



FEDERAL RESERVE BANK  
OF DALLAS

HELEN E. HOLCOMB  
FIRST VICE PRESIDENT AND  
CHIEF OPERATING OFFICER

DALLAS, TEXAS  
75265-5906

September 4, 1998

**Notice 98-81**

**TO:** The Chief Operating Officer of each  
financial institution and others concerned  
in the Eleventh Federal Reserve District

**SUBJECT**

**Redesigned \$20 Note**

**DETAILS**

The Treasury Department, together with the Federal Reserve, has prepared a brochure entitled *New Designs For Your Money*. The brochure introduces you and your customers to the new 1996 series \$20 notes, which will be released on September 24, 1998. New issues of lower denominations will follow.

Like the Series 1996 \$100 and \$50 notes issued in 1996 and 1997, respectively, this new design contains advanced security features to discourage counterfeiters. Security features such as a larger, off-center portrait, color-shifting ink, microprinting, a watermark, and a security thread have been incorporated into the new design. The back side of the note contains a large dark numeral on a light-colored background to help the low-vision community identify the bill.

The \$20 note is traditionally the large bill most frequently used to conduct daily business and, as such, it may be the first of the newly redesigned currency that many Americans will see. The note is widely issued by ATMs and is the most often counterfeited note in the United States.

**ENCLOSURES**

For your convenience, we have enclosed a brochure depicting the newly redesigned note. To order the brochure and other educational material at no charge, please complete the enclosed order form and mail or fax it to the Federal Reserve Bank of Kansas City—Omaha Branch.

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For additional copies, bankers and others are encouraged to use one of the following toll-free numbers in contacting the Federal Reserve Bank of Dallas: Dallas Office (800) 333-4460; El Paso Branch *Intrastate* (800) 592-1631, *Interstate* (800) 351-1012; Houston Branch *Intrastate* (800) 392-4162, *Interstate* (800) 221-0363; San Antonio Branch *Intrastate* (800) 292-5810.

**MORE INFORMATION**

For more information, please contact Sarah Jennings at (214) 922-5259. For small quantities of brochures and posters (50 or less), please call the Dallas Fed's publications line at (214) 922-5254.

Sincerely,

*Helen E. Holcomb*



# NEW DESIGNS FOR YOUR MONEY



**T**HE UNITED STATES is issuing currency with new security features. These enhancements make U.S. currency easier to recognize as genuine and more secure against advancing technologies that could be used for counterfeiting.

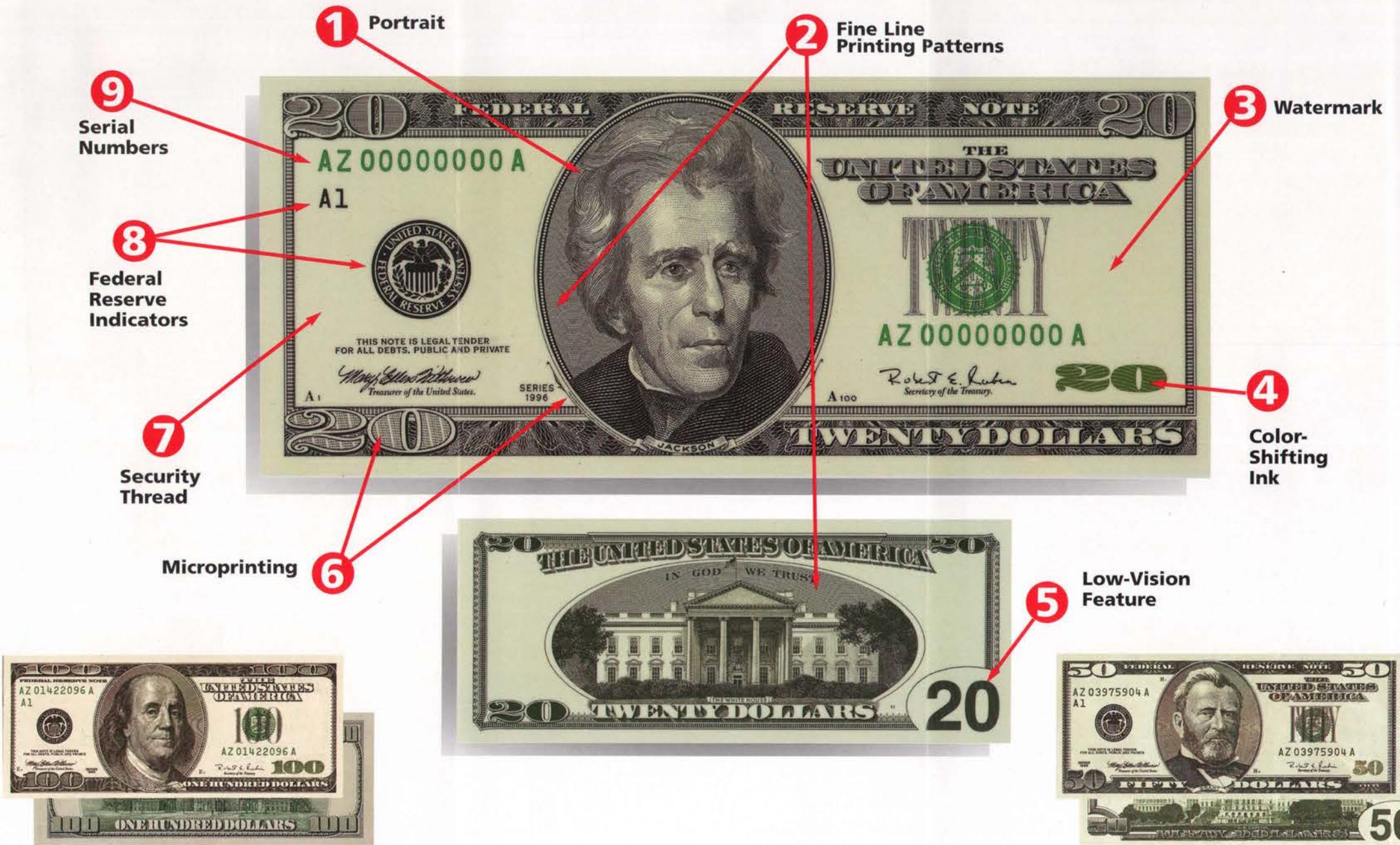
Newly designed \$100 notes were issued in 1996, newly designed \$50s were issued in 1997, and the newly designed \$20s are being issued in 1998. Lower denominations with new designs will follow. There will be no recall or devaluation of any U.S. currency, so you will continue to see both older and newer designs. Whether old or new, all U.S. currency always will be honored at full face value.

### **The Need for Change**

The new currency series of bank notes represents an ongoing commitment to protect the U.S. currency. In fact, U.S. currency has seen important changes throughout the years, beginning with the first series of U.S. bank notes issued in 1861. These early notes featured a distinctive cotton/linen paper, green ink, and a fine-line design. In 1928, each denomination was standardized with easily recognizable single portraits and illustrations. In 1990, U.S. currency was enhanced with two important new features—the security thread that runs vertically through the note, and microprinting around the portrait border—but the currency's appearance remained largely unchanged.

Now after nearly four generations, U.S. currency is undergoing a more noticeable change in appearance. And in the future, as new, dependable technology becomes available, the next generation of currency enhancements will be incorporated into the currency.

# WHAT'S NEW ABOUT YOUR MONEY



- 1 Portrait** The enlarged portrait of Andrew Jackson is easier to recognize, while the added detail is harder to duplicate. The portrait is now off-center, providing room for a watermark and reducing wear and tear on the portrait.
- 2 Fine Line Printing Patterns** The fine lines printed behind both the portrait and the building are difficult to replicate.
- 3 Watermark** A watermark identical to the portrait is visible from both sides when held up to a light.
- 4 Color-Shifting Ink** The number in the lower right corner on the front of the note looks green when viewed straight on, but appears black when viewed at an angle.
- 5 Low-Vision Feature** The large numeral on the back of the \$20 note is easy to read. Also, a machine-readable feature has been incorporated for the blind. It will facilitate development of convenient scanning devices that could identify the note as a \$20.
- 6 Microprinting** Because they're so small, microprinted words are hard to replicate. On the front of the note, "USA 20" is repeated within the number in the lower left-hand corner, and "The United States of America" is along the lower edge ornamentation of the oval framing the portrait.
- 7 Security Thread** A polymer thread embedded vertically in the paper to the far left of the portrait indicates the \$20 denomination. The words "USA TWENTY" and a flag can be seen from both sides of the note when held up to a bright light. The number "20" appears in the star field of the flag. Additionally, this thread glows green when held under an ultraviolet light.
- 8 Federal Reserve Indicators** A new universal seal represents the entire Federal Reserve System. A letter and number beneath the left serial number identify the issuing Federal Reserve Bank.
- 9 Serial Numbers** An additional letter is added to the serial number. The unique combination of eleven numbers and letters appears twice on the front of the note.

\$100 note, issued in March, 1996.

\$50 note, issued in October, 1997.

## Familiar Features

The new currency is still distinctly recognizable as American. Many elements remain the same, including:

- ▶ **Size of the bill**
- ▶ **Ink colors**—black on the front and green on the back
- ▶ **Paper**—cotton and linen with red and blue fibers
- ▶ **Texture of the paper**
- ▶ **Historical figures and back illustrations**—with slight alterations
- ▶ **Motto**—“In God We Trust.”

In addition, the security measures first introduced in the Series 1990 currency—microprinting and the embedded security thread—have been modified for use in the new currency. Other changes incorporated in the new design include a modified serial number and a modified Federal Reserve Seal.

## New Features

The design of U.S. currency has been changed to incorporate a number of new security features, among them:

- ▶ **Larger, off-center portrait**
- ▶ **Watermark portrait**
- ▶ **Color-shifting ink**
- ▶ **Fine-line printing patterns**
- ▶ **Low-vision feature on \$20 and \$50**

## A Smooth Transition

It is important to remember that *all* U.S. currency will continue to be honored at full face value. There will be no recall or devaluation of any U.S. notes. As the new currency is phased in, the old notes will be retired by the Federal Reserve when they are returned through the banking system. This means that there is no time limit or requirement for exchanging a previous series for a new series.

For further information, contact your local bank, Federal Reserve Bank or U.S. Secret Service office, or visit our website at <http://www.moneyfactory.com>

## Look for these features to guard against counterfeits

- **Color-shifting ink** - Tilt the front of the bill back and forth to see the color on the numeral on the lower right corner change from a distinct green to black and back again.
- **Watermark** - Hold the bill up to a light source to see the watermark in the blank space to the right of the portrait. Because the watermark is *in* the paper, not printed on it, the watermark looks the same from the reverse side.
- **Security thread** - Verify the presence of a thin strip running from top to bottom to the far *left* of the portrait on newly designed \$20 bills, *right* on \$50s, *left* on the \$100s. It is a strip of plastic actually embedded in, not printed on, the paper. It is visible only when you hold the bill up to a light source. On the \$20 you can see "USA TWENTY" and a flag from both sides of the note. The thread glows under ultra-violet light - green on the \$20, yellow on the \$50, and red on the \$100. The denomination number appears in the star field of the flag on the \$20 and \$50.
- **Fine Line Printing Patterns** - Look at the very fine lines behind the portrait. Then turn the note over and examine the fine lines behind the building. Be certain that the lines on *both* sides are clear - not splotchy, or composed of dots.
- **Microprinting** - Examine the portrait and the security thread under a magnifier to see very small printed words. In the \$20, "USA 20" is repeated within the lower left-hand number and "The United States of America" is on the lower edge ornamentation of the oval framing the portrait. On the \$50, microprinting appears in the side borders and in Grant's collar. On the \$100 it appears in the lower left corner numeral and in Franklin's coat.
- **Comparison** - Check the note against currency you know to be authentic and look for differences in the features above as well as in the texture of the paper, which should have a familiar feel.

## If you receive a counterfeit note

- **Keep** the bill from the passer.
- **Delay** the passer by some excuse if possible.
- **Telephone** the police or the U.S. Secret Service.
- **Observe** the passer's description and that of any companion or vehicle used.
- **Write** your initials and the date on the bill, and surrender the bill only to the police or the U.S. Secret Service.

