



Fact Sheet

The New \$5 Bill and Counterfeit Deterrence

The Federal Reserve, the Department of the Treasury and the U.S. Secret Service are committed to protecting the integrity of United States currency by regularly introducing new designs and security features, and employing aggressive law enforcement to stay ahead of counterfeiting and deter potential counterfeiters.

No bill is counterfeit-proof. Help protect yourself by learning the easy-to-use security features.

- The security features make it easier for you to check the new \$5 bills you receive and more difficult for counterfeiters to fake. Hold your bills up to the light to check these features:
 - **Watermarks:** There are now two watermarks on the redesigned \$5 bill. A large number “5” watermark is located to the right of the portrait replacing the previous watermark portrait of President Lincoln found on the older design \$5 bills. A second watermark — a column of three smaller “5”s — has been added to the new \$5 bill design and is positioned to the left of the portrait.
 - **Security Thread:** The embedded security thread runs vertically and is now located to the right of the portrait on the redesigned \$5 bill. The letters “USA” followed by the number “5” in an alternating pattern are visible along the thread from both sides of the bill. The thread glows blue when held under ultraviolet light.

The combination of public education, law enforcement and improved security features helps deter potential counterfeiters.

- While counterfeiting is not a significant economic problem overall, when a person or business accepts a counterfeit bill, it is a real loss to them.
 - In the U.S. alone last year there were 3,945 arrests where counterfeits were passed to individuals and businesses, equaling a total loss of \$62 million.
 - Last year the U.S. Secret Service and international authorities seized just over \$53 million in counterfeit bills before they entered circulation.

In order to stay ahead of the counterfeiters, the U.S. government continues to redesign our paper money. A redesigned bill will begin circulating in early 2008, and the \$100 bill will follow.

- The redesigned \$5 bill will help protect against a method of counterfeiting that removes the ink from a \$5 bill and changes it to look like a \$100 bill. You should check your \$100 bill carefully to protect yourself from receiving a counterfeit. Since both the old designs of the \$5 and \$100 bills have a portrait watermark in the same location — make sure that the watermark in your \$100 bill is a portrait of Ben Franklin.
- Since 1996, the \$10, \$20 and \$50 bills have been redesigned with improved security features to make counterfeiting more difficult and to make it easier for financial institutions, professional cash handlers and the general public to check the authenticity of their paper money.