

## Japanese Money over the Ages, in Life Size

**Tensho Naga Oban** gold coin  
approx. 170 mm in length  
second half of 16th century

**Sekishu-gin** silver coin  
approx. 160 mm in length  
16th century



**Today's 1-yen** aluminum coin  
20 mm in diameter



**Today's 100-yen**  
cupro-nickel coin  
22.6 mm in diameter

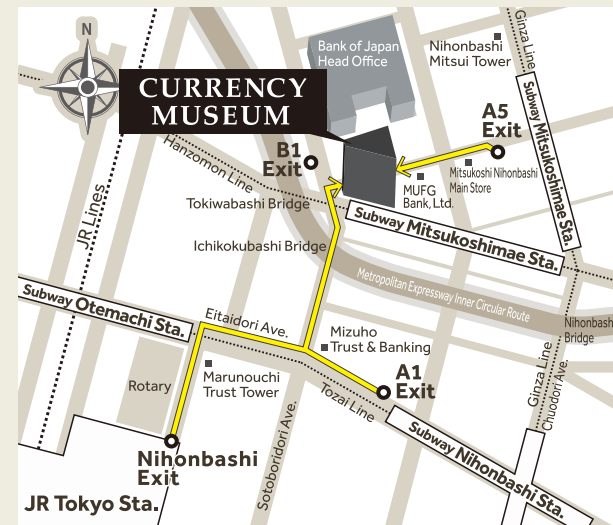


**Meiwa Nanryo Nishu-gin**  
silver coin  
approx. 26 mm in length  
second half of 18th century

**Tempo Koban** gold coin  
approx. 60 mm in length  
first half of 19th century

**Wado-kaichin** copper coin  
approx. 24 mm in diameter  
first half of 8th century

### Museum Visit Stamp



**Hours:** 9:30 am - 4:30 pm (no entry after 4:00 pm)

**Closed:** Mondays (open when Monday is a holiday),  
New Year's holidays (Dec. 29 - Jan. 4)

**Note:** In addition to the above dates, the Museum may close temporarily at  
other times to change exhibits or for other reasons.

**Admission:** Free (reservations required for groups of 20 or more)

**Address:** 1-3-1 Nihonbashi Hongokucho, Chuo-ku, Tokyo 103-0021, Japan  
(inside the Bank of Japan Annex Building)

**Tel.:** 03-3277-3037

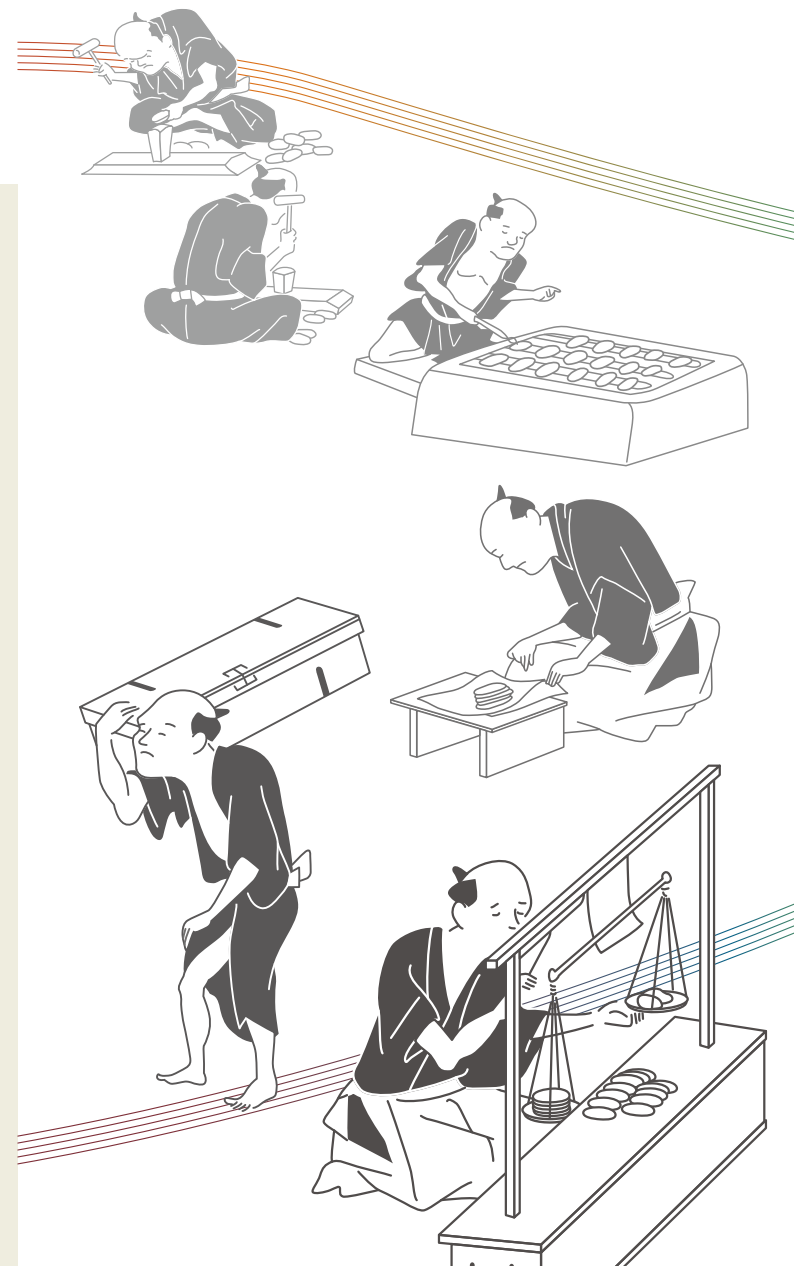
**Access:** **Subway**

- 1 min. on foot from Mitsukoshimae Station on the Hanzomon Line (Exit B1)
- 2 min. on foot from Mitsukoshimae Station on the Ginza Line (Exit A5)
- 6 min. on foot from Nihonbashi Station on the Tozai Line (Exit A1)
- **JR**
- 8 min. on foot from Tokyo Station's Nihonbashi Exit

[www.imes.boj.or.jp/cm/english/](http://www.imes.boj.or.jp/cm/english/)

Institute for Monetary and Economic Studies  
Bank of Japan

# CURRENCY MUSEUM



## Greetings

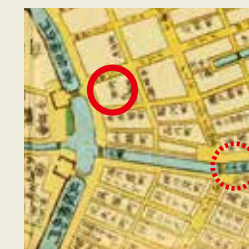
The Currency Museum of the Bank of Japan's Institute for Monetary and Economic Studies collects, preserves, and studies currency and currency-related historical and cultural materials. The Currency Museum is open to the public.

The Sempeikan Collection, the core of the Currency Museum's holdings, comprises the private collection of Keibun Tanaka (1884-1956), a numismatist of old currency. Tanaka collected not only the currencies of ancient to modern Japan but also those of other East Asian countries, mainly China, and a wide range of currency-related materials. The Sempeikan was a museum that exhibited and stored these materials. Its collection was donated to the Bank of Japan in 1944 to prevent its loss amid the destruction of World War II.

Organized as a part of the commemoration of the Bank's 100th anniversary in 1982, the Currency Museum opened in November 1985 to display these materials to the public. We hope visitors have an opportunity to think about the history and role of currency and its relation to culture and society through viewing the Museum's collection of coins, notes, related materials, and research results.

### About Nihonbashi

#### From the *Kinza* to the Bank of Japan



The spot where the Bank of Japan Head Office is located today was home to the *Kinza* (gold mint) during the Edo Era (the neighborhood was called Honcho 1-chome at the time). Gold coins were minted here until the closing days of the Edo Shogunate.

The Bank of Japan opened in 1882 in a temporary office in Eitaibashi. It moved to the current location in 1896, when the Bank of Japan Head Office (now the Old Building), designed by Kingo Tatsuno, was completed. Tatsuno was a student of the architect Josiah Conder, and his other works included the Marunouchi side of Tokyo Station.

The Bank of Japan Head Office Old Building





# The Museum's exhibits trace “the History of Money”

People have used various things as money  
from ancient through modern times.

## Money has a number of properties

It can be used  
by anybody

It can be exchanged  
for various things

It can be saved  
to use later

Let's take a look around the Museum to see what people  
have chosen to use as money and how they have used it.

## Key features of the Currency Museum

1.  
The brilliant beauty of  
gold ingots!

2.  
Large and small gold  
coins over the years!

3.  
Bank of Japan notes  
over the years!

### 01 Ancient Times

The First Coins

7th-mid-12th centuries

Japan began to issue metal coins, as it  
aimed to build a centralized nation-state  
based on the *ritsuryō* codes, patterned  
on China.



### 02 Medieval Times

Inflow of Coins from Overseas

Mid-12th-late 16th centuries

Chinese coins (*toraisen*) came into use.  
Coins circulated widely with the growth of the  
commodity economy.



### 03 Early Modern Times

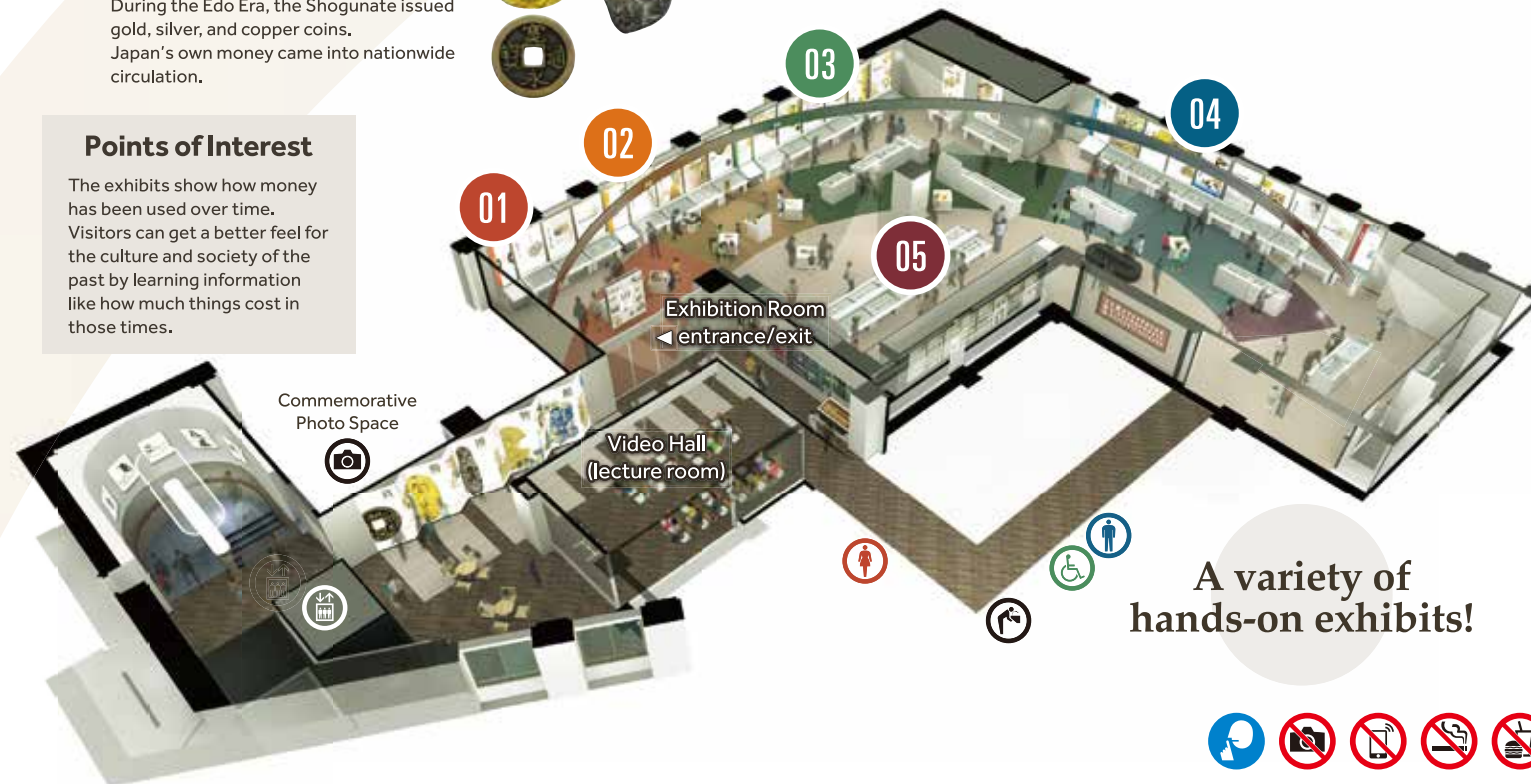
Toward a Unification of Currency

Late 16th-late 19th centuries

During the Edo Era, the Shogunate issued  
gold, silver, and copper coins.  
Japan's own money came into nationwide  
circulation.

## Points of Interest

The exhibits show how money  
has been used over time.  
Visitors can get a better feel for  
the culture and society of the  
past by learning information  
like how much things cost in  
those times.



### 04 Modern Times

The Era of the Yen and the Bank of Japan  
Late 19th-20th centuries

Japan developed a new currency  
system and adopted the yen as its  
single currency. Banknotes issued by  
the Bank of Japan started to circulate  
nationwide.



The *Daikoku-satsu*,  
the first Bank of Japan note

### 05 Thematic Exhibitions

(Temporary exhibition space)

These exhibits provide an introduction to the  
Museum's collection from various perspectives  
related to money, such as minting technologies,  
customs, practices, and foreign money.

The content of exhibits may vary during temporary  
exhibitions and other events.

### Ancient Times



*Fuhonsen* copper coin  
Late 7th century  
Japan's first  
metal minted coin.

From the collection of the Nara  
National Research Institute for  
Cultural Properties.



### Medieval Times

Money pot  
c. 16th century

This pot contained about  
7,700 coins, including Chinese coins.

### Early Modern Times



*Tensho Hishi Oban* gold coin  
Late 16th century  
The first *oban* oval gold coin, minted  
by the Goto goldsmith family under  
orders from Toyotomi Hideyoshi.

*Yamada Hagaki* note  
c. 1600  
Japan's first paper  
money, issued in Ise.  
Individual clans issued  
their own paper money  
(clan notes) throughout  
the Edo Era.



*Gembun Koban* gold coin  
1736

To increase the supply of money in  
circulation, the weight and gold  
content of *koban* coins were reduced.

### Modern Times



20-yen gold coin  
1871  
The yen replaced the  
units of *ryo*, *bu*, and  
*shu* that had been used  
since the Edo Era.



Government-issued paper money:  
*Jingu Kogo Satsu*  
(Empress Jingu note)  
1881  
This banknote adopted the landscape  
orientation of Western banknotes and  
was the first one in Japan to have a  
portrait printed on it.



Bank of Japan 100-yen note (reverse)  
1900  
The design on the reverse of this  
100-yen banknote featured an  
illustration of the newly completed  
Bank of Japan Head Office.

A variety of  
hands-on exhibits!

