



The New Color of Money
Safer. Smarter. More Secure.

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Series 2004 \$50 Note Features for The New Color of Money

Confidence. Trust. Value. That's what the American dollar stands for, around the world. This is made possible through continuous improvements in currency design and aggressive law enforcement that protect the integrity of U.S. currency by guarding it against counterfeiting.

The government introduced a new \$20 note design in 2003 and will continue with other denominations. A new \$50 note was issued on September 28, 2004. The next denomination to be introduced in the series will be the \$10 note in 2005. The \$100 note is also slated to be redesigned, but a timetable for its introduction is not yet set. The government has no plans to redesign the \$5 note at this time, and the \$1 and \$2 notes will not be redesigned. The new bills will remain the same size and will use the same, but enhanced, portraits and historical images. Above all, the world will continue to recognize the new money as quintessentially American.

Security Features

The new \$50 notes will be safer, smarter and more secure: ***safer*** because they're harder to fake and easier to check; ***smarter*** to stay ahead of tech-savvy counterfeiters; ***more secure*** to protect the integrity of U.S. currency. Because security features are difficult for counterfeiters to reproduce well, they often do not try, hoping that cash handlers and the public will not check their money.

A comprehensive public education program already has boosted public awareness of the new \$20 note's features from 73 to 85 percent, and representatives of major banks credit public education with a smooth introduction of the new \$20 note.

Watermark: Hold the bill up to the light and look for the watermark, or faint image, similar to the large portrait. The watermark is part of the paper itself and it can be seen from both sides of the note.

Security Thread: Hold the bill up to the light and look for the security thread, or plastic strip, that is embedded in the paper and runs vertically to the right of the portrait. If you look closely, the words "USA 50" and a small flag are visible along the thread from both sides of the note. This thread glows yellow when held under an ultraviolet light.





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Color-Shifting Ink: Look at the number “50” in the lower right corner on the face of the bill. When you tilt the note up and down, the color-shifting ink changes from copper to green. The color shift is more dramatic in the newly redesigned notes, making it even easier for people to check their money.

Microprinting: Because they are so small, microprinted words are hard to replicate. The redesigned \$50 note features microprinting on the face of the note in three areas: the words “FIFTY,” “USA,” and the numeral “50” can be found in two of the blue stars to the left of the portrait; the word “FIFTY” can be found repeated within both side borders of the note; and the words “THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA” appear on President Ulysses S. Grant’s collar, under his beard.

Low-Vision Feature: The large numeral “50” in the lower right corner on the back of the bill is easy to read.

Federal Reserve Indicators: A universal seal to the left of the portrait represents the entire Federal Reserve System. A letter and number beneath the left serial number identifies the issuing Federal Reserve Bank.

Serial Numbers: The unique combination of eleven numbers and letters appears twice on the face of the note. On the new \$50 note, the left serial number has shifted slightly to the right, compared with previous designs.

Design Features

To stay ahead of currency counterfeiters, the U.S. will be introducing new currency designs every seven to ten years. Not only will many of these design updates add complexity to the note and make counterfeiting more difficult, other features will help the public, particularly those who are visually impaired, to tell denominations apart.

Symbols of Freedom: New symbols of freedom have been designed on the face of the \$50 note to represent images of the American flag. The traditional stars and stripes of the United States flag are printed in blue and red behind the portrait of President Grant. A field of blue stars is located to the left of the portrait, while three red stripes are located to the right of the portrait. A small metallic silver-blue star is located on the lower right side of the portrait. The symbols of freedom will differ for each denomination.

Color: The most noticeable difference in the newly designed \$50 note is the addition of subtle background colors of blue and red to both sides of the note. Also, small yellow 50s have been printed in the background on the back of the note. The Series 2004 notes mark the first time in modern American history that U.S.





Fact Sheet

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cash will include colors other than black and green. Different background colors will be used for the different denominations. This will help everyone to tell denominations apart.

Updated Portrait and Vignette: The oval borders and fine lines surrounding the portrait of President Grant on the face and the United States Capitol vignette on the back have been removed. The portrait has been moved up and shoulders have been extended into the border. Additional engraving details have been added to the vignette background.

A Smooth Transition

More than 150,000 contacts were made with representatives of the cash-handling industry to help them to prepare for the new \$20 notes issued in 2003. Similar outreach was made in preparation for the new \$50 note and included manufacturers of self-service checkout counters, which are becoming increasingly prevalent at retail locations.

You won't have to exchange your old bills for new ones. Your old money will always be good. Every U.S. currency note issued since 1861 is still redeemable today at full face value. Both the new notes and the older-design notes will continue to be legal currency at full face value. The U.S. has never devalued its currency.

