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## **Table of Contents**

<b>Buying and Storing Gold and Silver Safely and Anonymously: An Introduction .....</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>Core Knowledge for Precious Metals Buyers .....</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>Is The Government Likely to Confiscate Gold or Silver from Private Citizens? .....</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>How to Buy Gold and Silver With No ID and for Cash Only.....</b>	<b>8</b>
<b>Where to Find Private Sellers.....</b>	<b>9</b>
<b>What Are The Reporting Requirements for Sellers and Buyers?.....</b>	<b>12</b>
<b>Do States Levy Sales Tax on Gold and Silver Sales?.....</b>	<b>13</b>
<b>Hiding Precious Metals at Home .....</b>	<b>14</b>
<b>What About Confidentiality, or “Loose Lips Sink Ships”? .....</b>	<b>17</b>
<b>How to Hide Precious Metals Somewhere Other Than at Home .....</b>	<b>18</b>
<b>Are Safe Deposit Boxes a Good Place to Store Bullion and Coins?.....</b>	<b>20</b>
<b>What About Overseas Storage Options and “Precious Metals Depositories”?.....</b>	<b>21</b>
<b>Are Some Types of Precious Metals Better for the Anonymous Investor Than Others? .....</b>	<b>22</b>
<b>What About Fractional Gold and Silver Bullion and “Junk Silver” .....</b>	<b>23</b>
<b>Protecting Precious Metals From The Natural Environment .....</b>	<b>25</b>
<b>What Kind of Insurance is Available? .....</b>	<b>27</b>
<b>What Do You do When it is Time to Sell All or Part of the Metals Stash? .....</b>	<b>29</b>
<b>What Basic Rules Should Gold and Silver Owners Keep in Mind?.....</b>	<b>30</b>
<b>Conclusion.....</b>	<b>32</b>

## **Buying and Storing Precious Metals Safely and Anonymously: An Introduction**

A lot of investors want to take advantage of the many benefits of owning precious metals anonymously. In addition to purchasing whatever quantity of gold and silver they want, buyers have a second need: where to store the stuff safely and “quietly.”

In fact, as many metals dealers like to point out, it’s pretty easy to buy gold and silver without facing draconian reporting requirements, but the real difficulty is storing valuable bullion or coins for the long term.

Serious investors who intend to acquire gold and silver in significant quantities need to know about U.S. reporting laws, the different kinds of storage options, and the cost of “anonymity” in today’s digital environment.

### **Core Knowledge for Precious Metals Buyers**

For those headed down the road of buying silver and gold with little or no reporting requirements, here’s what you need to know:

- How to buy metals with cash, and without being “carded” by the seller?
- Where are the private sellers?
- What are the reporting requirements for sellers and buyers?
- Is the government likely to confiscate gold or silver from private citizens?
- Do states levy sales tax on gold and silver sales?
- Storing precious metals at home
- What about confidentiality, or “loose lips sink ships”?
- Hiding precious metals somewhere other than at home
- Are safe deposit boxes a good place to store bullion and coins?
- What about overseas storage options and “precious metals depositories”?
- Are some types of precious metals better for the anonymous investor than others (gold vs. silver, bullion vs. coins, small bars vs. large ingots, “junk silver” coins vs. other options)?
- Protecting a metals stash from the environment (water, fire, etc.)
- What kind of insurance is available to those who still want to remain somewhat anonymous with their ownership rights?
- What to do when it is time to sell precious metals?
- What basic rules should gold and silver owners keep in mind?

## Is The Government Likely to Confiscate Gold or Silver from Private Citizens?

Short answer: No.

Better answer: Define “likely.”

**Longer answer: The government can do whatever it wants as long as it gets authorization from Congress.** In 1933 all private gold was legally “called in,” which was President Roosevelt’s euphemism for “confiscated.” It happened once, so the argument goes, thus it could happen again. But will it?

Before looking at the question of whether the federal government will ever enact another gold or silver confiscation law, consider this: a national regime cannot confiscate what it does not know about. In other words, if you have made anonymous purchases of precious metals, then there is no official record that the goods exist or are connected to you in any way.

Even though the 1933 gold confiscation laws were quite strict, practically everyone of a certain age remembers knowing about a “private stash” of family gold coins or bullion. So, there is a deep historical precedent for citizens ignoring draconian laws.

Perhaps no other sub-topic of the precious metals world is as controversial as the confiscation question. Level-headed investors should know the basic facts:

**Fact:** The Emergency Banking Act of 1933 was the one and, to date, only time in U.S. history that the government asked private citizens to turn in their gold to banks. Personal jewelry and a small number of collectible coins were exempt from the act.

**Fact:** The law specifically prohibited “hoarding” of gold certificates, gold bullion, and gold coins in large amounts. The law was a way, in FDR’s mind, to combat the effects of the Great Depression. The goal was twofold: to give the government more gold so it could print more currency, and to free up hoards of money and encourage people to buy things. The problem at that time was deflation and lack of economic activity.

**Fact:** The government paid citizens about \$21 per ounce for their gold, placed most of it in the national bank, and sold the rest to foreign buyers for \$35 per ounce. Some saw the government’s actions as nothing more than monopolistic trading that had the backing of federal law. Either way, it wasn’t until 1974 that citizens were allowed to freely own as much gold as they wished.

**Fact:** Theoretically, gold confiscation by the U.S. government could happen again, but is not likely to, for numerous reasons. It is helpful to remember that only a few months ago the world’s leading

economists were saying the UK would never leave the European Union, and if it did there would be overall collapse of global financial markets. They were wrong on both counts. So, when the question of confiscation arises, it's smart to "never say 'never'." So whenever someone says the U.S. government will never confiscate gold from its citizens, recall two other famous government promises: "Read my lips, no new taxes," and "If you like your doctor, you will be able to keep your doctor." In other words, anything is possible when dealing with the U.S. government.

**Fact:** An international currency problem could whet the federal appetite for a gold-backed dollar. Plus, no one knows for sure how much gold the U.S. government possesses because national gold reserves have not recently been audited by an outside agency. If federal debt were to reach a certain level, there could be several valid reasons for the government to confiscate private gold once again.

**Fact:** Because deflation is not a problem, and because the dollar is not gold-backed as it once was, gold confiscation would do practically nothing from an economic standpoint to help the feds stabilize the economy.

**Fact:** All the gold in private hands today would do little to offset the national debt. Besides, the U.S. government no longer has a stranglehold on the world price of gold. It is one of many players in

the global gold trade and would likely gain nothing from confiscating its citizens' holdings.

**Fact:** The actions of the U.S. government are unpredictable at best, which means that holding gold and silver anonymously, even in small quantities, is a good hedge against financial collapse.

### **How to Buy Gold and Silver With No ID and for Cash Only**

Truly “anonymous” purchases are done without credit cards (ultimately traceable regardless which one you use), and without having to provide any type of ID, even a driver's license.

It is much easier to buy gold and silver anonymously than to sell large amounts of the metals. Think like the IRS: buyers are giving cash to someone else. Sellers are receiving cash. Government taxing agencies and homeland security types focus their concern on money laundering and tax avoidance. From their perspective, individuals who buy precious metals are merely engaging in a retail transaction, just like buying a car or a boat. Reporting requirements are minimal to non-existent unless the dollar amounts are astronomical.

Sellers, on the other hand, are receiving cash and could be banking a profit based upon their original buy price. Government agencies are

always more interested in tracking your sales of metals as opposed to your purchases.

Gun shows, pawn shops and traditional coin dealers are ideal places to buy gold and silver without having to fork over ID or fill out any type of paperwork. Buyers should always try to get the lowest markup over the spot price. And because the market for precious metals is highly inefficient (at the consumer level anyway), it is common for some sellers to tack on very high markups, while others are just looking to get rid of their surplus metals inventory.

Always shop around before buying gold or silver and only purchase from a seller who requires no ID and has a reasonable markup. Note that some of the larger coin dealers and metals firms are now demanding ID. By law, they don't need to, but some feel pressured to cover themselves out of fear of the IRS or homeland agency snooping.

## **Where to Find Private Sellers**

The easiest part of the metal acquisition task is locating a seller. Most sources have advantages and disadvantages, but buyers located in big cities should have no problem finding at least a few good suppliers.

Keep in mind that maintaining anonymity as a buyer requires that you purchase from several different sources, preferably at irregular time intervals. Never allow one seller to become your sole source.

If you want to locate private gold and silver sellers in your local area, begin with Craigslist and similar online bulletin boards. The big danger here of course is fraudulent sellers. Whenever buying from a seller you've located online, be sure to meet in a safe place like a library or local bank lobby to do the transaction.

Consider investing in a simple chemical test kit (about \$20 retail) to be certain that the merchandise is genuine. You'll also need a scale to weigh the goods. Silver and gold have very specific weights per cubic centimeter. Armed with a chemical kit and accurate postal scale, anyone can verify that the coins or ingots are actually gold or silver and not lead- or nickel-filled fakes.

For those who don't want to play "amateur scientist" with the scales and chemicals, coin dealers are usually the best bet for buying gold and silver bullion or coins. Always call the business beforehand in order to find out what their markup (over the spot price) is and what kind of supply they have on hand. It is common for shops to be overstocked with a particular metal one day and be out of it the next. Working the phones for a half hour or so will also give you a good idea about who in your town has the best prices and the most consistent supply.

Always find out during the phone discussion whether the shop asks for ID. If they do, just say, “I’m sorry. I know you don’t need to ask for ID by law, and I want to buy anonymously, so I’ll be taking my business elsewhere.” Many a time you’ll get a reply like, “Oh, if that’s the case, then you won’t need ID today, so just come on over and we’ll sell to you without any ID or paperwork.”

Coin shops survive on regular customers, and the thought of losing a regular metals buyer will often cause them to change their policies on the spot. It never hurts to ask.

Gun shows, estate sales and private auctions are also other sources of anonymous metal buying. The only problem with gun shows in particular is that the trust level is basically the same as for Craigslist sellers. Generally, anyone can rent a booth at a show and sell anything they want to. Gun collectors typically have a problem with this as well because there are a lot of bogus “antique” guns floating around at the shows.

**Bottom line:** find about a half-dozen coin dealers who have good local reputations and cycle your gold and silver buying among them, giving preference to the ones with the lowest markup.

Make a point to tell your favorite dealers that you will be a regular buyer and would appreciate a low markup. In most cases, after your third or fourth transaction, a dealer will reduce the markup to retain your business. Coin dealers are just like many other retail and service

providers. The mom-and-pop shops live for their “regulars.” Become one, and you’ll be building a reliable, low-cost pipeline for regular gold and silver purchases.

## **What Are The Reporting Requirements for Sellers and Buyers?**

Reporting requirements that affect buyers of gold and silver are minimal. The primary rule buyers run into is the \$10,000 requirement, which mandates that any dealer who receives that much or more in cash (not checks or bank wires) from a buyer must report the transaction on a Form 8300.

Be careful not to “structure” buys by breaking up a larger transaction into several smaller ones. That is considered by the government to be a highly suspicious activity and could trigger all sorts of nastiness, like the filing of a Suspicious Activity Report by the dealer.

Typically, regular purchasers of gold and silver whose transactions take place every few weeks or months, and who have no single purchase above \$10,000 are not going to be on the radar. The Form 8300 was designed to ferret out actual money launderers and big-time drug dealers. If you are neither, then there is no cause for concern.

## **Do States Levy Sales Tax on Gold and Silver Sales?**

Anyone attempting to purchase gold and silver anonymously should know about local laws concerning reporting, sales tax and other transaction fees. When it comes to state taxes on metals transactions, it is always smart to discuss your personal tax situation with a professional before buying gold or silver. That way you'll know what the local rules are. They vary quite a bit from state to state.

Currently, about two-thirds of U.S. states charge some form of sales tax on precious metals transactions. Always check before buying, because even states that do tax PM purchases sometimes do so on the first \$1,000 and do not tax anything above that amount.

Believe it or not, some local towns and municipalities levy fees on gold and silver purchases even when there is no formal state tax on such transactions. A few cities in Wyoming, for example, tax PM purchases even though the State of Wyoming has no gold or silver tax. Hawaii imposes not a state tax but an excise tax on gold and silver purchases.

What are the states (and localities therein) that currently (as of mid-2016) have NO sales tax on gold and silver purchases whatsoever?

The “sweet 16” tax-free states are Arizona, Delaware, Georgia, Idaho,

Illinois, Iowa, Michigan, Mississippi, Missouri, North Dakota, Oregon, Pennsylvania, Rhode Island, South Carolina, South Dakota, Utah.

All other states have at least some form of taxation, so be sure to learn about local rules and regulations before plunking down a large amount of cash on silver or gold.

## **Hiding Precious Metals at Home**

Always use your best judgment when hiding valuables in the home. Professional thieves know all the common stash locations and many use sophisticated metal-detectors these days. It takes a professional burglar about 5 minutes to “sweep” an average size home with a hand-held detector. There have been several million-dollar burglaries in recent years and not all the goods were properly insured.

Those who want to remain completely anonymous when buying and storing gold and silver often forgo insurance. This is a personal decision, but must be taken with the utmost due diligence. No one can guarantee that your valuables won't be stolen, but there are common sense ways to minimize risk. Here are some suggestions for those who want to hide precious metals at home and avoid detection by thieves or authorities:

Always “diversify” hiding places by putting precious metals in three or four separate locations. If you do that, the chances of even a very capable thief finding everything are small. Later, we’ll discuss some places outside the home where you can hide gold and silver, so consider using multiple stash locations both in and out of your residence.

For those who intend to hide their metals at home, consider buying mostly gold rather than silver and gold in equal quantities. Silver can be a major pain to hide due to its relatively lower cost. In other words, it’s simple to conceal 10 one-ounce gold coins, but an equal value of silver (which would be about 600 ounces) can be cumbersome. So, anyone who plans on keeping a home stash should probably “go for gold” rather than silver.

Most metal-detectors can’t distinguish between water pipes, electrical hardware and small amounts of gold. That’s why it is wise to consider storing a few ounces of gold in or near water pipes (sealed plastic bags can easily be taped to pipes in hard-to-see areas), underneath switch plates or inside a refrigerator motor (always exercise caution when working with electrical appliances and be sure to shut off main power when dealing with lighting and switch plates).

Reformed thieves have told investigators that they typically hunted for wall or free-standing safes, checked mattresses, looked in freezers and refrigerators (where food is kept, not in the motor works),

examined bookshelves, and went through dresser drawers as their main priorities.

Burglars with metal detectors are mainly checking for hidden wall safes and stashes of gold or silver under floor boards. That information should give gold and silver owners a list of places NOT to use. Remember, hide metals in small amounts and use multiple locations.

Other locations that are usually good ideas for home storage include in or around silverware drawers, in hard to reach areas under the hood of a car (if the car is kept in a home-based garage), and ceiling fans.

Consider using decoys in your home security setup. This might mean putting a few hundred dollars of cash in a desk drawer or in the freezer, places where hurried thieves are sure to look. They'll usually assume they're found the "big stash" and move on to their next victim.

In addition, there is even a legitimate market for fake gold and silver ingots. A few of these iron-filled, authentic looking bars in a key location can be enough to convince a robber that he has hit the jackpot. Deterrence and clever thinking are effective weapons when storing gold and silver in the home.

Consider using an in-ground plastic container to store some gold and silver in your backyard, about 12 inches below the surface, perhaps

below a concrete slab that serves as a utility platform. Thieves will rarely be bold enough to traverse your yard, and if you hide the container deep enough or under concrete, a metal detector won't be able to locate it.

Because house burglars seldom have time to inspect attics, some homeowners hide part of their stash near or behind utility boxes above ceilings, or even behind insulation high in the attic. Be careful if you need to use a ladder to access a high point in the attic, but note that these difficult, remote spots are among the very best hiding places for valuables of all kinds.

### **What About Confidentiality, or “Loose Lips Sink Ships”?**

Never tell anyone that you store precious metals at home. In fact, it's usually a good idea to let it be known you prefer safe deposit boxes and only keep “emergency” cash in your home. But, do make arrangements for someone to know where things are hidden in the event of your death. Consider giving a sealed letter to your attorney that can become part of your official will.

Better yet, place a partial map of your stash areas in a safe deposit box and give the other half of the map to an attorney as part of your will. Structure the map so that either part alone is useless. When you

die and your safe deposit box contents are combined with the materials you handed over to the attorney, your heirs will know where the gold and silver are kept.

## **How to Hide Precious Metals Somewhere Other Than at Home**

The principle of diversification really is the overriding concept for hiding precious metals and owning them anonymously. Besides in-home locations, there are a number of rather safe places outside your residence, including safe deposit boxes.

Most owners of gold and silver maintain at least part of their metallic assets in a safe deposit box. Bank boxes are virtually anonymous though they can be seized in the event of a bankruptcy or a tax lien. If neither of those scenarios is likely for you, then think about a box as part of an overall diversification system for storing gold and silver.

Automobiles can be relatively safe places for storing small quantities of precious metals, even when cars are not kept in a garage. Careful thought must go into this decision because cars are routine targets of amateur thieves. When you take your car in for service, make sure that you remove the valuables, and then return them to their hiding place later on.

Always consider your own comfort level for storing gold and silver outside the home. These so-called “remote” locations are subject to much more uncertainty than nearby stashes, so should undergo a much more thorough vetting process. Indeed, many anonymous gold and silver buyers use a combination of storage locations, even though home sites tend to make up the bulk of the locales.

It is not unusual for owners of large quantities of precious metals to store the majority of the glittery stuff in secret hideouts within the house, keep a small quantity in an outdoor or underground area either in a backyard or in a remote wooded area, and to keep some in a safe box, in a car or on one’s person.

Shoe heels can be hollowed out for the purpose of holding up to about five ounces of gold. Cowboy boots are even better because they have more storage space. For “on-person” storage, remember to keep just a few ounces, never use a purse or wallet, and never tell anyone that you are carrying valuables. Even if you are robbed on the street, most muggers won’t ask for your shoes!

When storing gold and silver at home or elsewhere, be creative and always use multiple storage areas. You will also need to have emergency plans in place in the event of floods, fires or disasters. In the event of a total economic meltdown, it will be most convenient to have small units of gold and silver for easy trading. A 100-ounce bar

of silver or a 10-ounce gold ingot will not be negotiable for food or basic supplies (unless you want to buy 15,000 loaves of bread!).

See “Are some types of precious metals better” below for more information about the kinds and amounts of gold and silver to own.

### **Are Safe Deposit Boxes a Good Place to Store Bullion and Coins?**

Safe deposit boxes certainly have their pros and cons when it comes to storing silver and gold anonymously. They are quite safe from thieves, and are of course much less likely to be robbed than a home safe.

Note that several U.S. states, as well as the IRS, can get access to your box when you die, are placed under a tax lien, or are involved in a bankruptcy. The IRS routinely “freezes” access to safe deposit boxes during some types of tax litigation. There are urban legends about safe boxes having been seized or sealed as part of the 1933 gold confiscation. Those legends are completely false. Note that, while safe deposit boxes are by no means the best place to keep gold and silver, there are many hoaxes and plenty of misinformation about their security.

Recent rumors involve totally false reports that the State of California was seizing boxes and auctioning off the contents. Those reports are

untrue, as are the urban legends which state that the Dept. of Homeland Security can “secretly inspect” safe boxes. All these rumors surfaced shortly after the passage of the act and they are untrue.

Even if the IRS were able to freeze your box, in effect locking you out of it in the event of a tax lien filing, agents are unable to open the box unless you are present. Safety deposit boxes are a good place for storing important documents, a few valuables, and perhaps small amounts of precious metals; but they should not be the primary storage location for anonymous buyers of gold and silver.

### **What About Overseas Storage Options and “Precious Metals Depositories”?**

Most owners of gold and silver are not comfortable with overseas storage options, even though there are all sorts of companies that operate such businesses. Large companies who own significant amounts of precious metals tend to use overseas storage facilities as well as domestic “metals depositories.”

Individuals who anonymously own gold and silver usually want to have access to their valuables on short notice. Depositories do offer anonymous storage options, so don’t rule out this method completely.

One needs to consider fees, shipping and peace of mind when choosing either overseas or local off-site (meaning not in your home) precious metals storage.

## **Are Some Types of Precious Metals Better for the Anonymous Investor Than Others?**

As mentioned above, silver presents a much more problematic storage issue than gold, merely because of the bulk of the metal and its current cost per ounce. Anonymous investors do need to think about extreme situations, like economic catastrophes.

If the economy were to hit the skids and precious metals became the primary form of exchange, you don't want to be stuck with large "denomination" gold and silver pieces. That's why so many anonymous buyers keep at least some portion of their assets in very small gold bullion rounds and in small units of silver.

A typical "doomsday" stash should probably include at least a dozen tenth-ounce or twentieth-ounce gold bullion rounds or bars, as well as 50 or more silver one-ounce or half-ounce rounds. Another good way to own small amounts of silver is to purchase pre-1965 U.S. dimes, quarters and half-dollar coins. Nearly every coin dealer sells these items by the bag and in bulk. They also tend to be reasonably priced

if you are willing to purchase about \$1,000 worth of them. See the following section for more detailed information on this topic.

Owning small units of both gold and silver also fits in with the general rule of many precious metal enthusiasts: Buy smaller units of precious metals before acquiring larger, more valuable pieces. Some experienced buyers believe in accumulating silver first, and then buying gold. Whether such strategies match your own intentions and goals is a matter to consider. In any case, it makes perfect sense to have at least a few tenth-ounce gold rounds and a smattering of silver ounces or half-ounce coins.

### **What About Fractional Gold and Silver Bullion and “Junk Silver”**

Pre-1965 U.S. dimes, quarters and half dollar coins are 90 percent silver by weight. To calculate how much value each coin carries, multiply the face amount of the coin by .72 to see how many ounces of silver are in it.

For example, a 1962 Washington Quarter contains  $.72 \times .25$ , or .18 ounces of pure silver. At the current price of silver, which is about \$20.50, the silver in that one quarter is worth \$3.70, almost 15 times the face amount of the coin.

So-called “junk” silver coins like pre-1965 dimes, quarters and half dollars are ideal ways to own emergency silver. They’re reasonably priced at most dealers, and you can get significant discounts by buying in bulk. In times of financial strife, no one is going to wonder how much silver is in a 1960 dime or quarter. The amounts are set and verifiable. Plus, the coinage is legal tender and needs no testing or weighing to authenticate its value.

For the prepper in all of us, junk silver is an attractive part of any precious metals stash. On top of the pre-1965 silver, fractional silver and gold U.S. Eagles are convenient to own. The gold versions are available in one-ounce, half-ounce, quarter-ounce and tenth-ounce varieties. Silver Eagles come in one-ounce units. A large number of precious metals enthusiasts buy nothing but U.S. Eagle silver and gold bullion coins because of the liquidity factor and the variety of sizes for the gold coin. (Technically, the gold coins are called American Eagles and the silver ones Silver Eagles).

While the rules for *selling* silver and gold bullion and coinage are complicated, note that an individual can sell any amount of American Eagle gold coins (or any size) or Silver Eagle coins without any reporting requirements. In other words, investors who stick with the U.S. versions of official bullion coinage are easily able to buy *and* sell their precious metals to a dealer anonymously at any time.

For those who value anonymity, the ability to acquire or sell all or any fraction of one's holdings is a compelling reason to consider U.S. gold and silver bullion coins.

It's not just the American Eagle and Silver Eagle coins that are exempt from selling reports. The Canadian and Austrian silver bullion coins are also exempt, as are U.S.-minted "American Gold Buffalo" coins, a 1-ounce bullion round.

Indeed, the world of anonymous gold and silver buying, storing and selling can be a complicated one; but investors who spend time learning the ropes and establishing a diverse supply network can build a solid portfolio of "non-existent" assets.

## **Protecting Precious Metals From The Natural Environment**

Silver definitely presents more of a problem in this arena. It tarnishes quite quickly when exposed to oxygen and humidity, and can even rot through in extreme conditions. Gold is much sturdier but does scratch quite easily.

So, what is the best way to protect gold and silver from moisture and damage? Sealing each item in plastic, air-tight preferably, will usually be enough to protect metals that are hidden away. If storing precious

metals in the ground, be doubly sure to seal the containers carefully so that moisture and living organisms cannot get in.

Fires and floods are another issue. If your house is swept away in a flood or engulfed in a total-loss fire, there is a chance that your stash of gold and silver could be lost. Fires, floods and earthquakes can't really be predicted, but it helps to have contingency plans.

Know how to get to your primary gold and silver hiding places in the event of a developing fire, and make up your mind, in advance, which one or two storage places you'll try to rescue. Never put your own life in danger in order to save precious metals. And never, ever enter a burning structure to remove valuables.

In the huge majority of cases, using a system of triple-bagging coins and bars and then wrapping them with strong tape is good enough to get the job done. Coin stores sell tubes and plastic cases for holding pieces of various sizes. These items can be wrapped in additional plastic and tape to make them even more impervious to air and harsh elements.

## **What Kind of Insurance is Available?**

Insuring gold and silver you have purchased anonymously is rather difficult. For one thing, if you want to retain anonymity, traditional insurance policies won't do. At best, you would be looking at storing the metal in a safe deposit box and obtaining insurance on its contents (don't rely on the bank's insurance, because it does not cover the value of your goods in a safe box).

You'll need to have proof of purchase and good documentation for the metals that you keep in the box in order to get enough insurance. For gold and silver that you hide in your home, you are out of luck. Even homeowners' policies routinely allow for a maximum of about \$1,000 of insurance for precious metals, and you can't pay a higher premium to get more coverage.

Insurance companies, understandably, worry about home security. Even if you can show that you have a top-notch alarm system and have taken reasonable precautions, there just aren't many companies that are willing to insure large amounts of home-stored precious metals at reasonable rates.

Depositories are an option, but then again, anonymity becomes compromised when you hire any third party to store gold and silver for you.

## **What Do You do When it is Time to Sell All or Part of the Metals Stash?**

Selling gold and silver anonymously is much more difficult than buying it “under the radar.” Federal money-laundering regulations make large transactions problematic for sellers who want to go unnoticed.

Laws for selling privately owned gold and silver are incredibly complicated. Perhaps in a future discourse we’ll go into detail about that specific topic. For our present purposes, namely how to buy and store gold and silver anonymously let the following suffice:

You can almost always sell to an individual for cash without any problems or complications. In order to sell large amounts of bullion to a coin dealer, you’ll need to pay attention to the kind of metals you are selling (U.S. Eagles or raw ingots) and the amount you are selling.

In general, small quantities of gold and silver sales by you, to a dealer, will not require paperwork or reporting documents.

## What Basic Rules Should Gold and Silver Owners Keep in Mind?

- When buying from or selling to individuals, always meet in a safe location. If you are buying gold or silver, consider knowing how to verify the authenticity of the metal. That will probably involve purchasing some chemicals and equipment.
- When selling your gold or silver to an individual, meet in a safe place and be ready to have the metal tested for purity. Also, as a seller you should be aware that people do use counterfeit money. Know how to spot fake bills and consider meeting at your own bank so you can deposit the cash immediately, while your buyer waits.
- If the bills pass your own “pen test” (you can purchase such pens online and in many coin stores) AND passes the bank’s fraud controls, then the cash is authentic, is now safely in your bank account and the deal is done.
- Don’t pay for gold or silver that is retained by the seller in a “vault” or “segregated account.” The rule for most gold and silver buyers is to take possession of the physical metal.
- Note that gold and silver U.S. Eagles are among the most liquid forms of gold and silver bullion on earth. They are readily saleable, easy to store, and have lax reporting requirements for sellers (compared to sellers of gold and silver ingots and foreign bullion). Buying and selling gold and silver Eagles is as simple

as walking into a coin store and paying cash for them, or selling them for some percentage below the spot price. Every owner of gold and silver should seriously consider keeping at least part of their anonymous stash in the form of U.S. Eagles.

- Never talk or brag about your knowledge of the precious metals market. That “marks” you as someone who might keep valuables in your home.
- Be very careful not to be followed after purchasing precious metals from an individual, or when exiting a coin dealer’s shop. Nefarious individuals have been known to stalk customers who spend short amounts of time in coin shops on Fridays and other well-known pay-cycle days. Always watch your back.
- Never (ever) post a photo of your metallic stash on any social media site. This might sound highly moronic, but a quick glance at Facebook will prove that there are plenty of people who like to show off their wealth at the risk of becoming targets of thieves.
- Safety and diversification (of storage methods and places) are the most important concepts for anonymous buyers of gold and silver.
- Avoid buying “rare” gold or silver coins unless you are an experienced numismatist. That kind of investing is actually not related to precious metals, but more of a rarity acquisition, like buying a classic car or a work of art.

## Conclusion

Casual buyers of gold and silver typically have no problem remaining anonymous when buying and storing their metals. The situation becomes more complicated when one begins to accumulate something northwards of \$5,000-\$10,000 worth of the shiny stuff. Serious consideration should be given to issues like storage, secrecy, emergency plans, and private record-keeping.

People who sit down and plan their purchases, get to know several “cash and carry” dealers, and devote some time to long-term planning will be in the best position to profit from holding precious metals. If there is one rule for metals “accumulators,” as they are often called in the trade, it is this: decide ahead of time from whom you will buy, how and where you’ll store your assets, and whom else (if anyone) you’ll be sharing the information with.