

# If You See A Coin On A Headstone, Do Not Touch It Or Pick It Up – Here’s Why

As a consumer-driven society, we are taught that money can buy you lots of things. So when you see free money just lying around, your first gut instinct may be to grab it and run like the wind!

If there’s a lonely dime hanging out on the sidewalk, you don’t harbor any guilt about picking it up off the ground and dropping it into your purse. After all, there’s really no way to trace its owner. As the saying goes, finders keepers!



Flickr/Torbakhopper

Facebook/Jill Phillips

There’s also another place that you may spot a few coins, but it’s definitely “hands off.” Taking even a single penny is easily the most disrespectful thing you can ever do in life! At some point or another, most of us will find ourselves in a cemetery to pay our respects to a loved one.

There has been a growing trend to place coins on certain headstones. However, the groundskeeper or grave digger didn’t just empty their pockets while they were working, and forget to take their belongings back.

There’s actually a very special reason why those coins were placed on that particular grave site, and it represents something greater than just mere currency.

Honoring the deceased is an age-old tradition that goes back centuries. When it comes to pomp and circumstance, the ancient Egyptians were the biggest show-offs, and built huge pyramids to house their dead like royalty. Yet, even peasants from a hundred years ago could still hope to get a tearful send off and a simple burial in some type of dirt.

Ultimately, it’s not the size of the headstone, the cost of the burial plot, or even how many flowers and people show up to the funeral that matter. Because, one way or the other, all of us end up in the ground.

It's what the living do for each other after we're long gone that truly pays homage to our life and memory.

It may be hard to believe, but the humble penny says more about honoring the dead than a hundred million pyramids ever could.



Facebook/K4T Photography

Facebook/Be a Geek Be a Nerd

Men and women who serve in our armed forces garner a certain admiration from their brothers and sisters in arms. There is a tight fraternity-like bond that forms between soldiers that train or serve together. When a soldier passes into the great beyond, their loving military family still honors them here on Earth.

While deceased military heroes don't get their own pyramid, they do get something even better than that – the everlasting respect and love of their military brothers and sisters. That, my friends, is worth more than any treasure in the world.

The fact that the coins themselves don't have much monetary value doesn't belittle what it symbolizes. Its true value is in helping to soothe the broken hearts of the soldier's grieving family members.

When Dave Malenfant was visiting the National Cemetery in Holly, Michigan, he noticed that some coins were gently placed on top of the headstones. He was touched, and instinctively knew there was a deeper meaning behind the gesture. Wondering what the coins meant, he decided to investigate it further.

What he found is quite astonishing!

“A coin left on a headstone lets the deceased soldiers family know that somebody stopped by to pay their respect.”

Yet, each coin actually has its own meaning in and of itself.



Facebook/Dave Malenfant

Facebook/Confessions of a Funeral Director

Here's what Dave discovered when he researched the meaning of the coins:

Leaving a penny on the gravestone means that you paid your soldier friend a visit.

A nickel means that you and your fallen soldier buddy both went to the same boot camp or other military training course together.

If you were lucky enough to have served with the soldier, then you leave a dime.

This next one is going to make you cry. You better make sure you're not at work when you read this next part!

"A quarter is very significant because it means that you were there when that soldier died."

Wow. That last one is actually pretty intense. Dave went on to say that he was very proud to share this knowledge.

## The Meanings Behind the Coins Left on a Grave

**Penny**



Leaving a penny means simply that you visited.



**Dime**



Leaving a dime shows service in the same company but different platoon.

**Nickel**



Leaving a nickel shows that you attended boot camp or training with the deceased.

**Quarter**



A quarter is left by a service member who was with the deceased when the person died.

*Some of the items that are left on graves have sentimental meaning and therefore should ALWAYS remain where the items were left*

Tia Howe  
Quest for the Unknown

Facebook/Legacy Of Our Veterans Military Exposures

The tradition of leaving coins is not officially sanctioned by any branch of the military. In the U.S., it is rumored to have started during the Vietnam War. Because the country was extremely divided during this tumultuous time, leaving a coin was a silent way for a veteran to communicate respect to the family of the deceased.

Even though placing coins on a headstone is not an official military practice, I would like to believe that even high ranking Generals or Admirals have gone “rogue” on occasion.

Coins placed in National Cemeteries are eventually collected and go towards a good cause. The funds are used to help maintain the cemetery grounds, or it can even pay for the care of indigent veterans.

\*\*\*\*\*  
 A comment noted “It is Jewish custom to place a small pebble/rock – a sign to the family that someone has visited”.  
 \*\*\*\*\*

A grateful heart remembers each & every veteran for their sacrifice and courage. For those gone...Thank You for being there to protect this great country, its freedom and liberty a beacon for all. Thank You to each family member for all of their personal sacrifices known only to God.