

THE SCIENCE BEHIND pennies

WHAT IS THE COMPOSITION OF A PENNY?

Did you know that pennies in the United States have been made from a variety of materials, other than copper? In the past, pennies were made of 100% copper and even steel, but pennies made in 1982 and later are copper-plated zinc. There also have been pennies containing various metallic mixtures of copper with other metals, such as nickel, tin and zinc.

CURRENT COMPOSITION OF THE PENNY

**97.5%
ZINC**

**2.5%
COPPER**



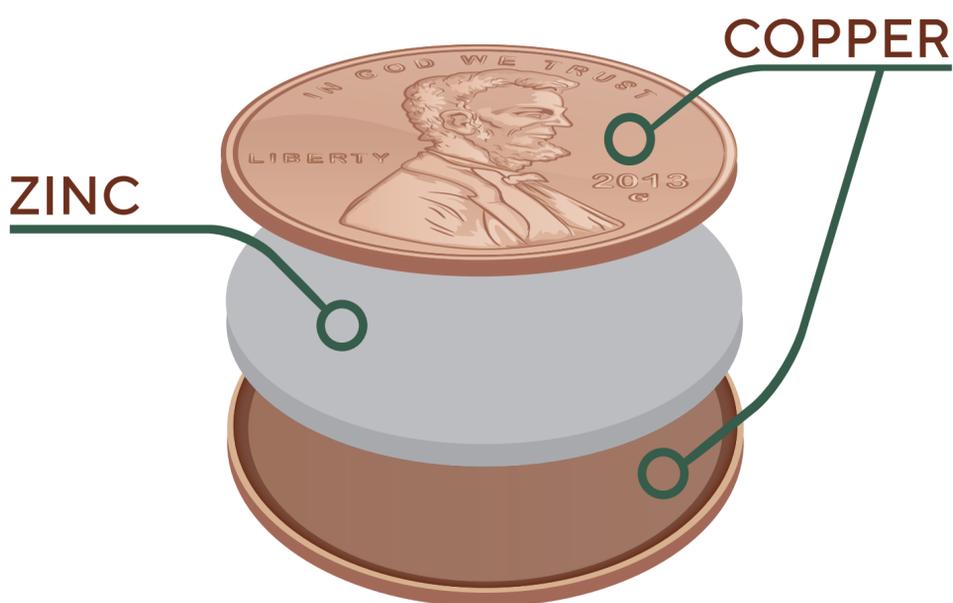
Zinc	30
Zn	
65.38	133
7.14	2
[Ar]3d ¹⁰ 4s ²	
1183	
692.7	

Copper	29
Cu	
63.546	128
8.92	2,1
[Ar]3d ¹⁰ 4s ¹	
2845	
1358	

2020

1965

CURRENTLY PENNIES ARE MADE OF COPPER-PLATED ZINC.



FUN FACTS ABOUT PENNIES

- 1 The first penny, minted in 1793, was as big as a half dollar. That is why it was called "large cent."
- 2 Once it was hard to tell a penny from a dime. During WWII, pennies were made of silvery-colored steel making it easy to mistake a penny for a dime.
- 3 Heads, it's Lincoln; tails, it's Lincoln. The Lincoln Memorial cent featured this beloved president on both sides of the coin. One side has his face in profile; the other side has him seated in the Lincoln Memorial.
- 4 In 1982, more Lincoln cents were minted than in any other year. 16.7 billion pennies were made, which equals \$167 million worth of pennies.



REFERENCES

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