

# GARAGE SALES



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## Look Out for Counterfeit Cash

Two police departments in Wisconsin recently warned garage sellers to be on the lookout for counterfeit bills.

“Please be careful and examine larger bills if you are having a sale,” the Eau Claire, Wisconsin, police department said. “The suspect purchased an item of small value and paid with the hundred dollar bill, which was later found to be fake.”

The U.S. Department of Treasury says there’s nearly \$70 million in funny money floating around. Here’s how to make sure you don’t end up taking any at your garage sale.

### AVOID TAKING LARGE BILLS

Most things at garage sales sell for pennies on the dollar, so anyone wanting to pay for a \$10 toy with a \$100 bill should raise a red flag. Instead of taking the money, offer to hold the item for an hour until they can return with smaller bills.

### HOW TO SPOT A FAKE

Prevail Bank says there are some ways to tell if money is fake. They are:

■ **Check the ink:** Hold the bill up to the light and rotate it back and forth. Any bill over \$5 printed after 1996 should shift from green to copper or copper to green.

■ **Check for raised printing:** Real money has raised printing on it. Pay close attention to where the shoulder and face of an image meets the regular bill face.

■ **Look for blurry printing:** Authentic money has very detailed microprinting. Even under a magnifying glass, the print should be crisp.

■ **Webdings:** Look for blue and red threads in the bill: Real bills have red and blue threads woven randomly into the fab-

ric of the money.

■ **Check the watermark:** While you’re holding the bill up to the light, look for a watermark. On newer bills, it’s a face. Older bills may just have a faded spot. If there isn’t a watermark at all or the watermark face doesn’t match the face on the bill, it may be fake.

■ **Look for the security thread:** Real bills have a security thread that runs from the top to the bottom of the bill on either the right or left side of the image. The text of the security thread should match the denomination of the bill.

■ **Look for the security ribbon:** New \$100 bills have a 3D strip from top to bottom. It

should have bells on it that appear to shift from side to side as you tilt the bill back and forth.

### WHAT IF I FIND A FAKE?

If you find a fake bill or believe someone has tried to give you a counterfeit bill, take some notes. Get an overall description of the person and, if you can, the car they were driving. Take note of any people that were with them.

Put the bill in a marked envelope. Handle it as little as possible.

You can take the bill to a bank or to the local police department to confirm that it’s counterfeit.

### BUYER’S TIP

Don’t bring big bills to a garage sale; instead, take a variety of denominations of smaller bills. When you’re shopping, only bring out what you think you’ll spend at that sale. Set up a cashless app such as PayPal, Venmo or Cash App to shop securely at sales where those payment methods are accepted.

## AD SPACE

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