

U.S. CURRENCY  
EDUCATION  
PROGRAM

# QUICK REFERENCE GUIDE

[uscurrency.gov](https://uscurrency.gov)



## FEEL THE PAPER



### **Raised printing**

Move your finger across the note. It should feel slightly rough to the touch as a result of the printing process and the unique composition of the paper.



## CHECK WITH LIGHT



### **Security thread**

Hold the note to light to see a security thread embedded on denominations \$5 and higher. The thread is in a different position for each denomination and glows a different color when held to ultraviolet (UV) light.

### **Watermark**

Hold the note to light to see a faint image to the right of the portrait on denominations \$5 and higher. The \$5 note has two watermarks, both of the numeral 5.



## TILT THE NOTE



### Color-shifting ink

Tilt the note to see the ink in the numbers on the lower right corner and the Bell in the Inkwell change color from copper to green. Color-shifting ink is found on denominations \$10 and higher.

### 3-D Security Ribbon

The 3-D Security Ribbon on the \$100 note is woven into the paper. It has images of bells and 100s that move from side to side and up and down when you tilt the note.



## CHECK WITH MAGNIFICATION



### Microprinting

Microprinting is featured in several locations on denominations \$5 and higher. These small printed words correspond to the denomination or are phrases such as “THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA,” “USA,” or “E PLURIBUS UNUM.”

### Red and blue fibers

There are small red and blue security fibers embedded throughout genuine U.S. currency paper.

## FEDERAL RESERVE NOTE IDENTIFIERS

Each Federal Reserve note includes identifiers. Federal Reserve identifiers serve a variety of purposes, like designating when a note was printed and which plate was used to print the note. See the opposite side of this brochure to learn where these identifiers are located on each note.

①

### SERIAL NUMBER

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Each note has a unique serial number. The first letter of the serial number corresponds to the series year.

E = 2004  
G = 2004A  
I = 2006  
J = 2009  
L = 2009A  
M = 2013  
N = 2017

②

### FEDERAL RESERVE INDICATOR

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Each note has a letter and number designation that corresponds to one of the 12 Federal Reserve Banks. The letter of each indicator matches the second letter of the serial number on the note.

③

### FACE & BACK PLATE NUMBER

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The face plate and back plate numbers identify the printing plates used to print each side of the note. The face plate number is found on the face of the note and the back plate number is found on the back. (Back plate number not shown.)

④

### SERIES YEAR

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The series year indicates the year in which a new design was approved by the Secretary of the Treasury, or the year in which the signature of a new secretary was incorporated into the design. Capital letters following the series year appear when there is a significant change in the note's appearance.

⑤

### NOTE POSITION LETTER & NUMBER

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The note position letter and number indicates in which position on a plate a note was printed. It is a combination of one letter and one number.



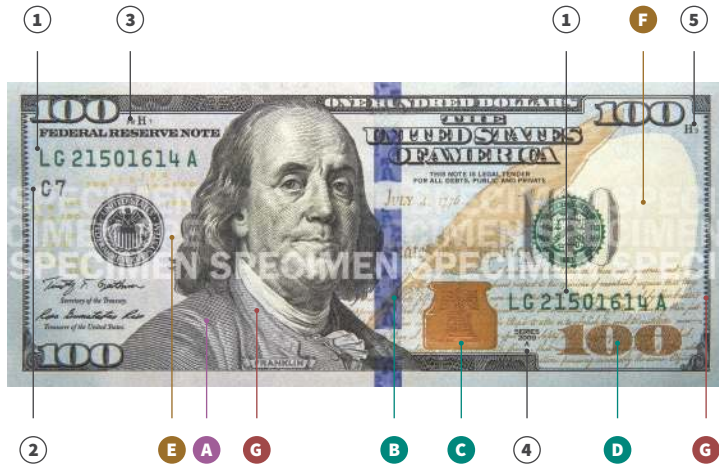
FEEL



Raised printing

\$100 NOTE

ISSUED IN 2013



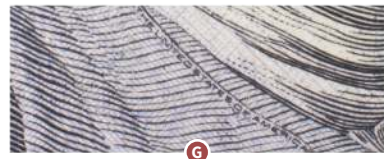
- 1 Serial number
- 2 Federal Reserve indicator
- 3 Face plate number
- 4 Series year
- 5 Note position letter & number

TILT



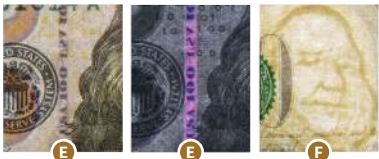
3-D Security Ribbon, Color-shifting Bell in the Inkwell, Color-shifting numeral

CHECK WITH MAGNIFICATION



Microprinting

CHECK WITH LIGHT



Security thread, UV security thread, Watermark of Benjamin Franklin

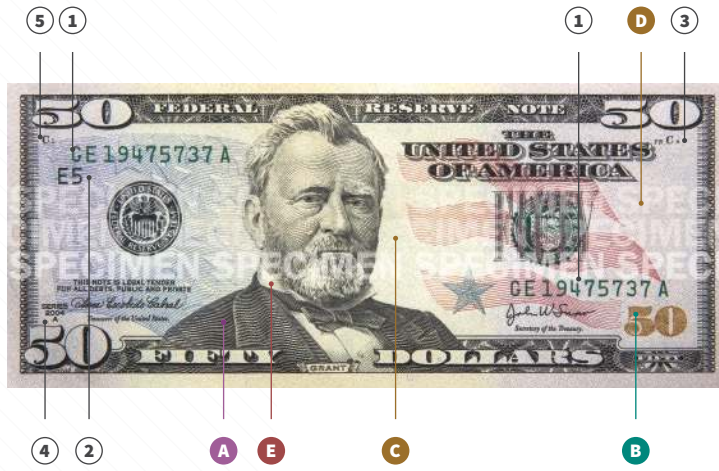
FEEL



Raised printing

\$50 NOTE

ISSUED IN 2004



- 1 Serial number
- 2 Federal Reserve indicator
- 3 Face plate number
- 4 Series year
- 5 Note position letter & number

TILT



Color-shifting numeral

CHECK WITH MAGNIFICATION



Microprinting

CHECK WITH LIGHT



Security thread, UV security thread, Watermark of Ulysses S. Grant

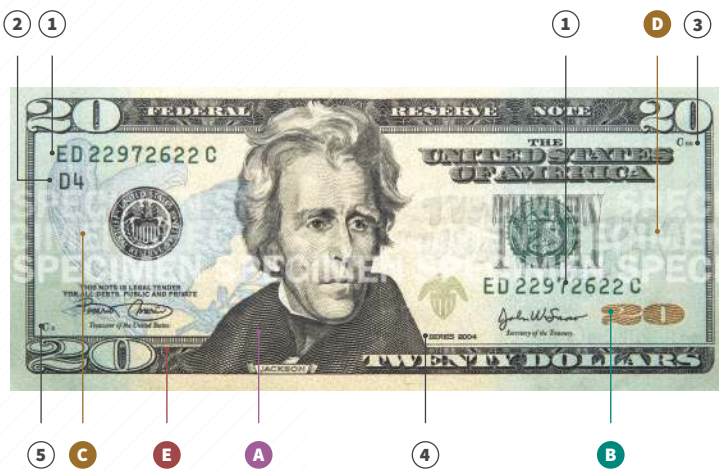
FEEL



Raised printing

\$20 NOTE

ISSUED IN 2003



- 1 Serial number
- 2 Federal Reserve indicator
- 3 Face plate number
- 4 Series year
- 5 Note position letter & number

TILT



Color-shifting numeral

CHECK WITH MAGNIFICATION



Microprinting

CHECK WITH LIGHT



Security thread, UV security thread, Watermark of Andrew Jackson

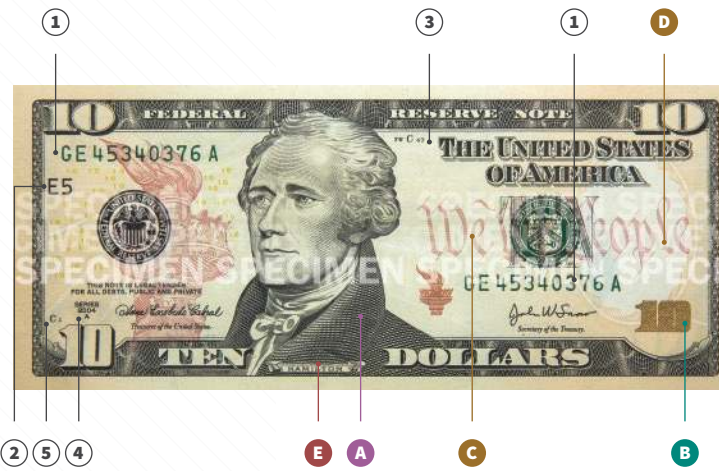
FEEL



Raised printing

\$10 NOTE

ISSUED IN 2006



- 1 Serial number
- 2 Federal Reserve indicator
- 3 Face plate number
- 4 Series year
- 5 Note position letter & number

TILT



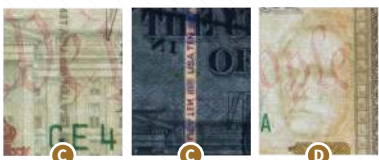
Color-shifting numeral

CHECK WITH MAGNIFICATION



Microprinting

CHECK WITH LIGHT



Security thread, UV security thread, Watermark of Alexander Hamilton

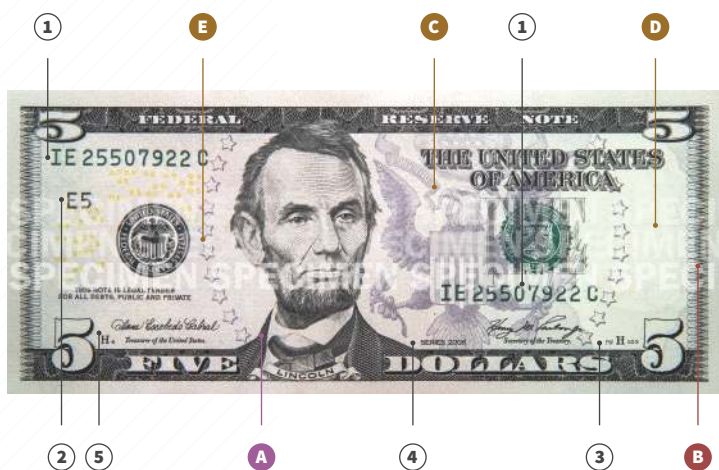
FEEL



Raised printing

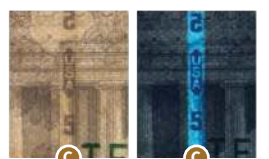
\$5 NOTE

ISSUED IN 2008



- 1 Serial number
- 2 Federal Reserve indicator
- 3 Face plate number
- 4 Series year
- 5 Note position letter & number

CHECK WITH LIGHT



Security thread, UV security thread



Watermark of numeral 5, Watermark of numeral 5s

CHECK WITH MAGNIFICATION



Microprinting



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E5



THIS NOTE IS LEGAL TENDER  
FOR ALL DEBTS, PUBLIC AND PRIVATE



*Anna Escobedo Cabral*  
H<sub>4</sub> Treasurer of the United States.

## COUNTERFEIT REPORTING

### Do you know what to do with suspected counterfeits?

Become familiar with your organization's counterfeit-reporting procedures and learn what to do if you suspect you have a counterfeit note. This may include contacting local law enforcement or the local field office of the United States Secret Service.

[www.uscurrency.gov](http://www.uscurrency.gov)

[www.secretservice.gov](http://www.secretservice.gov)