

## Questions and Answers

1. What is **notgeld**? Notgeld is a German word meaning "emergency money." Although it sometimes refers to coins and can describe the paper money of other countries, it is used here to denote the emergency notes of Germany. Austrian notgeld is similar to German.
2. How does one collect notgeld? There are no hard and fast rules. The possibilities are so vast that one can collect as he/she sees fit. There are several categories of notgeld - determined by the year of issue and denomination. For example, 1914 is a separate category with its own catalog. Small denomination notes of 1916 to 1922 are another general category that is divided into two major sections, each with a separate catalog. The 1923 category consists of notes issued in extremely high denominations. The most common notgeld is the small denomination notes issued in sets or series in 1920-21. It is this group, **Serienscheine**, that has so many interesting designs and is especially attractive to the collector who is interested in certain topics or themes. There are scores of different topics to be found on these notes. One could find hundreds of different notes with famous persons, architecture, and history. Many could be found with such topics as animals, transportation, manufacturing and crafts. There are moderate amounts with music, art, flags, chess, maps, guns, mining, sports, religion, military and costumes. Scarcer topics include aircraft, automobiles, fire fighting, anti-semitic, astronomy and Americana. Although notgeld collecting is a branch of numismatics, it has something in common with stamp collecting. Both are printed objects that can be collected along political, geographical, aesthetic and thematic lines. Like stamps, some notgeld was issued in sets varying from two to dozens. Sets of three are common and could be taken as a specialty. Complete sets are generally desired and valued above parts of sets. There are literally thousands of minor varieties extant in notgeld as a result of differences in serial numbers, colors, water marks, control letters, seals, overprints, etc. Notgeld can be collected in a general way, in a highly technical and specialized manner, topically or whimsically.
3. Where can I get more information about notgeld? There is no one book about notgeld in English, yet much has been written in various numismatic publications. A bibliography is in preparation which will list hundreds of articles. Some information was contained in the "Journal of the Emergency Money Society" but it is no longer being published. "Notgeld Newsletter" is the only English language publication devoted exclusively to German notgeld. In several of the following questions the answers cite the latter publication as "NN."
4. Where can I get information about notgeld catalogs? See NN #8, p. 20-21.
5. What articles on notgeld were published in the "Journal of the Emergency Money Society?" See NN #2, p.3-4.
6. Is notgeld available from the German colonies? Some German towns issued notgeld featuring the former colonies. See NN #3, p.8.
7. Does any notgeld have references to the United States? See NN #3, p.8.
8. Much notgeld comes in sets. Where can I find a detailed description and translation of one of the more interesting sets? NN #3, p.9-12.
9. Where can I find a list of Dr. Keller's notgeld catalogs? NN #4, p.13-14. Also in "Numismatic International Bulletin," January, 1979, pp. 77ff.
10. Where can I find translations of some words frequently used on notgeld? NN #4, p.15. Also in "Notgeld Collectors Guide."
11. I have trouble reading some of the German letters on notgeld. Can you help? Printers and designers have access to hundreds of different type faces. In some cases the German letters are unlike any that we are familiar with. A chart showing a typical German type face with the corresponding Roman letter is found in NN #4, p.16 and also in "Notgeld Collectors Guide."



12. Where can I find check lists of topical notgeld? Some have been published in Notgeld Newsletter. Others are available on separate sheets. Available check lists include: Martin Luther, Christmas, Sports, Music, Medicine, Witches, Madonnas, Chess, Ships, Americana, and anti-Semitic. No doubt many others will follow.

13. Where can I find information on the designers and printers of notgeld? Some information of this type is contained in NN #10, p.23-24.

14. What is Reutergeld? It is a special series of notgeld named for Fritz Reuter, patriot and noted writer in German dialect. Seventy different towns in northern Germany issued a set of three notes in honor of Reuter. Although designed by five different artists, the 210 notes show some similarity in appearance. The 70 towns are listed in my price list of sets. I also had a feature article on Reuter in Coin World, June 16, 1976.

15. Is there a list of all the towns that issued notgeld? Yes, in a book called "Der Notgeld-Mufti." It lists towns alphabetically and tabulates the categories of notgeld issued. The ten categories correspond to the catalog in which they are detailed. For example, if you looked up **Erfurt**, you would find that this city issued notes in six different categories. Some towns issued only one or two kinds. There is a similar volume, "Der Notgeld-Kompass," that groups the towns into geographical areas. In Germany, it is common to collect notgeld by province, region or state.

16. Since all of the notgeld catalogs are in German, can the English-speaking collector read them? You cannot read every word, but you can **use** the catalogs with some practice. You are dealing mainly with names and numbers which require no translation. "Notgeld Collectors Guide" is helpful if you have the **Serienscheine** catalog.

17. There are sometimes so many words on a piece of notgeld, how can I be sure which one is the name of the town? The town name frequently follows the word **Stadt**, **Gemeinde**, or **Kreis**. Sometimes it follows **Gutschein von**. Very often the name of the town is just before the date. You quickly learn that any word that appears on several different notes is **not** the name of a town. Once you locate the word you think is the town, check it in "Der Notgeld-Mufti."

18. If I go to Germany or write to German dealers can I get notgeld at low prices? Probably just the opposite is true. Notgeld is extremely popular in Germany and prices are generally higher than in the U.S. - often much higher.

19. Were the notgeld sets ever issued in special packaging? Yes, a number of towns packaged the notes in printed wrappers or descriptive envelopes or folders. Although not rare, the packages are fairly uncommon.

20. What are some odd and unusual kinds of notgeld? Aside from the unusual subject matter found on some of the notes, notgeld comes in odd sizes and shapes. There are very small notes, square, round and elongated pieces. Notgeld was printed on the back of paper originally intended for some other use. Besides paper and metal, notgeld was made of ceramic material, cloth, leather, wood, and foil. Playing cards and photographs were made to serve as notgeld. Some notgeld is unusual because of its simplicity or even its crudeness - others because of unexpected printing techniques.

21. Are there albums for notgeld? Nothing like a stamp album is available. Special notgeld albums were made in Germany during the notgeld collecting mania of 1921. They had slots something like a stamp stock book. Notgeld can be arranged, stored and displayed in various ways but should never be taped, pasted or hinged to other paper.

22. Is notgeld a good investment? Notgeld should be collected for pleasure and the opportunity of adding to one's knowledge and appreciation of the world. However, in the nearly 30 years that I have been interested in notgeld, values have risen steadily if not spectacularly.

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