

The coin-making process

The coin-making process is an interesting one. It takes hundreds of hours of careful work to get from the initial idea to the finished coin. Here are the steps involved.



1. The coin designer prepares detailed sketches of the design concept.



2. The proposed design of the coin is sent to the appropriate Minister for approval before proceeding to the next stage.



3. The model of the coin is then created in one of two ways:
 - a) On a computer using design software, or
 - b) Using modelling clay and plaster.

In this process:

- A large model of the coin is sculpted using modelling clay on a sheet of glass.
- A steel ring is then placed around the model and filled with plaster to form a reversed (negative) cast of the design.
- The first model is used to make a second positive plaster cast. The designer uses this model to refine the design.
- The model design is then transferred to a computer using a 3D digital scanner. Computer-aided design software is then used to add words and dates around this design.



Investigating Australian Coins



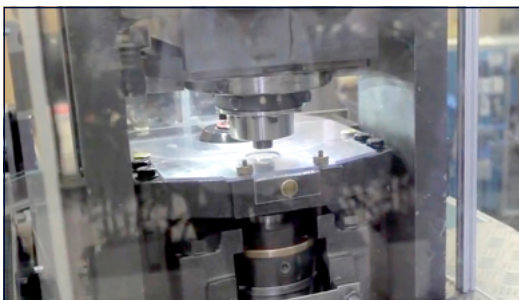
4. However the model is made, the design is then cut directly into steel using a computer-controlled engraving machine. This process takes up to 24 hours.



5. Blanks are cut from sheet metal and shipped to the Mint in drums.



6. Titan (one of the Mint's robots) tips the blanks into a hopper and they travel along a conveyor belt to the coin presses.



7. The design is 'pressed' into the reverse (tails) of the blank at the same time as the portrait of the current monarch is pressed into the obverse (head) of the coin.



8. Finished coins are packed and sent to banks around the country.