



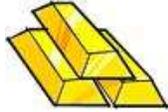
Consumer Affairs Tabloid



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Army Community Service Financial Readiness Branch

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Excerpt from the Federal Trade Commission

<http://ftc.gov/bcp/edu/pubs/consumer/alerts/alt187.shtm>

Investing In Bullion and Bullion Coins

If you're thinking about investing in bullion or bullion coins, the Federal Trade Commission (FTC), the nation's consumer protection agency, says your best bet is to research your options and get smart. Being uninformed can have serious consequences.

Bullion is a bulk quantity of precious metal, usually gold or silver, assessed by weight, typically cast as ingots or bars, and sold by major banks and dealers. You also can buy bullion as coins.

Bullion coins are minted from precious metal, usually gold or silver, and bought for investment purposes from major banks, coin dealers, brokerage firms, and precious metal dealers. Their value is based on their gold or silver bullion content. Prices fluctuate daily, depending on the price of gold and silver in the world markets.

The U.S. Mint has produced gold, silver and platinum bullion coins since 1986, and guarantees their precious metal content. The Mint produces two types of bullion coins:

- *Proof bullion coins*, which are specially minted for collectors and usually sold in a protective display case directly by the Mint.
- *Uncirculated bullion coins*, which are minted for investment purposes and sold to a select number of authorized buyers based on the current market price (the spot price) for the precious metal plus a small premium charged by the Mint.

Check these websites for additional information:

- Commodity Futures Trading Commission – www.cftc.gov
- U.S. Mint – www.usmint.gov
- U.S. Securities and Exchange Commission – www.sec.gov and www.investor.gov
- American Numismatic Association – www.money.org
- World Gold Council – www.gold.org

Excerpt from the United States Mint

www.usmint.gov/consumer/?action=consumer

Consumer Information



Colorized and Plated Coins

The United States Mint has never produced or sold colorized coins or gold- or silver-plated coins. However, many businesses purchase genuine United States coins and then plate them in a thin layer of gold or silver or use a variety of methods to "colorize" the coins. The most common colorization techniques involve painting an enamel finish on the coin or applying a holographic or superimposed image to the coin.

Excerpt from the Federal Trade Commission
www.ftc.gov/bcp/edu/pubs/consumer/alerts/alt186.shtml

Investing in Gold? What's the Rush?

You see the ads on TV and online, and you hear them on the radio: they tout gold as a solid investment. It's true that people sometimes use gold to diversify their investment portfolio: it can help hedge against inflation and economic uncertainty. But how much gold to buy, in what form, at what price, and from whom, are important questions to answer before you make that investment.

All Gold is Not Created Equal

You can buy gold in a variety of forms:

Gold Stocks and Funds – Buying stock in a gold mining firm or buying into a mutual fund that invests in gold bullion is a common way to invest in gold. Most brokerage firms buy and sell these financial instruments. Gold stocks and mutual funds may offer more liquidity than actual gold, and there's no need for an investor to store or protect gold investments purchased in this form.

Bullion and Bullion Coins – Bullion is a bulk quantity of precious metal, usually gold or silver, assessed by weight and typically cast as ingots or bars.

Collectible Coins – These coins have some historic or aesthetic value to coin collectors. Most collectible coins have a market value that exceeds their face value or their precious metal content. This so-called collectible value is often called numismatic value. The coin dealers who sell collectible coins often have valuable coins graded by professional services, but grading can be subjective.

From the files of Fort Hood Consumer Affairs Office

Before jumping on the bandwagon and rushing out to buy or invest in gold ask yourself a few questions.

1. Are you a collector or an investor?
2. What are my investment goals and how well does gold fit in with my current portfolio?
3. Do I understand what drives the price of gold?
4. How do I check out an investment company or broker?
5. What are the guarantees, risks, and fees?
6. What are my options?



The Financial Readiness Branch offers classes on Credit, Savings & Investing, Home Buying, Banking, Budgeting/Debt Management, Insurance and Consumer Awareness/Identity Theft. Call 553-4701 for more information.

Previous issues of the Consumer Affairs Tabloid are available on the Financial Readiness section of the ACS website at www.hoodmwr.com/acs.

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