



BANK OF CANADA
BANQUE DU CANADA

More Than Meets the Eye

You think nothing of it when you run out to the convenience store to buy a litre of milk. You hand over a \$5 bill, pocket the change, and head home.

Now imagine that you live with significant vision loss. Getting to the store is one thing, paying for the milk is another. How will you know the \$5 from a \$20 in your wallet? And would you be comfortable relying on a stranger for help?

This is the challenge faced by well over 800,000 Canadians whose vision loss cannot be corrected using ordinary lenses. And with an aging population, the number of affected Canadians is expected to double in the coming years.

The Bank of Canada recognizes that the blind and partially-sighted need bank notes that are easy to identify, and is committed to making cash more accessible for this growing segment of the population.

Did You Know?

The Bank takes blind and partially-sighted Canadians into account when designing bank notes, and has developed a suite of features to assist this community with independent living.

Accessibility features are designed to do just that—make cash accessible to the blind and partially-sighted. That means that bank notes can be differentiated either by touch, sight, or electronic signal.

Touch

On our current Canadian bank notes (with the metallic stripe) you may have noticed the raised dots in the top right corner. This tactile feature is made up of sets of six raised dots. The number and position of these impressions vary depending on the denomination. For example, one set of dots means it's a \$5, and two sets represent a \$10, and so on.

You might think this system is Braille, but it's not. It was developed with the help of blind and partially-sighted Canadians because research indicated that not all potential users read Braille.

(see over)

Canada's Bank Note Reader

The reader is distributed at no charge by the Canadian National Institute for the Blind (CNIB) to assist people living with vision loss.

To order the reader, contact the CNIB at 1 866 659-1843 or email store@cnib.ca.

October is Eye Health Month

This national public awareness campaign highlights the importance of eye health and regular eye exams.

Visit www.opto.ca for more information.

Sight

For those with low vision, large high-contrast numbers appear on both sides of the notes. On the front you'll find a dark number on a light background, and on the back there is a white number against a dark background. This makes the numbers stand out and easier to identify.

Those with healthy eyesight take the vibrant colours used on our notes for granted, but they also help identify the denominations. We don't need to read the printed '50' to know that a red note is a \$50 and a purple one's a \$10.

Electronic Signal

The bank note reader is a hand-held device into which you insert the edge of a bill to determine its worth. It was implemented by the Bank as a handy tool for the blind and partially-sighted to identify notes through machine-readable codes. It works in one of three ways: it talks (in English or French), it signals different sounds (for each denomination), or it vibrates to identify each note's value.

Moving Forward

When a new series of bank notes is launched, you may think that it's only about improved security. It's about more than that. It's about making continuous improvements and designing notes that all Canadians can rely on and use with confidence.

In addressing the needs of those living with blindness or partial vision, the Bank's goal is to make it easier for them to complete cash transactions with ease.

There really is more to our money than meets the eye.

For more information and free training tools:
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For story ideas or to get more information on Canadian bank notes, please contact media relations at 613 782-8782 or email communications@bankofcanada.ca