

US Large Cents - General history – from Wikipedia

First struck in 1793, the large cent was coined every year from 1793 to 1857 minus one year (1815) due to a shortage of copper.^[1] The Philadelphia Mint produced all large cents, which contained twice the copper of the half cent. This made the coins bulky and heavy, bigger than modern-day [U.S. Quarters](#).^[2]

Flowing Hair cents, chain reverse (1793)

Henry Voight's design was almost universally criticized in its time for its unattractiveness and perceived allusion to slavery. It bears the distinction, however, of being the first official coinage minted by the federal government on its own equipment and premises. 36,103 were minted. Its low survival rate on top of a small mintage, coupled with being the first regular federal issue and a one-year design and type, has created an extremely strong demand from generations of numismatists. As a result, all surviving specimens command high prices ranging from \$2,000-\$3,000 in the absolute lowest state of preservation to over \$500,000 in the highest.

Flowing Hair cents, wreath reverse (1793)

The Mint caved to the intense ridicule later in 1793, and Mint Director [David Rittenhouse](#) ordered [Adam Eckfeldt](#) to revise the obverse and reverse designs. Liberty's bust was redesigned with even longer, wilder hair, and the chain was removed from the reverse in favor of a wreath. Scholars are undecided as to what plant or plants are depicted in the wreath, with several varieties extant. Total mintage of the wreath reverse numbered about 63,000 pieces.

Liberty Cap cents (1793–1796)

Rittenhouse was dissatisfied with Eckfeldt's designs, and with the criticism of the Chain cents fresh in his mind, he hired [Joseph Wright](#) to do yet another redesign in the denomination's troubled first year. Wright's design faced Liberty to the right and "tamed" her wild hair. The cap was added as an ancient symbol of freedom. The reverse design was revised to a recognizable laurel wreath, and future Chief Engraver [Robert Scot](#) had a hand in several minor revisions to the design over the next three years.


This design was more successful and it was continued into 1796. In 1795, [planchets](#) became too thin for the edge lettering because of a weight reduction, so the mint stopped edge lettering on the cent, and the rest of these coins were made with a plain edge. Four coins from 1795 are known to have a reeded edge.^[3]

Draped Bust cents (1796–1807)

Robert Scot redesigned the whole of United States coinage for 1796, applying a new design featuring a bust of Liberty wearing a drapery at the neckline and a ribbon in her flowing hair. The reverse design now featured an olive wreath. As with earlier types, several minor revisions to the design were made in the first few years, with the final 1797 design lasting through the end of the type in 1807.

Classic Head cents (1808–1814)



 An 1811 cent

[John Reich](#), assistant to Chief Engraver Scot, was appointed by new Mint Director [Robert Patterson](#) to redesign Scot's Draped Bust cent (along with every other circulating coin design). The so-called "Classic Head" derives its name from the [fillet](#) worn by Liberty on the obverse, though the fillet was worn only by male athletes in ancient Greece. The copper used during the years in which Classic Head cents were minted was of a higher quality, containing less metallic impurity. Consequently, they were softer and more prone to wear and corrode quickly than issues before or after. As a result, unimpaired, high-grade specimens are especially difficult to obtain and fetch strong premiums when they appear on market, especially with original red or red-brown mint luster.

Coronet cents (1816–1857)

Matron Head, or Middle Dates (1816–1839)

As a response to public criticism of the Classic Head, the Mint assigned Chief Engraver Scot to redesign the cent in 1816. This newest design enlarged the obverse portrait, giving Liberty a much more mature look (leading to the Matron Head reference), and surrounded the portrait with stars along the outer edge of the coin. The "Matron head" design was modified in 1835 to give Liberty a younger look and matron head cents continued to be made until 1839. These can be worth up to 1 million dollars.

Braided Hair, or Late Dates (1839–1857)



 An 1855 Braided Hair cent

Facing more negative public reaction, the Coronet cents were redesigned in 1835 by new Chief Engraver [Christian Gobrecht](#). This last major change to the coin updated the obverse by giving Liberty a slimmer, more youthful appearance. Minor tweaks continued through 1843, and the 1843 design prevailed through the end of mintage in 1857. Some 11 years after the large cent was discontinued, a mint employee coined several large cents dated 1868, almost certainly for sale as instant rarities to numismatists. Fewer than a dozen of these unofficial issues, struck in both bronze and copper-nickel, are known to survive.

Description	Mintage	Description	Mintage
1793 Chain AMERICA	36,103	1827	2,357,732
1793Wreath Vine & Bars Edge	63,353	1828	2,260,624
1793 Liberty Cap	11,056	1829	1,414,500
1794 Head of 1794	918,521	1830	1,711,500
1794 Starred Reverse	501,500	1831	3,359,260
1795	37,000	1832	2,362,000
1796	109,825	1833	2,739,000
1796 Reverse of 1797	363,375	1834	1,855,100
1797	897,510	1835	3,878,400
1798	1,841,745	1836	2,111,000
1800	2,822,175	1837	5,558,300
1801	1,362,837	1838	6,370,200
1802	3,435,100	1839	3,128,661
1803	3,131,691	1840	2,462,700
1804	96,500	1841	1,597,367
1805	941,116	1842	2,383,390
1806	348,000	1843	2,425,342
1807	829,221	1844	2,398,752
1808	1,007,000	1845	3,894,804
1809	222,867	1846	4,120,800
1810	1,458,500	1847	6,183,669
1811	218,025	1848	6,415,799
1812	1,075,500	1849	4,178,500
1813	418,000	1850	4,426,844
1814	357,830	1851	9,889,707
1816	2,820,982	1852	5,063,094
1817	3,948,400	1853	6,641,131
1818	3,167,000	1854	4,236,156
1819	2,671,000	1855	1,574,829
1820	4,407,550	1856	2,690,463
1821	389,000	1857	333,456
1822	2,072,339		
1824	1,262,000		
1825	1,461,100		
1826	1,517,425		