

What Are The Most Popular Coins?

by [Michael Marotta](#)

People in America collect American coins. It is generally true that local or regional or national interests will always be strong. Here in Michigan, most fans of banknotes assemble the issues of Michigan banks. In Great Britain, most coin enthusiasts prefer British coins. No surprise there.

However, people outside the USA do not understand how popular American coins are in America. Most polls, no matter how scientific or informal, reveal that *nine* out of ten American hobbyists focus on US Government issues.

Within that 90% majority, most prefer the coins from 1865-1945: Morgan dollar, Indianhead, Lincoln Cent, Buffalo Nickel, Large Cents and Half Cents, etc. Of all of these, the Lincoln Cent is the single most commonly assembled set in the world. (Yes.) America has more coin collectors than most other places put together and among American hobbyists, the Lincoln Cent is the one issue most do seek or have sought.

Morgan Dollars and Walking Liberty Halves are more popular than Peace Dollars and Standing Liberty Quarters. Buffalo Nickels are more popular than Mercury Dimes, but not by much. Large Cents and Half Cents are so popular that their national club is a corporation: Early American Coppers, Inc.

At the other end of the spectrum, consider the non-numismatists who "collect coins." Maybe they simply hang on to Bi-Centennial Half Dollars. If they do no more, the real numismatist is not impressed because they are not actively pursuing KNOWLEDGE about coins. But, they are to whatever arbitrary level of activity "collecting coins." One notch above that is the person who buys a coin magazine or coin newspaper or who patronizes a coin store. These are the Whitman Folder crowds and they overshadow all the next higher levels combined. The higher you go, the sparser the trees. It's a fact of life.

Myself, I like ancients. Most students of ancient numismatics like Romans. I like Greeks. Most admirers of Greek coins have at least one coin from Alexander the Great. I have none. My inventory is built around philosophers.