With the release of the George Washington commemorative half in 1982, a new era in U.S. coinage began. This 90% silver coin celebrated the 250th anniversary of his birth, and marked the first new commemorative since 1954.
Dear Collector,

Modern U.S. Commemoratives are pure Americana. That’s because these special coins are created to honor our country’s historic events, famous people, important buildings, anniversaries and more. While each coin is legal tender, every design is different and has its own story to tell. Hold one in your hand, and you’re holding a coin rich in historical significance.

**From 1982 to date... modern commemoratives reflect the fabric of American life**

Whether it’s the very first modern commemorative – the 1982 George Washington half dollar, or the 2009 Abraham Lincoln dollar, each beautiful clad, silver or gold coin displays images representing the special occasion they honor. Their designs recall bicentennials, baseball legends, and events that make up the very fabric of our American life.

**Have a plan for your collection**

Littleton makes collecting commemoratives fun and easy, but it’s always good to have a plan. There are many ways to build a set of modern commemoratives. Some choose to collect the silver and clad halves or dollar issues in chronological order, while others, with a larger budget, choose the gold coins. And still others collect by topic: the Olympics, buildings, ships, history and many other themes. In addition, many round out their sets with news clippings, folders, and different materials associated with the event that inspired the coin. As you can see, it’s rewarding and fun to build a modern U.S. commemorative collection. That’s because there are no strict rules; the grades, compositions, designs and dates are based on your choices and are as individual as you.

Most collectors are drawn to the hobby of coin collecting because it offers history, art, challenge of completion, and fellowship. Whatever your interest or experience, I hope you’ll find our modern U.S. commemorative coin collectors booklet a fun, useful, and educational guide.

Sincerely,

David M. Sundman
President
Introduction to Modern Commemorative Coins

In 1982, after an absence of 28 years, the U.S. Mint once again began to strike commemoratives. Its first official coin was the 90% silver Washington half dollar, honoring the 250th anniversary of his birth. This special issue began the modern U.S. commemorative era. Since then, at least one issue per year has been released.

A tradition started in ancient times lives on

America’s modern commemoratives follow a custom that began in ancient times. Back then, coins honored famous battles, leaders, cities, events and more. And our very first federally issued U.S. commemorative of 1892 followed that tradition. It was a silver half dollar celebrating the 1893 World's Columbian Exposition.

Today commemoratives are struck in gold, silver, and more recently, clad. Authorized by Congress, they are minted in small numbers for a limited time. Although these official U.S. Mint issues are legal tender, they aren’t struck for circulation, and shouldn’t be confused with so-called “commemoratives” produced by private organizations; those are medals, not coins.

The past lives again

Commemoratives capture historical events and remind us of our heritage. Inside this collectors guide, you’ll find information about the modern U.S. commemorative series. It is arranged chronologically with half dollars and silver dollars first, followed by the gold coins. Beyond a few basics, commemoratives offer you an almost limitless variety of ways to form your collection and will bring you a lifetime of enjoyment!

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1982 George Washington 250th Anniversary of Birth Half Dollar

As the first U.S. commemorative since 1954, this half dollar honored the 250th anniversary of Washington’s birth. It launched the modern commemorative era, and also marked the first time since 1964 a U.S. coin was struck in 90% silver. Chief Engraver Elizabeth Jones based her obverse (front) design on American artist Rembrandt Peale’s circa 1820s painting of Washington on horseback.

1983 Los Angeles Olympiad Silver Dollar

Interestingly, this 1983 Olympic coin was the first commemorative silver dollar since 1900. Issued to help support American athletes and honor the 1984 Los Angeles Summer Olympic games, it features a discus thrower outlined in three layers, giving the image movement.

1984 Los Angeles Olympiad Silver Dollar

Sculptor Robert Graham created the bronze statues in front of the Los Angeles coliseum for the 1984 Olympics. Based on the nude forms of a male water polo player and female long jumper, the statues celebrated the ideal body, but were headless and footless. When a similar design was used on this coin, it became one of the most controversial commemoratives ever.

Composition: 90% silver
Mints: Philadelphia, Denver & San Francisco

Discus was an Olympic sport in ancient Greece. Athletes were judged on their rhythm & precision.

In 1984, the L.A. coliseum became the first stadium ever to be used for opening ceremonies.
1988 Seoul Olympiad Silver Dollar

Struck to honor the 1988 Summer Olympics in Seoul, South Korea, this silver dollar shows Lady Liberty’s torch lighting the Olympic torch of free competition. These would be the last games that the Soviet Union and East Germany participated in – both ceased to exist by the next Olympics.

Compositions: 90% silver
Mints: Denver & San Francisco

1987 U.S. Constitution Bicentennial Silver Dollar

Struck on July 1, 1987, this silver dollar celebrated the 200th anniversary of the Constitution. Displayed prominently on the obverse is a quill pen, sheaf of parchment and the words WE THE PEOPLE, recalling the original document, handwritten on 4 sheets of paper. The reverse shows a group of people, representing our nation’s ethnic diversity, from various periods in history.

Composition: 90% silver
Mints: Philadelphia & San Francisco

1986 Statue of Liberty Centennial Half Dollar & Silver Dollar

Both coins feature a version of the Statue of Liberty. Originally in 1886, when the Statue of Liberty was unveiled, it was the largest free-standing statue in the world. At its century mark in 1986, the Statue of Liberty needed repairs, and sales of these coins helped restore it. The half dollar was the first clad U.S. commemorative ever issued.

Composition: Clad half dollar
90% silver dollar
Mints: Philadelphia, Denver & San Francisco

The U.S. Constitution has 4,440 words and is one of the world’s oldest constitutions

Called Liberty Enlightening the World by its creator, the French sculptor Bartholdi, the statue is known as the Statue of Liberty to most Americans

During the Seoul Olympics, U.S. diver Greg Louganis hit his head on the diving board, but went on to win gold

Clad & Silver Half Dollars & Dollars
1989 Congress Bicentennial Half Dollar & Silver Dollar

Both coins feature the Statue of Freedom, which graces the top of the U.S. Capitol dome. Issued to mark the 200th anniversary of the first Congressional legislative meeting, the sales helped preserve the Capitol building and pay down national debt. Freedom wears a helmet decorated with stars and topped with an eagle’s head and crest of feathers.

Composition: Clad half dollar 90% silver dollar
Mints: Denver & San Francisco

1990 Eisenhower Centennial Silver Dollar

This is the only U.S. coin to feature 2 portraits of the same person on the same side. Authorized by President Reagan in 1988, this silver dollar honors the 100th anniversary of General Dwight “Ike” Eisenhower’s birth. The profile of an older “Ike” is superimposed over his youthful image as Supreme Commander of Allied Forces in Europe during WWII.

Composition: 90% silver
Mints: Philadelphia & West Point

1991 Mount Rushmore Golden Anniversary Half Dollar & Silver Dollar

The Mount Rushmore Memorial opened in 1941, after more than 14 years of work. These coins marked the 50th anniversary, and their sales helped preserve it. Located in South Dakota’s Black Hills, the granite sculpture shows the faces of Washington, Jefferson, Lincoln & Teddy Roosevelt, representing 150 years of U.S. history.

Composition: Clad half dollar 90% silver dollar
Mints: Philadelphia, Denver & San Francisco

Eisenhower was a 5-star general whose military career spanned more than 4 decades

The Capitol dome’s statue faces East, symbolizing that the sun never sets on freedom

Each face, from the chin to the top of the head, spans 60 ft., and is as tall as the Great Sphinx of Egypt
1991 Korean War Memorial Silver Dollar
Struck to honor Korean War veterans, this silver dollar marks the 38th anniversary of the war's end. Its sales helped fund the Korean War Memorial in Washington, D.C. Along with a soldier and naval ships, the obverse also shows the F-86 Sabre jet, renowned for its air superiority against the Soviet MiGs during the war.

Composition: 90% silver
Mints: Philadelphia & Denver

1991 United Service Organizations Silver Dollar
This silver dollar debuted during the Desert Storm Victory parade in June 1991. The U.S.O. float featured a performance members of the military might enjoy overseas, and carried a 10-foot replica of the coin. The U.S.O. supports the military and their families, offering them a “home away from home.”

Composition: 90% silver
Mints: Denver & San Francisco

1992 XXV Olympiad Half Dollar & Silver Dollar
Issued to celebrate the 25th Summer & Winter Olympics and help fund U.S. athletes’ training, the half dollar shows a gymnast in motion and the silver dollar features a pitcher winding up. Plus, the Denver dollars, with XXV OLYMPIAD, are the first coins with edge lettering since 1933.

Composition: Clad half dollar 90% silver dollar
Mints: Philadelphia, Denver & San Francisco

19 statues representing soldiers on patrol are part of the Korean War Memorial

Many believe the pitcher on the 1992 Olympic silver dollar is Hall of Famer Nolan Ryan

In 1941, the U.S.O. was created in response to Franklin D. Roosevelt’s challenge to boost the morale of members of the armed forces
1992 White House 200th Anniversary Silver Dollar

In 1792, the White House's cornerstone was laid, and this coin celebrated that iconic building's 200th anniversary. Designed by architect James Hoban, the White House has served as the U.S. president's residence since 1800. George Washington oversaw its construction, but did not live in it – that honor went to John Adams, our second president.

Composition: 90% silver
Mints: Denver & West Point

1992 Christopher Columbus Quincentenary Half Dollar & Silver Dollar

These coins mark the 500th anniversary of the discovery of the New World by Christopher Columbus. They recall the age before computers when compass and astrolabe guided the wooden ships – *Nina, Pinta & Santa Maria*. Although Columbus is somewhat controversial, his discoveries changed the course of history.

Composition: Clad half dollar
90% silver dollar
Mints: Philadelphia, Denver, San Francisco

1993 Bill of Rights Half Dollar & Silver Dollar

Many delegates to the Constitutional Convention demanded a document that protected the individual’s and the state’s basic rights before they would ratify the constitution. So, George Washington urged the first United States Congress to adopt amendments protecting individual rights, and by December 1791, the first 10 amendments became the Bill of Rights. These coins honor this historic document.

Composition: 90% silver half dollar
90% silver dollar
Mints: West Point, Denver & San Francisco

Struck in 1993, these coins honored the U.S. involvement in WWII and helped finance the WWII Memorial in Washington, D.C. Authorized in 1993, construction began on the memorial in 2001, and it opened in April 2004. The half dollar obverse shows the B-17 Flying Fortress above “V” for victory and members of the armed forces, while the dollar depicts a D Day landing at Normandy.


The 250th anniversary of Thomas Jefferson's birth in 1993 prompted the authorization of this silver dollar, but it was not struck until 1994. Jefferson was only 33 when he wrote the first draft of the Declaration of Independence. His portrait, on the obverse, is based on an 1805 painting by Gilbert Stuart, and the reverse shows the 43-room Monticello (meaning “Little Mountain” in Italian).

1994 World Cup Tournament Half Dollar & Silver Dollar

In 1994, the United States hosted the 15th FIFA World Cup Soccer Tournament. This marked the first time in history the event had been held outside Europe or South America. With 24 different teams participating, the event had the highest attendance in World Cup history. These coins commemorate that tournament.

The WWII Memorial honors the more than 16 million veterans who served in this conflict.

Construction began on Monticello in 1769. Later, Jefferson remodeled and enlarged it.

The World Cup for soccer is one of the most sought-after trophies in the world.
Modern Commemorative Coins

1994 Vietnam Veterans Memorial Silver Dollar
Known as The Wall, the Vietnam Veterans Memorial recognizes more than 58,000 men and women who died during that war, or are still missing. The Wall is made out of two sections of highly polished black granite, each over 240 feet long, and rises 10.1 feet at its tallest point. A portion is shown on this coin with the Washington Monument in the background.

Composition: 90% silver  
Mints: Philadelphia & West Point

1994 U.S. Prisoner of War Museum Silver Dollar
Issued to help fund the National Prisoner of War Museum, which pays tribute to the hardships and sacrifices of all U.S. prisoners of war, this silver dollar was designed by Tom Nielson, a former POW. The museum located in Andersonville, GA, was once the site of a Civil War POW camp, and is part of Andersonville National Historic Site.

Composition: 90% silver  
Mints: Philadelphia & West Point

1994 Women in Military Service Memorial Silver Dollar
The first major memorial in the nation’s history to honor women in the military was funded in part by sales of this commemorative. Located at the Ceremonial Entrance to Arlington National Cemetery, the memorial pays tribute to all servicewomen, from the Revolutionary War to the present. It opened in 1997.

Composition: 90% silver  
Mints: Philadelphia & West Point

Andersonville Prison Camp was once the Confederates’ largest POW camp during the Civil War.

Names on the Vietnam Veterans Memorial are arranged chronologically by date of casualty.

The Hemicycle, which is part of the Women in Military Service Memorial, is shown on the reverse of the silver dollar.
1994 U.S. Capitol Bicentennial Silver Dollar
Authorized in 1993, this coin celebrates the 200th anniversary of the U.S. Capitol. Construction began in 1793, but because of financial shortfalls, the Senate wing was not completed until 1800, and the U.S. Congress met there for the first time in November. Work began on the House wing in 1804 and the House of Representatives began using it in 1807.

Composition: 90% silver
Mints: Denver & San Francisco

1995 Civil War Battlefield Preservation Half Dollar & Silver Dollar
In 1895, Gettysburg National Military Park became the first battlefield to be preserved as a memorial. These coins commemorate the 100th anniversary of the first protection of Civil War battlefields, which according to President George H. Bush's 1992 statement, are under attack from urban development. Roughly 30 acres of battlefields are lost each year.

Composition: Clad half dollar & 90% silver dollar
Mints: Philadelphia & San Francisco

These coins not only celebrated the 1996 Olympics held in Atlanta, GA, but also marked the 100th anniversary of the modern summer games held in 1896.

Olympiad Half Dollar
Composition: Clad
Mints: Philadelphia & West Point

Basketball  Baseball
Composition: Clad
Mints: Philadelphia & West Point

The Georgia Dome hosted team handball, gymnastics and basketball during the 1996 Summer Olympics

Eagle and Shield, a gilded wood sculpture in the Old Senate Chamber of the Capitol - dates from around 1834

Although many Civil War drummers were too young to fight, they kept order in the field and saw action
The Olympic flame is a tradition coming from the ancient Greek Olympics, over 2,700 years ago.
1995 Special Olympics World Games Silver Dollar
Issued to honor the Special Olympics, this silver dollar broke with coinage tradition and became the first U.S. coin to portray a living woman. In 1968, Eunice Kennedy Shriver co-founded the Special Olympics, which grew out of her work with people with special needs. About 1,000 athletes participated in those very first games held in Chicago.

Composition: 90% silver
Mints: Philadelphia & West Point

1996 National Community Service Silver Dollar
Each year, millions of Americans volunteer in soup kitchens, shelters, schools, and fire departments, and this silver dollar honors their efforts. Interestingly, the obverse, which features a standing Liberty, is based on an Augustus Saint-Gaudens’ design used on a medal in 1905. The reverse displays the inscription: SERVICE FOR AMERICA.

Composition: 90% silver
Mints: San Francisco

1996 Smithsonian Institution 150th Anniversary Silver Dollar
Struck to mark the 150th anniversary of the Smithsonian Institute, this is the first U.S. commemorative to benefit numismatics. Some of the funds supported the museum’s National Numismatic Collection. The museum was established in 1846 from a legacy left by Englishman James Smithson, who had never even visited the United States.

Composition: 90% silver
Mints: Philadelphia & Denver

Littleton employees pause during cleanup sponsored by LCC’s Community Service Program

Eunice Shriver began the Special Olympics when she was in her mid-40s

Called The Castle, this building was the original home of the Smithsonian Institution
1997 U.S. Botanic Garden Silver Dollar
Honoring the 165th anniversary of the nation’s oldest continually operating botanic garden, this silver dollar features the front of the Botanic Garden building. George Washington proposed the idea in 1796. Legislation was passed in 1820, creating an area to preserve and grow plants important to the nation. Although the coin marks the anniversary in 1995, it was not issued until 1997.

Composition: 90% silver
Mints: Philadelphia

1997 Jackie Robinson Silver Dollar
When Jackie Robinson signed with the Brooklyn Dodgers in 1947, he became the first African-American to play in the majors in the 20th century. This dollar celebrates the 50th anniversary of the event. Its front shows Robinson stealing home, and on back is the Jackie Robinson Foundation logo. The foundation provides disadvantaged students with scholarships, and skills for higher education.

Composition: 90% silver
Mints: San Francisco

1997 National Law Enforcement Officers Memorial Silver Dollar
Dedicated in 1991, the National Law Enforcement Officers Memorial honors law enforcement officers who have made the ultimate sacrifice for the safety of others. More than 18,600 names of those killed in the line of duty are carved on the memorial’s wall. This low-mintage coin marks the memorial’s 6th anniversary and shows two officers making a rubbing of a fallen comrade’s name.

Composition: 90% silver
Mints: Philadelphia

The same year this 1951 comic book was released, Jackie Robinson ended the season with a .335 batting average and 25 stolen bases

The Lord & Burnham greenhouse (conservatory), part of the Botanical Gardens, has 14 different exhibits

The memorial’s two curving, 304-foot-long blue-gray marble walls carry the names of all officers dating back to 1792, the first known death
1998 Robert F. Kennedy Silver Dollar
This silver dollar honors Robert F. Kennedy’s life work and legacy. During his presidential campaign, on the eve of his California primary victory in 1968, Kennedy was assassinated. As younger brother to JFK, “Bobby” Kennedy served as U.S. Attorney General and in the Senate. Seals of both offices are shown on the coin’s reverse.

1998 Black Revolutionary War Patriots Silver Dollar
Crispus Attucks, an African-American, became the first patriot killed in the Boston Massacre of 1770. Today, he is one of the few victims whose name is widely remembered. This coin not only marks the 275th anniversary of his birth, but also honors other black Revolutionary War patriots, and mint sales fund a proposed memorial to commemorate these heroes.

1999 Dolley Madison Silver Dollar
Not only is this first U.S. coin designed by Tiffany & Co., but also the first honoring a First Lady – Dolley Madison. During the War of 1812, she courageously refused to leave the White House until Gilbert Stuart’s famous painting of George Washington was safe from destruction! Considered one of the most beautiful modern commemoratives, it marks the 150th anniversary of her death.
1999 Yellowstone National Park Silver Dollar
Yellowstone National Park, established in 1872, holds the honor of being America’s first national park. In 1997 the park celebrated its 125th anniversary, and this coin honors that event. It was the last commemorative dollar of the 20th century. Geysers are relatively rare and Yellowstone is home to about half that exist worldwide.

2000 Library of Congress Bicentennial Silver Dollar
Established in 1800, the Library of Congress celebrated its 200th anniversary in 2000, and this coin marked that occasion. Not only is the library the nation’s oldest federal cultural institution, but it is also the world’s largest library. With over 140 million items and about 650 miles of bookshelves, it provides the U.S. Congress and the American people with unsurpassed research materials.

2000 Leif Ericson Millennium Silver Dollar
About A.D. 1,000, the Norseman Leif Ericson and his crew sailed west and eventually landed on the shores of present-day Newfoundland, Canada, which they named Vinland. The Vikings became the first Europeans to set foot in North America, and many believe they may have traveled as far west as Minnesota. This silver dollar marks the 1,000th anniversary of that voyage.
2001 American Buffalo Silver Dollar
Using a modified version on James Earle Fraser's very popular Buffalo nickel design, the U.S. Mint issued this silver dollar to help fund the National Museum of the American Indian. The mint began taking orders for the coin in May of 2001 and by June 21st, it had sold out. Construction started in 1999 and the museum opened in 2004.

Composition: 90% silver
Mints: Philadelphia & Denver

2001 U.S. Capitol Visitor Center Half Dollar & Silver Dollar
The obverse of both commemoratives show the north wing of the original Capitol, which the British burned in 1814, and today's building. Each year the U.S. Capitol draws millions of visitors. They receive a timed-entry pass and tour. Now instead of waiting outside, the Visitor Center provides information, food, and a place for people to wait inside.

Composition: Clad half dollar
90% silver dollar
Mints: Philadelphia

2002 Salt Lake City Olympic Games Silver Dollar
Struck to help support the 2002 Salt Lake City Olympics, this silver dollar features the Crystal Emblem of the games. The emblem represents a stylized snow crystal, and is a dramatic departure from previous Olympic coins that show athletes competing in various sports. The reverse shows the Salt Lake City skyline with the Rockies in the background.

Composition: 90% silver
Mints: Philadelphia & Denver

The museum’s distinctive architecture captures the feeling of wind-sculptured rock, and reflects the Native Americans’ connection to the earth
Modern Commemorative Coins

2002 West Point Bicentennial Silver Dollar

Established on March 16, 1802 by Thomas Jefferson, this prestigious military academy has graduated many notable American leaders, like Robert E. Lee, Ulysses S. Grant, and Dwight D. Eisenhower. Struck to honor West Point’s 200 years of “Duty, Honor, Country” (academy’s motto), this silver dollar shows military cadets on parade with Washington Hall and the Cadet Chapel in back.

Composition: 90% silver
Mints: West Point

2003 First Flight Centennial Half Dollar & Silver Dollar

On December 17, 1903, Orville and Wilbur Wright’s airplane soared above the ground at Kitty Hawk, NC. In just 12 seconds, the brothers successfully made the first engine-powered flight controlled by man. With Orville Wright piloting, the plane traveled 120 feet. The silver dollar features both brothers, and the half dollar the Wright Monument.

Composition: Clad half dollar & 90% silver dollar
Mints: Philadelphia

2004 Thomas Alva Edison Silver Dollar

Issued in 2004 to honor the 125th anniversary of Edison’s invention of the practical light bulb, this coin shows the inventor while the reverse depicts his first light bulb of 1879. For over a century, our daily lives have been brightened by his invention. Nicknamed "The Wizard of Menlo Park," Edison patented over 1,000 inventions during his lifetime.

Composition: 90% silver
Mints: Philadelphia

Although Edison invented the incandescent light bulb, the phonograph of 1877 made him famous.
2004 Lewis and Clark Bicentennial Silver Dollar
When Thomas Jefferson signed the Louisiana Purchase in 1803, he doubled our nation's size. To chart this unknown territory and build relations with the native peoples, he sent Lewis & Clark on a voyage of discovery. They traveled safely through hostile lands, making their way to the Pacific and back. This coin pays tribute to the 200th anniversary of that daring expedition.

2005 Chief Justice John Marshall
Issued for the 250th anniversary of the birth of John Marshall, this silver dollar celebrates the longest serving Chief Justice in Supreme Court history. Marshall served from 1801-1835, writing and shaping America's constitutional law. He established the court's right to judicial review of all Acts of Congress. This dollar depicts John Marshall, and the reverse shows the Old Supreme Court Chamber.

2005 Marine Corps 230th Anniversary Silver Dollar
This coin marks the first time the U.S. Mint has honored a branch of the military with a commemorative. Honoring the 230th anniversary of the Marine Corps' beginning in 1775, the obverse captures the Marines' heroism and courage with an image of the raising of the American flag at Iwo Jima. The reverse bears the Marine emblem and the motto SEMPER FIDELIS – “Always Faithful.”
Modern Commemorative Coins

2006 Benjamin Franklin Tercentenary Silver Dollars

Scientist
Naturally curious with a brilliant mind, Franklin was one of our young nation’s most important scientists, founding fathers, and thinkers. Called “Scientist,” this silver dollar marks the 300th anniversary of his birth. It shows Franklin conducting his famous kite and key experiment. The reverse shows his 1754 cartoon, which is believed to be America’s first political cartoon.

Composition: 90% silver
Mints: Philadelphia

Founding Father
As America’s first diplomat, it’s fitting this 300th anniversary coin is called “Founding Father.” It reflects the familiar Franklin image, capturing the statesman in his later years. From 1776-78, he worked to gain French support for the American independence. Later, he drew up trade and defense treaties with France. The reverse depicts the 1776 Continental Currency dollar with the mottoes he suggested.

Composition: 90% silver
Mints: Philadelphia

2006 San Francisco Old Mint Centennial Silver Dollar
Issued to honor the 100th anniversary of the “Granite Lady,” San Francisco’s Second Mint, this silver dollar pays tribute to the building’s role in helping the city survive the earthquake and fire of 1906. The reverse shows George T. Morgan’s beloved eagle design used on the Morgan dollar, and thought to have been copied from a 1904-S coin.

Composition: 90% silver
Mints: San Francisco

Trumbull’s painting of the five-man drafting committee presenting the Constitution to Congress in June 1776

America’s first known political cartoon is Franklin’s Join, or Die., published in his Pennsylvania Gazette newspaper

In 1961, the “Granite Lady,” the former U.S. Mint in San Francisco, became a National Historic Landmark
2007 Jamestown 400th Anniversary Silver Dollar
In May 1607, after 5 months at sea, the three ships Susan Constant, Godspeed, and Discovery landed on the banks of the James River, and established America’s first permanent English settlement. This coin celebrates the 400th anniversary of that momentous event. It shows people of three different cultures that worked together to establish the colony of Jamestown.

2007 Little Rock Central High School Desegregation Silver Dollar
On September 23, 1957, nine high schoolers became the first African-American students to enter Little Rock High School. When violence broke out they left, but returned two days later escorted by federal troops. They became known as The Little Rock Nine. The coin marks the 50th anniversary of this desegregation event and pays tribute to their courage.

2008 Bald Eagle Half Dollar & Silver Dollar
Designated our national emblem in 1782, the American bald eagle stood at the brink of extinction over 35 years ago. Thanks to the 1973 Endangered Species Act it has made a comeback, and was removed from the list in 2007. These handsome coins celebrate its recovery. The dollar features an eagle soaring, and the half dollar, eaglets nesting.
Modern Commemorative Coins

2009 Louis Braille Bicentennial Silver Dollar
This commemorative celebrates the 200th anniversary of Louis Braille’s birth. Plus, it is the first American coin to feature readable braille. Sightless since 4, Braille was just 15 years old when he developed the system that uses raised dots to represent letters. Before his invention, learning tools for the blind were limited to hard-to-read books that were expensive to make.

Composition: 90% silver
Mints: Philadelphia

2009 Abraham Lincoln Bicentennial Silver Dollar
Inspired by Daniel Chester French’s sculpture in the Lincoln Memorial, this silver dollar celebrates the 200th anniversary of Lincoln’s birth in 1809. It features a bold, full-faced depiction of “Honest Abe” and the reverse carries the final 43 words of his famous Gettysburg Address. Lincoln led America through the Civil War, abolished slavery, and dedicated his life to securing human rights and uniting a nation.

Composition: 90% silver
Mints: Philadelphia

2010 Veterans Disabled for Life Silver Dollar
Struck at West Point, located near the U.S. Military Academy, this silver dollar is the first ever to pay tribute to America’s disabled veterans. Through the years, millions of men and women have answered duty’s call, and the coin’s design reflects the tenacity and courage of those who live with permanent disabilities. These will help fund the American Veterans Disabled for Life Memorial.

Composition: 90% silver
Mints: West Point

Also scheduled for release in 2010, is the Boy Scout Centennial Silver Dollar.
Modern U.S. gold commemoratives offer collectors low mintages, unique designs and are limited-edition coins because they are not always issued every year. The most common denominations are $5 gold pieces, but occasionally the mint has issued $10 coins, and more recently, it issued the first-ever bimetallic commemorative in gold and platinum. Over the years, the majority of modern gold commemoratives have been Proofs, but a few Uncirculated versions have been issued too.

1984 Los Angeles Olympiad Gold $10
The torch relay began in May, at United Nations Plaza in New York. Bill Thorpe Jr., grandson of 1912 Olympian Jim Thorpe, ran the first leg. Over 3,600 runners took part, carrying the torch through 33 states, plus the District of Columbia on its way to the Los Angeles coliseum. This coin was the first $10 gold commemorative, the first of this denomination since 1933, and the first struck at 4 different mints.

1986 Statue of Liberty Centennial Gold $5
Not only is this gold coin the first $5 commemorative, but it also won the coveted Coin of the Year award in 1986. The dramatic design features a majestic close-up of the statue's head and crown on the obverse. An eagle in flight, about to land, is on the reverse. The design made it an instant collector hit, with the entire mintage selling out.
Modern Commemorative Coins

1987 U.S. Constitution Bicentennial Gold $5
America’s constitution has served as a model for other countries around the world since its creation over 200 years ago. Interestingly, the word democracy isn’t used in it. Quill pens, symbolic of what could have been used to sign the constitution, and a modernistic eagle are prominently displayed on this coin.

Composition: 90% gold
Mints: West Point

1988 Seoul Olympiad Gold $5
Considered by many one of our most beautiful modern coins, the $5 gold piece's obverse features the head of Nike, ancient goddess of victory. Chief Engraver Elizabeth Jones created the design in honor of the 1988 Olympic games held in South Korea. During those games, Flo-Jo (Florence Griffith-Joyner) won gold in the 100m, 200m and 4x100 relay and silver in the 4x400 relay.

Composition: 90% gold
Mints: West Point

1989 Congress Bicentennial Gold $5
1989 marked the 200th anniversary of the first Congressional meeting held in New York City in 1789, under the new constitution. Nowadays, Congress meets in the U.S. Capitol building, so it's fitting the dome is featured on this coin. Above the vice president’s chair in the Old Senate Chamber, is a carved gilded eagle and shield; this majestic carving is shown on the reverse.

Composition: 90% gold
Mints: West Point

The National Archives holds 3 of our nation’s most important documents: the Declaration of Independence, the Constitution, and the Bill of Rights

In Greek mythology, winged Nike is the goddess of Victory

New York City’s Federal Hall, where the first U.S. Congress met in 1789
1991 Mount Rushmore Golden Anniversary Gold $5
The swooping eagle, with sculptors’ tools in its talons, made one of the more dramatic commemorative designs of the era. Engraver John Mercanti seamlessly incorporated all of the required coin elements such as liberty and the date. The reverse, created by Robert Lamb, marked the first time the design carried no emblems or images – letters alone made up the motif.

1992 XXV Olympiad Gold $5
Celebrating both the 25th Olympic Summer games held in Spain, and Winter games held in France, this gold piece features a sprinter, with the U.S. flag in the background. The summer games saw the debut of professionals being allowed in basketball. America sent the “Dream Team,” composed of such greats as Larry Bird, Michael Jordan and Karl “the Mailman” Malone, to name a few.

1992 Christopher Columbus Quincentenary Gold $5
Celestial navigation was in its infancy, so Columbus primarily used dead reckoning on his voyage to the new world. We know this because he is believed to be the first sailor to keep a detailed log. Dead reckoning uses a magnetic compass to set the course, and calculates distance by time and speed, to chart the voyage. This coin honors that courageous ocean journey.
Modern Commemorative Coins

1993 Bill of Rights Gold $5
Known as the father of the Bill of Rights, James Madison introduced his proposal in June 1789, during the first meeting of the Congress. It guaranteed our essential rights and liberties, and became the first 10 amendments to the Constitution. The coin features James Madison reading the Bill of Rights, and the reverse displays one of his quotes.

Composition: 90% gold
Mints: West Point

1991-1995 50th Anniversary of World War II Gold $5
Struck to commemorate the 50th anniversary of WWII, this coin features a unique reverse design – the letter V and •••• Morse Code for that letter. The obverse depicts a soldier with his arms raised in victory. Both the Allies and Axis powers used Morse Code to encrypt messages, but the codes could be broken. America then began to use the Native American Code Talkers.

Composition: 90% gold
Mints: West Point

1994 World Cup Tournament Gold $5
One of the most sought-after trophies in the world is that for winning soccer's World Cup. So, it is fitting that this trophy is shown on the $5 gold coin's obverse. In the 1930s, French sculptor Abel LaFleur created the first trophy out of solid gold, but in 1983, it was stolen and apparently melted. The present-day trophy, made out of 18k gold, was created in 1974.

Composition: 90% gold
Mints: West Point

Not only did James Madison help draft the Bill of Rights, but he also served as a commander in the Virginia Militia.

Currently in World Cup Soccer, 32 qualifying teams compete in a round-robin-type tournament for the trophy.

Short wave radio and Morse code played a big part in combat during WWII.
**1995 Civil War Battlefield Preservation Gold $5**
Struck to honor the 100th anniversary of the protection of Civil War battlefields (1895), this coin shows a bugler on horseback. Buglers were a crucial part of all military efforts, used until the age of electronics. During the Civil War, the familiar melody *Taps* was created by Union General Daniel Butterfield, and later played at a military funeral for the first time.

**1995 – 1996 XXVI Olympiad Gold $5**
To celebrate the 1996 Olympics held in Atlanta, GA, and mark the 100th anniversary of the modern summer games, the U.S Mint issued four gold commemoratives.

**Composition:** 90% gold  
**Mints:** West Point

1995 Torch Bearer Runner  
1995 Stadium  
1996 Flag Bearer  
1996 Cauldron

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**Downtown Atlanta, host city of the 1996 Summer Olympics, seen from Centennial Olympic Park**

**Civil War buglers signaled wake up & lights out, boosted morale and relayed battlefield commands**

**Turner Field, once Olympic Stadium, is now home to the Atlanta Braves**
Modern Commemorative Coins

1996 Smithsonian Institution 150th Anniversary Gold $5
James Smithson, the British scientist whose fortune led to the creation of the Smithsonian Institution is on the obverse of this gold piece. The reverse shows the distinctive Smithsonian sunburst. Struck in gold, the $5 coin recalls the 104,960 gold Sovereigns (Smithson’s fortune), which were shipped to the U.S. and melted, to help fund the museum.

Composition: 90% gold
Mints: West Point

1997 Jackie Robinson Gold $5
An older Jackie Robinson is shown on the coin. After retiring from baseball in 1956, he served as vice president of human resources at Chock Full O’ Nuts until 1964. Robinson was an advocate of civil rights, a member of the NAACP and helped establish the Freedom National Bank, which loaned money to minority businessmen. In 1962, he was elected to the Baseball Hall of Fame.

Composition: 90% gold
Mints: West Point

1997 Franklin D. Roosevelt Gold $5
Ironically, the president who issued the Gold Recall Order of 1933, which called in America’s gold coins and gold certificates, is shown on this commemorative. While it does not honor an anniversary, the coin was unveiled at the Four Freedoms Award dinner. During a speech in 1941, FDR noted the four freedoms were: freedom of speech and expression, freedom of worship, freedom from want, and freedom from fear.

Composition: 90% gold
Mints: West Point

James Smithson devoted his life to exploring the natural world
Roosevelt’s Four Freedom’s speech is one of the most famous political speeches of the 20th century
Rachel Robinson accepting the Congressional Gold Medal for her deceased husband, Jackie Robinson
**1999 George Washington Death Bicentennial Gold $5**

In 1931, sculptor Laura Garden Fraser submitted this design for a competition for the Washington quarter. Although it was selected, because of the politics of the day, it ultimately lost to the present-day quarter design. For this $5 gold piece, the mint adapted her original winning design to commemorate the 200th anniversary of George Washington’s death, and honor his life and legacy.

**Composition:** 90% gold  
**Mints:** West Point

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**2000 Library of Congress Bicentennial Bimetallic $10**

To honor the Library of Congress’s 200th anniversary, the U.S. Mint issued the first-ever ringed, bimetallic commemorative. The mint used two separate planchets (coin blanks), an outer ring of .900 gold and a core of .9995 platinum, which bond together during striking. In 1814, the British burned the library, but Jefferson sold the government over 6,000 books from his own collection to start a new one.

**Composition:** .900 gold & .9995 platinum  
**Mints:** West Point

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**2001 U.S. Capitol Visitor Center Gold $5**

Inside the U.S. Capitol is a hallway that extends more than 100 feet, called the Hall of Columns. Built in the 1850s, Corinthian columns, made from marble quarried in Massachusetts, border each side of the hall. This $5 gold piece features an adaptation of the top of a column with the words 1800 FIRST CONVENING OF CONGRESS IN WASHINGTON.

**Composition:** 90% gold  
**Mints:** West Point

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The Mount Vernon Ladies’ Association has dedicated its resources to preserve and protect George Washington’s home.

This circa 1800 watercolor shows the North Wing of the U.S. Capitol before it was burned by the British.

The main Library of Congress Reading Room for humanities and social sciences.
2002 Salt Lake City Olympic Games Gold $5
The Crystal Emblem of the games, a stylized snow crystal, is the central design element seen on this commemorative. Over 2,300 athletes competed in the games, and 78 events were held. The judges used instant replay for the first time in figure skating in these games, and awarded two gold medals in pairs skating.

2003 First Flight Centennial Gold $10
Brothers Orville and Wilbur Wright, shown on the coin, solved the problem of how to control flight by watching birds fly and working with kites. They invented wing-warping features that provide attitude (orientation), control, and turning, through pilot operation. The coin’s reverse shows their biplane. Constructed out of muslin and softwood, it weighed 700 pounds.

2006 San Francisco Old Mint Centennial Gold $5
At a little past 5 A.M. on April 18, 1906, a magnitude 7.8 earthquake hit San Francisco and devastated much of the city. San Francisco’s Mint “The Granite Lady” (featured on the coin) came through the earthquake and ensuing fire with minimal damage overall. During the days that followed, the mint’s artesian well supplied water, light, and a point for food distribution to citizens from miles around.
2007 Jamestown 400th Anniversary Gold $5
While exploring the Chickahominy River in December 1607, Captain John Smith was captured by men from Powhatan’s tribe. Powhatan was a Native American chief of about 30 tribes living in the surrounding Jamestown area. Early the next year, Smith and Powhatan became trading partners. Both leaders are shown on the obverse of this $5 gold piece, and the reverse shows the Old Church at Jamestown.

Composition: 90% gold
Mints: West Point

2008 Bald Eagle Gold $5
This gold coin features two young bald eagles, and celebrates the bird’s removal from the Endangered Species List. Known as “immatures,” young bald eagles are brown and white speckled. The familiar white head and tail feathers don’t appear until about the 5th year, when they fully molt. In the wild, eagles live for about 20 years.

Composition: 90% gold
Mints: West Point

Caring For Your Coins
Proper handling and storage of coins is not difficult. It maintains the natural condition (and value) of collectible coins, and helps preserve them for future collectors. Below are a few tips that will help you care for your collection.

- **Handling:** It’s important to protect coin surfaces and designs from fingerprints and natural oils in fingers or palms that can be corrosive over time. Coins should be held by their edges between thumb and forefinger (see picture), and for high-quality Uncirculated or Proof coins, use soft cotton gloves.

- **Cleaning:** Improper cleaning, more than anything else, harms valuable coins. Do not clean high-quality Uncirculated and Proof coins. Improper cleaning can cause permanent loss of original mint finish, color, and value, plus experts can easily detect an improperly cleaned coin.

- **Storage:** Humidity, air pollution, salt air, and temperature extremes can sometimes affect surfaces of coins. Store your coins in protective holders or albums, and keep them in an area with relatively uniform temperature.
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