

How to Spot Fake Indian Head Cents

1. Examine a real Indian Head Cent very closely. If you own any real Indian Head Cents, examine them with a magnifying glass. If you don't already own any, find a high-resolution image on a reputable website like the [Professional](#) Coin Grading Service's site. Make note of all of the defining features of the coin.
2. Look over the Indian Head Cent that you think may be fake. If at all possible, try to compare it side by side with one you know is authentic. If any obvious differences exist between the coins, the one you're examining is probably counterfeit. Note that the 1859 Indian Head Cent does not have a shield at the top of the wreath on the back of the coin, so the lack of a shield on that particular coin is not cause to assume it is counterfeit.
3. Closely examine the numbers and the lettering on the coin with a magnifying glass. If these do not look like the numbers and letters on the authentic coin, chances are the coin is forgery.
4. Measure the coin if possible. A real Indian Head Cent is 19 mm in diameter. If the coin has a different diameter, it is not real.
5. Weigh the coin. Indian Head Cents weigh 4.67 grams. Any difference of more than a few hundredths of a gram is proof that the coin is counterfeit.

Tips & Warning

Buying coins from a trusted dealer is the best way to avoid fake Indian Head Cents. Be extra careful when purchasing coins from flea markets or small, non coin-centric auctions

When buying raw coins always ask the seller if he or she would submit the coin to a trusted third party grader like PGGGS, NGC, and ANACS if you paid for the service

Submitted by Stanley K.