

Term	Definition
Abrasions	Light rubbing or scuffing from friction, not to be confused with hairlines or bag marks.
Accolated	Conjoined, jugate. Design with two heads facing the same direction and overlapping.
Albata	A white metallic alloy; which is made into spoons, forks, teapots, etc. British plate or German silver.
Alignment	Alignment, also known as die alignment or die axis, refers to the relationship in orientation of the obverse and reverse of a medal or coin. "Coin Alignment" normally means that the coin must be "flipped" from 6:00 to 12:00 for the obverse and reverse to be viewed right-side-up. "Medal Alignment" means that the medal must be rotated from 9:00 to 3:00 for the obverse and the reverse to be viewed right-side-up.
Allotropes of Tin	Grey tin, stable below 13.2°C, which is a grey powdery substance. White tin, stable from 13.2°C to 161°C, which is the normal white metallic form. Rhombic tin, stable above 161°C to the melting point, another metallic form, has been referred to in some sources. I have no clear evidence for this form. Thus on an ordinary English winter day (below 13.2° C, white tin should turn into a grey powder. In fact this does not happen unless in extreme cold, but once some is formed, the transformation is more rapid, giving rise to what is known as tin-pest.
Alloy	A combination of two or more metals, such as electrum or cupro-nickel.
Alloy	Coin metal that is made from two or more different metals, blended together in the molten state. Other than United States Large Cents and Half Cents, which are pure copper, all U.S. coins have been alloyed. Copper, at a 1-to-9 ratio, is the usual alloy for gold and silver. There are several reasons for not using metals in their pure state. Gold for instance is too soft and subject to wear if not alloyed with a tougher substance. Sometimes alloying is done for economic reasons or to improve the appearance of a coin. The practice of coins being alloyed goes back to ancient times.
Anepigraphic	Coin or medal with no legend.
Anneal	To soften dies, planchets or metal by heat treatment.
Assay	Analytic test or trial to ascertain the fineness, weight and consistency of precious or other metal in coin or bullion. An assay piece is one that has been assayed.
Attributes	The elements of a coin that help determine grade (such as strike, marks, luster, and appeal)
Attribution	The identification of a numismatic item by characteristics such as issuing authority, date or period, Mint, denomination, metal in which struck, and by a standard reference.
Base metal	Non-precious metal; e.g., copper.
Bath Metal	Metal made from an alloy of zinc and copper. This metal was in Britain in the 18th century for tokens and sometimes for medals.
Beading	The tiny dots usually found around the rim of a coin.

# Glossary

Term	Definition
Bilingual	Referring to the inscription on a coin that is in two languages.
Blank	A stamped out piece of metal before the sides have been raised. See planchet.
Blundered Inscription	A mistake made with the writing on a coin. Sometimes due to the illiteracy of the person making the dies (often the tribes that copied the Roman and Greek ancient coins) or more recently an error.
Bracteate	A very thin medieval European coin with the design impressed on one side showing through to the other side.
Brass	An alloy of copper and zinc, although the term is loosely used to include all copper alloys. Generally the alloys used vary in composition from 3% zinc to 30% zinc, and vary in color from the red of copper to a bright yellow.
Bronze	An alloy of copper, zinc, and tin with a composition of (generally) 95 % copper, 4% tin, 1% zinc. Bronze has been used for coinage since since ancient times. The exact formula has varied in different places and eras.
Bronzing	Research a definition for this!
bs	brass
Burnishing	a process by w planchet or coin are made to shine through rubbing or polishing
Bust	Device including head, neck, and some part of shoulder or chest.
bz	bronze
co	copper
Cabinet friction	Slight surface wear on a coin, token or medal caused by friction between it and the tray or envelope in which it is contained.
Cast	Made not in the usual manner of striking with dies, but by pouring molten metal into a mold.
Celluloid	Celluloid is the name of a class of compounds created from nitrocellulose and camphor, plus dyes and other agents, generally regarded to be the first thermoplastic. Easily molded and shaped, there are suggestions that celluloid was first made as an ivory replacement. Celluloid is highly flammable and also easily decomposes, and is no longer widely used. The first celluloids were made in 1856 by Alexander Parkes, but he was never able to actually use his invention. The name Celluloid actually began as a trademark of the Celluloid Manufacturing Company, which manufactured the celluloids patented by John Wesley Hyatt (whose use of heat and pressure simplified the manufacture of these compounds). The name was registered in 1870.
Chevron Milling	A coin with '>' shaped edge milling as opposed to the usual small straight ridges. Not widely used today but originally intended to deter counterfeiting.
Circulated	Denotes a numismatic item that has been used and no longer in its new condition as minted or printed.
Coin	Metal currency issued by a governmental authority as legal tender.

Term	Definition
Commemorative	A coin, token, or banknote issued to mark, honor or observe an anniversary, other event, place or person, or to preserve its memory.
Conjoined	Accolated, jugate. Two or more busts shown facing the same way with one on top of the other. The only British example of this is William and Mary 1688-94.
Continental dollar	A dollar-sized pattern struck in 1776 as a proposed coinage.
Copper	A soft reddish metal known since ancient times. It is rarely used unalloyed in modern coins, other than as a coating for other metals (modern US cents and the UK 1p and 2p are examples), because it has relatively poor wear properties. The beautiful large British pennies of Queen Victoria from 1839 to 1859 were made of copper.
Cruciform Shields	4 shields in the form of a cross. The most recent British example is probably the florins of George V (1911-36).
D, Del, or Des	Delineated or designed
Denticles or dentils	The toothlike raised design around the rims of some coins. They are part of the die design.
Design	The arrangement of devices, lettering, etc. on a coin.
Designer	The artist who creates a coin's design. The engraver is the person who cuts a design into a coinage die.
Details	Small features and fine lines in a coin design. Particularly those seen in hair, leaves, wreaths and feathers.
Device	A major design element, such as a portrait, shield or heraldic emblem, on the obverse and/or reverse of a coin, token or medal.
Die	A hardened metal punch, the face of which carries an intaglio or incuse mirror-image to be impressed on one side of a planchet.
Die Axis	The angle at which the top and bottom coin dies oppose each other when the coin is struck. All circulating British coins are '^'. In other words you can hold a coin by the top and bottom, turn it around and the other side is up the correct way up. The other main die axis is when you hold a coin by the top and bottom, turn it around and the other side is upside down. I represent this 180 degrees rotation by 'v'. During ancient times coins often had random die rotation depending on how the dies were placed before striking.
Die Variety	Because dies wear out often different pairs are used to strike medals..
Edge	Often termed the third side of a coin, it is the surface perpendicular to the obverse and reverse. Not to be confused with rim. Edges can be plain, lettered or milled (reeded or with some other repetitious device). Edges became particularly important with the advent of machine-struck coinage.
Edge Inscription	The words on the edge of a coin. A modern example is the edge of British One pound coins which bears a different inscription each year.
Edge Plain	A plain edge with no ridges or words, like for example the British 2p coin.

# Glossary

Term	Definition
Effigy	The name given to the Head on the obverse of a coin. For example the Effigy of Queen Elizabeth II on all current British coins. <i>Shown in Illustration 1, top of page.</i>
Engraver	A person who cuts a design into a coinage die.
Engraving	The engraving of the dies with the negative coin image.
Exergue	(Pronounced EXsurge). The area on a coin generally below the main design area, often the site of the engraver's and/or designer's name or initial in very small print. Such data is referred to as being "in exergue" (relative to the design element above it).
Exonumia	A broad category of non-money, non-legal tender numismatic items, including tokens, medals and badges. An exonumist is a specialist in exonumia.
Exonumia	Tokens, medals and other non-monetary coin-like objects. The numismatic items studied and/or collected by an exonumist.
f., fec., fect., fct, fecit., fac., faciebat	made by
Field	That portion of a coin's surface not used for a design or inscription.
Fillet	A name for a head band. On some Victorian coins there are varieties where the Queen wears a slightly different fillet combination.
Fillet Head	A head on coins showing the hair tied with a band, generally on the forehead.
Fineness	Represents the purity of precious metal, either in monetary or bullion form. Most forms of precious metal require an additional metal to provide a durable alloy. Often stated in terms of purity per 1,000 parts: A .925 fine silver coin has 92.5 percent silver and 7.5 percent other metal.
Flan	A blank piece of metal in the size and shape of a medal on which are struck the obverse and reverse designs by the dies. Also called planchet.
Friction	A disturbance which appears either on the high-points of a coin or in the fields, as a result of that coin rubbing against other objects. A coin is said to have friction when only the lustre is disturbed, and no actual wear of the metal is visible to the naked eye. Many strictly uncirculated coins can have some friction, often from storage in old style coin cabinets or albums or from rubbing against other coins in rolls. (See "Rubbing").
Gelluloid	Gelluloid is a mixture of nitrocellulose and camphor. These two when mixed together form a plastic mass which can be molded into any desired shape. (From An Elementary Study of Chemistry by William Edwards Henderson, 1917.)
Glory	A circlet or halo, usually of stars, from which radiate lines represent beams of light.
Goldine	A gold-colored finish often used for medals or tokens.

Term	Definition
Goloid	Goloid, a "dream metal" patented by Dr. William Wheeler Hubbell on May 22, 1877, was employed to strike numerous pattern dollars beginning in 1878 and continuing through 1880. This alloy contained silver and gold metal in the value ratio of 16 to 1, alloyed with 10% copper by weight (to add strength). Goloid coins were to be struck with weights and proportions on the metric system, hence the term goloid metric dollar. Hopefully, goloid would please both silverites and gold bugs and would be a prayer answered at the Mint. Reality intervened, and Dr. Richard H. Linderman pointed out that the goloid alloy looked just like silver, was indistinguishable from the standard silver, and that if one grain of gold were replaced by one of silver the intrinsic value would drop to just 81-1/4 cents, and if the gold were omitted entirely, the value would be reduced to 60 cents with no one except a metallurgist being able to tell the difference. After considerable experimentation, the idea of goloid and a metric coinage was dropped.
Graining	The usual American name for the ridged 'Milled' type edge.
Gutta percha	Gutta-percha, a resin from the Isonandra Gutta tree from the Malay Peninsula was one of the first of the natural plastics to be exploited by man. It is chemically the same as that other tree extract, rubber, but the shape of the molecule gives it different properties. The name Gutta Percha is used to describe any dark coloured Victorian moulding material, from horn to shellac and Bois Durci to genuine gutta percha.
Hammer die	The die that performs the striking action. See also anvil die.
Holed	The name given to a coin with a hole in it! Usually because it has been used as jewellery in the past. Needless to say collectors don't often want coins with holes in them unless that's how they were made.
Hub	A positive punch used to impress negative working dies used to strike coins and medals.
Hybrid	Another name for a mule.
Incuse	A design that is recessed rather than raised, produced by a die on which the field has been carved away to leave the negative design and inscription in relief. The opposite of the more common bas-relief method in which the design and inscription is raised above the field.
Inscription	The legend or lettering on a coin.
Inv, Invenit	He invented or created it.
Jugate	Conjoined, accolated. Design with two heads facing the same direction and overlapping.
lam	looped as made
Lead	Lead is a very soft bluish-grey metal, so early lead coins do not survive very well. However, it has been used, particularly in southern India around the time of Christ, in China, and in Burma and Siam during the 19th century. Because it casts well and has a silvery appearance when new it has often been used for forgeries, especially when plated to replicate gold coins. In its normal state it tarnishes rapidly to a dark grey colour, and has extremely poor wear resistance.

# Glossary

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Term	Definition
Legend	The inscription on a numismatic item.
Lettered edge	An incused or raised inscription on the edge of a coin.
Lith., litho., lithog	Lithographed by
Low Relief	A coin with low relief is one with the raised design not protruding as much as is usual.
Master die	A metal punch used to produce "working hubs," which are then used to produce working dies. See also die and hub.
Master hub	A metal punch used to produce master dies. See also hub and master die.
Maverick	An unidentifiable specimen, generally referring to a token.
Medal	Usually a piece of metal, marked with a design or inscription, made to honor a person, place or event; not intended to pass as money.
Medalet	A medal smaller than 25.4 mm (1 inch).
Medallion	Sometimes used to denote a large medal, usually 3 or more inches in diameter.
Milled Edge	A raised rim around the outer surface of a coin, produced by the collar in a medal or coin press. This is a confusing term, because it is actually distinguished by the raised rim and not by the edge, which can be plain (smooth), patterned (reeded or engrailed), or lettered.
Mintage	The process of striking coins. Quantity coined.
Misstrike	An coin that has not been struck properly.
Mod., modellavit	He modeled it.
Motto	An inspirational word or phrase used on a coin.
Mule	A coin, token or medal whose obverse die is not matched with its official or regular reverse die.
Mule	A medal struck from a die pair, one of whose dies has been used with another die to create a new medal with one common side.
Mullet	A five-pointed star, taken from Fench heraldry.
Mute	A 'silent' coin; same as anepigraphic.
Novodel	A "restrrike" make from newly-made copy dies. The Continental Dollars produced in 1876 by Dickeson for sale as souvenirs at the Philadelphia Exposition are novodels. The versions produced later from the same dies by Empire and Barlow are restrikes rather than novodels. (de Tom Delorey)
Numismatics	Of or related to coins, medals, and tokens.
Numismatist	A student or collector of coins, medals, tokens, and/or similar items.

Term	Definition
Obverse	Technically the side of the coin that is uppermost when the coin is struck but usually referred to as the side of the coin with the 'Head' on it. <i>Shown in Illustration 1, top of page.</i>
Oreide or Oroide	An alloy of copper, zinc, and tin, used in imitation gold jewelry.
Pattern	An experimental or trial coin or medal, generally of a newer design, denomination or metal.
Piefort	A piece struck on a planchet twice or more the normal thickness. The French spelling used in Europe is piefort.
Planchet, blank	The disc of metal or other material on which the dies of the coin, token or medal are impressed; also called blank, disc, flan.
Plaque	Generally square or rectangular medal more than eight inches in its longest dimension. Anything larger is a tablet.
Plaquette	Generally square or rectangular medal less than eight inches in its longest dimension.
Reeded Edge	The edge of a coin with grooved lines that run vertically around its perimeter. The edge found on all modern United States silver coins.
Reeding	Another name for the small grooves on some coins.
Relief	Any part of a coin's design that is raised above the coin's surface is said to be in relief. The opposite of relief is incuse.
Restrike	A numismatic item produced from original dies at a later date.
Reverse	The side opposite to that on which the head or principal figure is impressed. The side opposite from the obverse. On paper money this is called the back.
Rim	The raised border around the circumference of a coin, which protects the design from wear, not to be confused with the edge.
Rotation	The direction in which a medal must be turned from obverse to reverse in order to keep the image right-side-up. "Medal" rotation is horizontal (from 9:00 to 3:00). "Coin" rotation is vertical from 12:00 to 6:00). Most medals exhibit medal rotation, though there are exceptions.
sc	scalloped (# of lobes)
Sc., sculp., sculpsit., sculpt	carved or engraved
So-called dollar	A silver dollar-sized medal commemorating a special event.
Strike	The act of impressing the image of a die into a planchet, making a coin. The quality of strike is important when determining the amount of wear on a coin.
Tin	Silver-like in color and very malleable, but too soft to stand up to wear, and the metal is more often used as an alloying addition in copper to make bronze. The metal has three allotropic forms (see Tin Pest). Medals made of white metal are sometimes incorrectly referred to as tin.

## Glossary

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Term	Definition
Tin Pest	<p>Tin pest is an example of an autocatalytic reaction of the element tin, which causes deterioration of tin objects at low temperatures. Tin pest has also been called tin disease, or tin leprosy (Lèpre d'etain). It was long observed in pipes in pipe organs in medieval in cathedrals in Europe in cool climates. What the medieval church members noticed, was as soon as the tin began decomposing, the process sped up, and seemed to feed on itself, and would continue even at higher temperatures. At 13.2 Celsius (about 56 degrees Fahrenheit) and cooler, pure tin had a habit of self-destructing from the (silvery, ductile) allotrope of white tin to brittle, useless grey tin. Eventually it often decomposed into powder, hence the name tin pest. What was happening was the decomposition was catalyzing itself, which was why the reaction seemed to speed up once it started; the mere presence of tin pest led to more tin pest. Tin objects at low temperatures would simply disintegrate. In modern tin casting and plating, the tin is alloyed with small amounts of antimony or bismuth which prevent the decomposition. Silver, indium, and lead have also been used.</p>
Token	<p>A numismatic item, similar and often confused with a medal, but issued for the purpose of promoting a business, such as advertising or “Good for” tokens.</p>
Toothed	<p>Usually referring to the border of the coin with miniature toothed like pattern around the rim. Similar to beading and shown on the picture at the top of the page but the teeth are 'attached' to the rim.</p>
Truncation	<p>The sharply cut off bottom edge of a bust.</p>
Uniface	<p>Having a design on one side only.</p>
VF	<p>Very Fine</p>
Working die	<p>A metal punch that is used to impress images into coins; wrong-reading. See also die.</p>
Working hub	<p>A metal punch used to produce working dies; right-reading. See also die and hub.</p>