

Australia's banknotes represented a world first in currency manufacturing – they were the first full series to be printed on polymer (plastic). Polymer banknote technology was developed in Australia, jointly by the Reserve Bank and the CSIRO. The reason for introducing polymer banknotes was simple – to keep one step ahead of counterfeiters by making Australia's banknotes more secure. Polymer banknotes have the added benefit of being more durable than paper banknotes which, in turn, makes them more cost-effective.

The designs of the banknotes celebrate the diversity of Australia's social, cultural and scientific achievements.

The \$50 polymer banknote was first issued on 4 October 1995.



Dealing with suspect banknotes

It is an offence to knowingly possess counterfeits. Suspect banknotes should be given to State or Federal police.

If you have concerns about a banknote, you are within your rights to refuse to accept it.

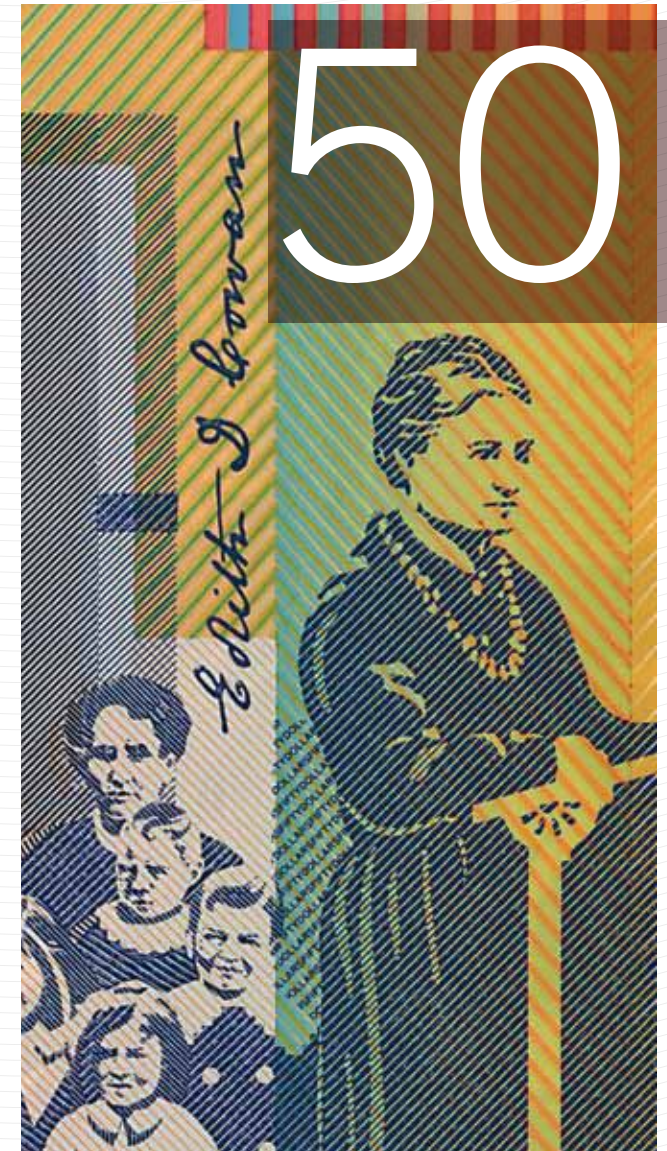
If you suspect a banknote is counterfeit:

- Handle it as little as possible.
- Note relevant information, such as how it came into your possession.
- Report the matter immediately to the police.

Do not take actions that may jeopardise your safety or the safety of others.

If the suspect banknote is found to be genuine, you will receive full value for it.

AUSTRALIA'S BANKNOTES



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\$50 banknote

Who's who on the \$50 banknote

David Unaipon, a Ngarrindjeri man, made significant contributions to science, literature and improvements in conditions for Aboriginal people. Despite having no advanced education in mathematics, Unaipon researched many engineering problems and developed a number of his own inventions. In 1909, he patented an improved hand tool for sheep shearing, depicted on the front of the banknote. Unaipon gained a reputation as 'Australia's Leonardo' for his promotion of scientific ideas. He became the first published Aboriginal writer; his earliest published works included newspaper and magazine articles and a booklet entitled *Native Legends*, published in 1929.

Edith Cowan is best remembered as a social worker and the first female member of an Australian parliament. Gaining insight from her husband's work as a police magistrate, Cowan was involved in many voluntary organisations throughout her life and worked towards important reforms for women, children and migrants. She helped found the Women's Service Guild, which advocated equal rights of citizenship. Cowan was also a founding member of the Children's Protection Society, which was instrumental in establishing the Children's Court, where she was one of the first women appointed to the bench. Cowan was elected to the Legislative Assembly in Western Australia in 1921.

Did you know?

David Unaipon believed that the aerodynamics of the boomerang could be applied to aircraft and predicted the development of the helicopter.

Did you know?

When Edith Cowan was elected to parliament in 1921, she narrowly defeated the then Attorney-General, T.P. Draper, who was responsible for introducing the changes to legislation that allowed her to run for the seat.

Is your banknote genuine?

- Always check a range of security features – don't rely on only one or two.
- It can be useful to compare a suspect banknote with one you know is genuine. Look for differences.
- All Australian banknotes have similar security features, though their location can vary.

1. Feel the banknote

Australian banknotes are printed on plastic and have a distinct feel. The dark printing is produced with a special raised ink that can be felt with your finger.

2. Check the clear window

The clear window should be part of the banknote and not an addition. Check that the white image of the Southern Cross cannot be easily rubbed off and look for the clear embossing of the number '50'.

3. Look for the star

Diamond-shaped patterns are printed inside a circle on each side of the banknote. When the banknote is held up to the light, the patterns should line up perfectly to form a seven-pointed star.

4. Check the shadow image

A hidden image of the Australian Coat of Arms to the right of Unaipon's portrait can be seen when the banknote is held up to the light.

5. Look for the microprinting

Under a magnifying glass you will see tiny, clearly defined words that read 'FIFTY DOLLARS'.



Actual banknote dimensions: 65 mm x 151 mm (images not to scale)

Examine the plastic

It is difficult to start a tear along the edge of a genuine banknote. You can also try scrunching it in your hand – a genuine banknote should spring back when you release it.

Check the print quality

The background printing should be sharp. Check for irregularities such as less clearly defined patterns, thicker or thinner lines, or colour differences.

Look at the banknote under UV light

The serial numbers on a genuine banknote will glow under ultraviolet light, along with a patch showing the value i.e. '50'. The rest of the banknote should not glow under this light.

FOR MORE INFORMATION

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