



Keeping it Real

You walk into a store and hand the cashier a \$20 bill in exchange for some groceries. The cashier takes your note and looks at it, and then tells you, “Sorry, I’ll need another \$20. I think this one’s a fake.”

Perhaps you’ll blush, especially if there are other people in line, now beginning to give you subtle looks heavy in meaning. You might also feel confused because you thought your money was good. But if you had checked all your cash, immediately after accepting it from an ATM or some other person, you wouldn’t be in this situation.

Did You Know?

According to the Royal Canadian Mounted Police (RCMP), criminals passed on \$3.4 million in fake money in 2009. Given that there’s over \$50 billion worth of real cash in the wallets and tills of this nation, that may not seem like much. But consider this:

- Every fake bill you accept is money out of your pocket.
- When businesses lose money to fraud, the cost is often passed on to you, the consumer.
- Our bank notes are also national symbols. Keeping our cash supply real is a matter of pride.

A Job for the Bank of Canada

The Bank of Canada is always working to improve the security features of our bills. In fact, the Bank will be releasing a new series of polymer notes starting in 2011 to keep us all a few steps ahead of fraudsters. The Bank also works with retailers, the police, and your local banks to fight fake cash.

A Job for You Too

Don’t forget to check your cash. Canada’s most recent bills (the ones with metallic stripes) have security features you can touch and see in seconds. In the above scenario, a few seconds to check with just your eyes and fingers would have saved you valuable money. Those two senses work way better than any machine out there!

(see over)

Cash Tip

Older notes (ones without the metallic stripes) are less secure than newer ones. Only accept older bills if you know how to check them.

Here's how to check the security features in our money:

- Touch the raised ink on the bill.
- Tilt the bill and look for colour changes in the metallic stripe and dashes.
- Look through the bill by holding it up to the light, and check for a ghost image and puzzle number. The dashes form a solid line.

So what do you do if you suspect that someone's trying to hand you a fake bill? Refuse it and ask for another one.

What if you discover your cash is no good when trying to spend it? Unfortunately, the Bank of Canada will not exchange a phoney bill with a real one. That's how we make sure fraudsters aren't rewarded.

It's better to hand the suspect note to the local police. They'll send it to a special division of the RCMP to formally determine if it's fake or real. Real money will be returned to you. Whatever you decide to do, don't try to spend cash that you suspect is fake. It's a crime to knowingly do so.

Cash is a convenient way to pay for what you buy. Just remember to check all notes before accepting them, so we can keep our cash real.

For more information and free training tools:
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