

# A Day in the Life of a Bill



Have you ever thought about what would be like to be a dollar bill? It's not the easiest job in the world, but we play a very important role in our economy. When we bills do our job, we go on lots of exciting adventures. Stick with me and I'll tell you all about it.

Bills are what people use to pay for the goods and services they want. At one time, bills and coins were the primary way people got the things they wanted but now people use plastic cards and other electronic forms of money so there isn't quite as much of a need for bills and coins. But that's okay. I still enjoy being exchanged from one person to another. At first it sort of bothered me to think that someone would just trade me away for a burger or gas for their car. After a while, though, I got used to traveling to new places. Now I even look forward to seeing where my travels will take me next.

In order to do our work, we have several characteristics that make us special. For one thing, we must last a while. Did you know an average dollar bill lasts nearly six years? With all the wear and tear we go through, that must be like 600 people years! We are strong because we are made of a special type of paper that makes us very durable. I've been crunched, folded, unfolded, stuffed into and spit out of machines, written on, spilled on, washed and dried inside the pocket of a pair of pants (I definitely DO NOT recommend this!), etc. and I am still just as valuable as the day I was made.

Another important trait we must have is being portable, or easy to carry. People wouldn't carry us around if we weighed as much as a brick. I am easy to carry because I am small and super light-weight. Would you believe I only weigh one gram? That's not very much!

We also do our jobs well because we come in different values. This helps people combine and divide money easily to pay for the things they want. For example, I am worth one dollar. I have friends who are worth five, ten, twenty or even one-hundred dollars. As you might expect, sometimes one-dollar bills don't get much respect from the higher bills who think they're more important just because they have a bigger number on them. I don't let them get to me because I know one-dollar bills are the only bills with the very first president of the United States on them and I think that's pretty special! Besides, we outnumber all of them. There are many more one-dollar bills in the world than any other bill. Can you guess why?

Bills must also be rare to do our job well. While there are more one-dollar bills in the world than any other bill, there are not as many of us compared to the number of people who want us, so that makes us rare. When something is rare, that can make it more valuable. People value us bills because they can use us to get the goods and services they want.

Another important characteristic we have is that we are accepted by people everywhere. Money helps buyers and sellers come together to trade so that each gets what he wants and comes away feeling better off than before he made the trade. People all over the world take bills like me in exchange for the goods and services they sell.



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Let me tell you a little story about my life. It was a crisp fall morning and I awoke early to find myself neatly tucked away in young man's wallet. I could hear him yawning as he struggled to wake up. About an hour later, we were on the move and suddenly I smelled the aroma of freshly brewed coffee. I felt myself being lifted out of the wallet as the young man

exchanged me for a cup of coffee. The cashier gave the young man his coffee and placed me in the drawer.

About 10 minutes later, even though I'd barely had the chance to introduce myself to the other bills in the drawer, I was taken out and given as change to a new owner, an older woman with white hair. The woman folded me twice and put me in her coat pocket and off we went! We hadn't gone far when I felt myself begin to fall. The woman had a hole in her pocket, and I slipped right through the hole and onto the ground. She didn't even realize she had lost me! So, there I was, folded up, lying on a sidewalk, waiting ... and waiting ... hoping someone would notice me and pick me up before I was trampled on. Lucky for me, along came a little girl in a blue dress who picked me up and straightened and smoothed me out. And just like that, I had a new owner!

The little girl placed me in the pocket of her blue dress where it was warm and cozy. As she walked, she reached into her pocket every once in a while, to make sure I was still there. I could tell she was so happy to have found me! When she arrived home, I heard the rustle of her hand reaching in to her pocket to grab me. The little girl gently removed me from her pocket, looked at me with a great big smile and then reached up and pulled her piggy bank down off the shelf in her bedroom. She slid me into the slit at the top. I could tell she was so proud to have found me and was putting me in a safe place so that she wouldn't lose me.

So far, I have visited 22 states. I have been in more pockets, wallets, and cash register drawers than I can count. Although I wouldn't trade my adventures for anything, I am now ready to rest inside the comfort of my little friend's piggy bank while she saves me for something special in the future. I don't know how long I will be here or for what I might be exchanged in the future, but for now, I am happy to spend some time with new friends, other bills also waiting to see for what they are being saved.



## Think and Write about it...

Think up your own adventure about a bill and write a story to tell about a day in the life of the bill. How much is the bill worth? To where does the bill travel? How is it exchanged throughout the day? Use your imagination and be creative!