

seniors first BC

COULD FAKE CASH DECEIVE YOU?

Counterfeiting can involve a false coin or false paper money that resembles or is apparently intended to resemble or pass for a current coin or current paper money (Government of Canada Justice Laws Website, 2020).

Have you ever come across a suspicious looking bill and didn't know what to do with it? Such a situation could happen to anyone, but it is helpful if you are prepared to deal with counterfeits in advance. This blog post will go through true stories about counterfeit bills and give some tips on how to protect yourself from being duped by fraudsters using these bills.

True stories

Fake notes can come in all denominations, but people sometimes do not take enough precautions against lower value bills. Michael Boddy, a resident in Toronto, only realized 63 bills of \$20 he received from selling his iPhone were fake after he returned home from the sale meet up. Additionally, counterfeiters often try to circulate fraudulent cash during busy times because they can be harder to detect while our attention is elsewhere. David Neil, the owner of a Westboro deli, unknowingly received a fake \$20 note over a busy weekend despite its obvious differences from a genuine note, such as differences in its size, color, and images in the hologram.

How to spot fake polymer?

Counterfeit money differs from genuine polymer banknotes in many ways. Familiarizing yourself with the differences can help enhance your chances of detecting forged bills. There are three words that will help you recognize counterfeit currency: **feel, look, and flip**.

- Take some time to feel the bill as the first feeling might tell you whether the bill is authentic. Canadian bills will have raised ink on the large numbers of the bill, such as on the \$5, \$10, and \$20, as well as raised ink on the words "Bank of Canada."
- Look at security features on the bill to find the differences. Below is a diagram that highlights some of the key security features of a Canadian \$20 bill.

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- Flip the bill over to check the security features on the other side.



You can also visit the [Bank of Canada](https://www.bankofcanada.ca) website for more information on the security features and free training materials on how to detect fake currency. In case you are still suspicious about the bill, bring it to the bank or local police for further verification. **It's also important to remember that the best defense against fraudulent money is always being vigilant when making any cash transactions.**

What if I come across a suspicious note?

If you suspect the money you received is a counterfeit:

- Do not panic and make sure that you are not at any risk at the time of transaction.
- Politely refuse suspicious money and explain the reason. Remember that the person handing you the bill could be an innocent victim to counterfeits as well.
- Ask for another bill and compare it with a genuine one, or you could switch to other alternatives such as electronic transfers if possible.
- Advise the person to check the note with a bank or the local police.
- Report any attempts trying to pass suspected fake bills to the local police.

Takeaways

- Checking bank notes helps protect everyone from fraud, so do not be offended if someone wishes to examine your bills.
- The Bank of Canada will not reimburse counterfeit money, so check all notes carefully as you receive them.
- Whether to surrender forged bills to the bank or the police depends on the holder's decision. However, intentionally passing these bills on to someone else is considered a criminal offense.

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Accepting counterfeit money, knowingly or not, could result in a financial loss. **But do not let this loss blind you and turn yourself a person who abets counterfeiting.**

If you want to reach out for help, please do not hesitate to call the Seniors First Abuse and Information line at 604-437-1940 or 1-866-437-1940. Seniors First BC's trained intake workers can provide you with the appropriate information and referrals to other resources.

References:

[Offenses Related to Currency](#)

[CBC News - Fake money circulating in Westboro, deli owner warns](#)

[Canadian Bankers Association - Avoiding counterfeit bills](#)

[CTV News - Careful, Canada! This counterfeit cash could fool you](#)

[Edmonton Police - Recognizing Polymer Bank Notes](#)

[Bank of Canada - Counterfeit Prevention](#)

Contributor

Thank you to our volunteer Ngoc Ha An for writing this blog!