

Two-cent piece (United States coin)

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The **two-cent coin** was produced in the [United States](#) from 1864–1873 with decreasing mintages throughout that time. The two-cent piece was made of 95% copper with tin and zinc making up the remainder. It was very slightly smaller than a modern [U.S. quarter](#). The two-cent piece was designed by [James B. Longacre](#), the Chief Engraver of the [United States Mint](#), and was the first coin of the United States to bear the motto "[In God We Trust](#)." In terms of consumer price indexes, the 1864 coin would be comparable to \$0.28 in today's money.

The obverse (so designated because it bears the date) has a shield with a ribbon over it bearing the motto, IN GOD WE TRUST. Behind the shield are two arrows, and a branch with leaves (most likely an olive branch).

The reverse has a wreath made up of several different plant components surrounding the words 2 CENTS. The words UNITED STATES OF AMERICA surround the wreath.

The design is similar to the [shield nickel](#) of the same period, which was also designed by Longacre.

Two cent pieces were minted in both [proof](#) and regular issues. Although the proof mintages were normally smaller than the regular issue mintages more proofs of high grade survive as they were always special collector coins.

The two cent piece was authorized by [Congress](#) on April 22, 1864 by the [Coinage Act](#) and the same law that eliminated the coins in 1873 also did away with the [half dime](#) and the silver three-cent piece (the copper-nickel three cent piece continued to be minted through 1889). During the mid-

Two Cent (United States)	
Value:	2 cents (0.02 U.S. dollars)
Mass:	6.221 g
Diameter:	23.00 mm
Thickness:	? mm
Edge:	plain
Composition:	95% Cu , 5% Zn & Sn
Obverse	
	
Design:	Shield
Designer:	James Barton Longacre
Design Date:	1864
Reverse	
	
Design:	Wreath
Designer:	James Barton Longacre
Design Date:	1864

and late-1970s there was some discussion about reviving the two-cent denomination (in conjunction with reducing the mintage of the one-cent piece), but nothing came of it.

While all two-cent pieces are of the same type, many [die varieties](#) exist. The most significant of these are the Small Motto and Large Motto varieties of 1864. The Small Motto is rarer and more valuable. [Doubled dies](#), [die cracks](#) and other [mint errors](#) are often encountered in this series.

Mintage Figures

All two cent pieces were minted at the Philadelphia Mint, and therefore bore no mint mark.

- 1864 - 19,847,500
- 1865 - 13,640,000
- 1866 - 3,177,000
- 1867 - 2,938,750
- 1868 - 2,803,750
- 1869 - 1,546,500
- 1870 - 861,250
- 1871 - 721,250
- 1872 - 65,000
- 1873 - About 1,100 (proof only)