeit bill, you are stuck with the loss. Don't try to pass a known counterfeit bill to someone else, or you can be fined up to \$5,000.
- As long as you present what is clearly more than one-half a bill, a bank will accept it for deposit or replace it. The bank then sends the bill to a Federal Reserve Bank, which destroys it and issues another bill in its place.

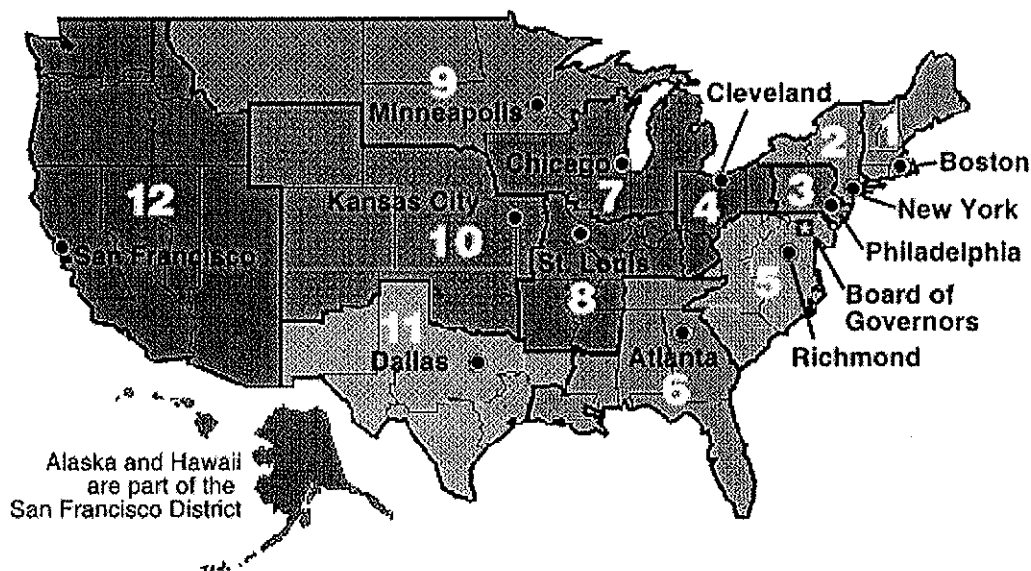
<sup>1</sup> Source: Federal Reserve System, "Fundamental Facts about U. S. Money," 1998.



# The Federal Reserve Board

## The Twelve Federal Reserve Districts

Addresses and phone numbers
<u>Banks</u>
<u>Branches</u>
<u>Boston</u>
<u>New York</u>
<u>Philadelphia</u>
<u>Cleveland</u>
<u>Richmond</u>
<u>Atlanta</u>
<u>Chicago</u>
<u>St. Louis</u>
<u>Minneapolis</u>
<u>Kansas City</u>
<u>Dallas</u>
<u>San Francisco</u>
<u>Board</u>



The Federal Reserve officially identifies Districts by number and Reserve Bank city.

In the 12th District, the Seattle Branch serves Alaska, and the San Francisco Bank serves Hawaii. The System serves commonwealths and territories as follows: the New York Bank serves the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico and the U.S. Virgin Islands; the San Francisco Bank serves American Samoa, Guam, and the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands. The Board of Governors revised the branch boundaries of the System in February 1996.

[Home](#) | [About the Fed](#)  
[Accessibility](#) | [Contact us](#)  
 Last update: December 13, 2005