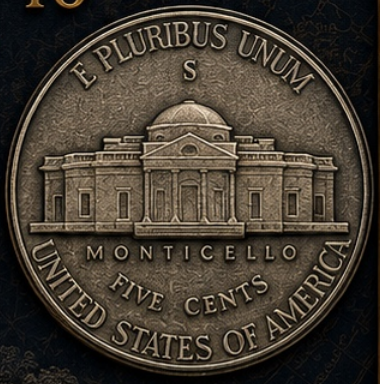
UNITED NONCENTZ ATLAS

JEFFERSON NICKELS

VOLUMES 09–10

1938–Present





IN ERRORS WE TRUST

WAR NICKELS • KEY DATES • ERRORS • VALUES

HIDDEN ERROR FIELD ATLAS

Proof-first diagnostics, honest values, die markers, microscope workflow, and sold-comp discipline

Volumes 09-10 | Jefferson Nickels | 1938-present | In Errors We Trust

THE NONCENTZ PRINCIPLE

The best coin guide is not the one with the loudest prices. It is the one that teaches someone how to prove what they have, avoid bad claims, and still enjoy the hunt.

WHAT MAKES THIS NICKEL GUIDE DIFFERENT

- Proof first: every claim must survive photos, weight, diameter, marker comparison, and damage filters.
- Value lanes: we separate pocket-change value, collector premium, attributed variety value, and certified condition-rarity value.
- Under-talked errors: this guide does not chase only famous dates; it trains you to spot subtle die states, steps, planchet flaws, and mintmark positions.

THE NONCENTZ PROOF LADDER

- 1. Identify date, mint, design type, composition, and normal specifications.
- 2. Rule out damage, corrosion, plating, squeeze marks, and common machine doubling.
- 3. Photograph exact pickup points: date, mintmark, motto, eye/profile, Monticello, steps, windows, rim, and edge.
- 4. Compare to Variety Vista, Wexler, PCGS/NGC, and Error-Ref before pricing.



PHOTO SLOT: OBVERSE DETAIL



PHOTO SLOT: REVERSE DETAIL



PHOTO SLOT: STEPS / MARKERS

VOLUME 09-10 PROMISE

This Jefferson Nickel atlas is built to be used at a desk with a loupe, scale, phone camera, and microscope - not just read like a price list. The target is to help a beginner stop guessing and help an advanced collector document coins well enough for attribution, sale, or submission. The final year-by-year build should add your own microscope photos, exact die markers, current sold comps, and a plain-English warning when a coin is interesting but not valuable enough to grade.

SERIES MAP: 1938 TO PRESENT

CORE SPECIFICATIONS AND DESIGN CHECKPOINTS

Jefferson nickels began in 1938 with Felix Schlag's Jefferson obverse and Monticello reverse. Regular alloy business strikes are 75% copper and 25% nickel. War nickels from part of 1942 through 1945 use a silver alloy and carry a large mintmark above Monticello; later issues return to copper-nickel alloy. The modern series also includes Westward Journey designs and updated Jefferson portraits, so correct design type comes before variety hunting.

Era	Dates	What to check first	NONCENTZ value reality
Early Schlag design	1938-1941	1938-D/S, 1939 reverse of 1938/1940, doubled Monticello, early RPMs, full steps.	Most circulated pieces are modest; premiums jump with scarcer mints, full steps, and attributed varieties.
War silver alloy	1942-1945	Large reverse mintmark, 35% silver alloy, 1943/2-P, 1943-P DDO, 1945-P DDR, laminations, alloy streaking.	Common circulated war nickels usually trade near melt/collector levels; major attributed varieties are different markets.
Post-war vintage	1946-1964	RPMs, over-mintmarks, proof doubled dies, full steps, die polish, strike weakness.	Look for condition rarity and full steps; many raw claims are only common nickels.
Modern & Westward	1965-present	No silver, mintmark placement changes, 2004-2005 designs, doubled dies, die chips, cud breaks, off-center strikes.	Most modern errors need dramatic visibility or certified high grade to bring strong money.

MINTMARK LOCATIONS MATTER

- 1938-1942 early copper-nickel: mintmark on reverse near Monticello, except Philadelphia has no mintmark.
- War nickels: giant P, D, or S above Monticello. Philadelphia used a P mintmark for the first time on U.S. coinage.

FULL STEPS WARNING

- Full Steps is a certification-sensitive designation; do not call FS from a blurry picture.
- Weak steps from normal strike are not damage, but they can erase most premium.
- A common-date MS coin can be ordinary while the same date with verified FS can become a condition-rarity target.

BEGINNER SORTING ORDER

Sort nickel finds into: common face-value coins; silver war nickels; early dates/mints; full-step candidates; visible mint errors; and possible die varieties. This prevents the biggest mistake: treating every doubled-looking line, mark, or scratch as a rare variety. A coin becomes a claim only after it is measurable, photographable, and comparable to a known listing or a recognized mint-error category.

DIAGNOSTIC TOOLKIT: PROVE IT BEFORE PRICING IT

FIELD EQUIPMENT

- 10x loupe for first pass; 30x-60x microscope for markers.
- Digital scale accurate to 0.01g; calipers for diameter if planchet error suspected.
- Two light angles: one soft overhead, one low side light to reveal raised vs incuse metal.

PHOTO SET EVERY NICKEL NEEDS

- Full obverse and reverse, straight and uncropped.
- Date and mintmark closeup.
- LIBERTY and IN GOD WE TRUST closeup.
- Jefferson eye/profile/hair details when checking doubled eye or profile.

RAISED METAL VS DAMAGE

- True die varieties repeat the same raised pattern on multiple coins from the same die.
- Damage usually cuts, pushes, scrapes, or displaces metal and will not match known marker charts.
- Machine doubling is flat, shelf-like, and often reduces design width instead of adding rounded secondary design.
- Die deterioration creates mushy outlines; it may look doubled but lacks notching/split serifs.

NICKEL-SPECIFIC TRAPS

- War nickel alloy streaking and lamination can be real mint-made planchet behavior but not always high value.
- Steps are often weak from strike; weak steps alone are not an error.
- Old nickels tone, stain, and corrode easily; surface color is not proof of rare composition.
- Filled mintmarks and die chips can be collectible, but most are small-dollar unless dramatic or attributed.



DATE / MINTMARK



MONTICELLO / STEPS



EDGE / PLANCHET

NONCENTZ DIAGNOSTIC SENTENCE FOR LISTINGS

Use wording like: "Possible doubled die / RPM candidate. Photos show the suspected pickup points. I have not certified this coin; buyer should compare to Wexler, Variety Vista, PCGS/NGC, and Error-Ref." Honest language protects the seller, respects the buyer, and keeps the hobby cleaner.

WAR NICKELS: THE SILVER SHORT SET WITH HIDDEN VARIETY POTENTIAL

WHY 1942-1945 MATTER

War nickels are the one Jefferson nickel group every beginner should separate immediately. The alloy changed to 56% copper, 35% silver, and 9% manganese, and the large mintmark above Monticello makes them easy to pull from mixed lots. But the big money is not automatic silver content - it comes from condition, full steps, and confirmed varieties such as the 1943/2-P overdate, 1943-P doubled die obverse, and 1945-P doubled die reverse.

Target	Primary pickup points	Reality check	Field value lane
1942-P/D/S war type	Large reverse mintmark above Monticello; silver alloy; 5.00g spec.	Common circulated examples are usually melt-plus, not jackpot coins.	Often about $1-$3 raw common depending silver and demand; better BU/FS can be more.
1943/2-P overdate	Date: remnants of 2 under 3; compare exact shape and location.	A die flaw near the date is not enough; this is a known major variety.	Strong premiums when attributed; verify with PCGS/NGC/Wexler/Variety Vista before pricing.
1943-P DDO	Obverse doubling; profile/eye/motto/date diagnostics depending listing.	Do not confuse with machine doubling or glare on silver alloy.	Attribution is the value switch; raw guesses should be conservative.
1945-P DDR	Reverse doubling on Monticello lettering and design details.	Requires reverse closeups and marker comparison.	Can be meaningful in higher grades; low-grade weak photos sell weaker.

SILVER IS NOT THE WHOLE STORY

- Silver content creates a base floor, but that floor moves with spot silver.
- Cleaned, stained, or damaged war nickels lose collector premium fast.
- Full Steps and high grade can matter more than melt value.
- Never advertise "rare silver nickel" as if every war nickel is rare.

BEST MICROSCOPE TARGETS

- Date numerals on 1943-P; look for true overdate shape.
- Jefferson eye/profile and motto for DDO candidates.
- Monticello, FIVE CENTS, E PLURIBUS UNUM for DDR candidates.
- Planchet laminations and alloy streaks: photograph raised/peeled metal, not stains.

NONCENTZ WAR NICKEL LISTING NOTE

Good listing title format: "1943-P Jefferson War Nickel - possible variety candidate - microscope photos - 35% silver - please verify markers." Bad listing title format: "RARE ERROR WORTH THOUSANDS" when no attribution, grade, or sold comps are shown.

VINTAGE NICKEL VARIETY HUNT: 1938-1964

WHAT MOST PEOPLE MISS

The nickel series is deeper than 1950-D and war nickels. Early Jeffersons have reverse design changes, doubled Monticello varieties, repunched mintmarks, over-mintmarks, proof doubled dies, die scratches, and full-step condition rarities. The NONCENTZ edge is not claiming every coin is rare - it is building a checklist that teaches where to look.

Date/Zone	Variety families to research	Exact field markers to photograph	Price truth
1938-D/S and 1938-S/D claims	RPM/OMM candidates and mintmark style.	Mintmark closeup with light from two angles; reverse field marker if known.	Real OMM/RPM needs attribution; ordinary 1938-D/S mints are not all varieties.
1939 reverse types & doubled Monticello	Reverse of 1938/1940; doubled Monticello.	Monticello steps/window/lettering; compare reverse hub design, not just date.	Some 1939 varieties can bring serious premium in grade; raw damaged coins do not.
1946-1954 proof & business strike DDs	DDO/DDR, proof doubled dies, RPMs.	LIBERTY, date, motto, Monticello, EPU, and die scratches listed by source.	Proof doubling can be valuable but must be distinguished from reflections/cameo glare.
1950-D and 1950s FS chase	Key date, rolls saved, high-grade Full Steps.	Full steps, cheek marks, luster, strike, surfaces.	1950-D is famous but not automatically rare in all conditions. FS/grade determine premium.
1960-1964 last vintage years	RPMs, DDRs, strike quality, full steps.	Mintmark, Monticello details, die scratches, cud/rim breaks.	Most circulated examples are low value; high grade FS or attributed varieties are the play.

DOUBLED DIE PROOF POINTS

- Look for notching, separation, and rounded secondary design.
- Document die markers: scratches, gouges, cracks, polish lines, and die stage.
- Do not rely on one zoomed-in letter; the coin should match the listed variety pattern.

RPM/OMM PROOF POINTS

- Secondary mintmark must be raised, not gouged or scratched.
- Use multiple light angles because nickel metal reflects harshly.
- Compare exact direction: north, south, east, west, tilted, horizontal, or over another mint.

PUBLICATION TARGET

The final year-by-year nickel atlas should have one page per date/mint family with your own microscope photos: normal coin, suspect marker, confirmed marker, and a "not this" damage example. That is what makes it different from recycled internet lists.

MODERN JEFFERSON NICKELS: 1965-PRESENT

MODERN DOES NOT MEAN WORTHLESS - BUT PROOF MATTERS MORE

Modern nickels are plentiful, so value usually needs one of four things: dramatic mint error, certified top grade, Full Steps on a tough issue, or a confirmed die variety. The hunt is still fun because rolls can produce off-center strikes, clips, cuds, die breaks, doubled dies, rotated dies, strike-throughs, proof errors, and unusual Westward Journey varieties - but the market punishes weak photos and exaggerated titles.

Modern target	Where to look	Do not overclaim	Good value lane
1965-1990s business strikes	Date, mintmark, rim, Monticello steps, die cracks, cuds, off-center strikes.	Small chips and scratches are common; most circulated modern nickels stay face-to-low-dollar.	Dramatic errors and elite certified FS grades can be premium.
Proof nickels	Cameo contrast, doubled dies, die polish, struck-through, planchet flaws.	Proof haze, fingerprints, and reflections are not varieties.	Strong only when surfaces are clean and the variety/error is real.
2004-2005 Westward Journey	Design-specific doubling, strike quality, edge/rim, planchet clips, off-center.	Design changes can fool beginners; compare to normal examples first.	Common raw pieces are face value; dramatic errors/grade can sell.
2006-present portrait	Obverse lettering, eye/profile, mintmark, reverse steps, die chips/cuds.	Tiny die chips need honest language; avoid "major error" if it is minor.	Low-dollar unless dramatic, high grade, or attributed.

ROLL-SEARCH STRATEGY

- Pull out pre-1960, all war nickels, proofs, off-colors, broadstrikes, clips, cuds, and strong off-centers.
- Set aside clean high-grade coins for step photos before touching the fields.
- Use a normal example of the same year/mint as your control coin.

MODERN LISTING HONESTY

- Say "die chip" not "major cud" unless it reaches rim and matches cud definition.
- Say "possible doubled die candidate" until attributed.
- For high grade claims, show full coin, luster, cheek, fields, and steps - not only one closeup.

MODERN VALUE WARNING

A 1970s, 1980s, 1990s, or 2000s nickel can be exciting, but most claims fail because sellers skip diagnostics. The best way to make modern nickels profitable is not hype - it is volume sorting, clear photography, accurate terms, and knowing when a coin is not worth a grading fee.

MINT ERRORS VS DAMAGE: NICKEL EDITION

THE MOST IMPORTANT PAGE FOR HONEST SELLING

Nickels are hard, reflective, and often heavily circulated. That makes damage look convincing in photos. A good NONCENTZ guide teaches the collector to reject bad claims before the buyer does. Use weight, diameter, edge condition, metal flow, and repeated die markers to separate true mint errors from post-mint damage.

Claim	What real error needs	Common false match	Value lane
Off-center strike	Part of design missing, blank crescent, correct weight/diameter behavior.	Coin cut, squeezed, or damaged after strike.	Minor low-dollar; dramatic with date visible can be much stronger.
Broadstrike	Out-of-collar expansion with full design present.	Flattened rim from spooning, dryer damage, vise damage.	Premium if genuine and attractive.
Clipped planchet	Curved/straight clip plus Blakesley effect and correct weight loss.	Cut with shears, corrosion, ground edge.	Small clips modest; multiple/large clips premium.
Lamination / alloy flaw	Peeling/split metal from planchet; often follows metal grain.	Scratches, stains, chemical corrosion.	Depends on size, location, eye appeal, and attribution.
Cud / die break	Raised metal connected to rim; missing detail where die broke.	Dent, glue, corrosion, hit.	Rim cuds can bring collector premium; tiny chips are smaller market.
Wrong planchet	Wrong weight/diameter/composition; design mismatch.	Altered coin, plated coin, fake color.	High value when certified; do not sell raw as fact without proof.

DAMAGE RED FLAGS

- Incuse cuts where the claim should be raised.
- Metal pushed over the rim with no mint-made flow pattern.
- Random scratches crossing devices and fields.

PROOF PACKAGE BEFORE PRICING

- Weight to 0.01g, diameter, edge photos, full coin both sides.
- One normal comparison coin from same era.
- Marker closeups and source comparison screenshots/notes.

NONCENTZ RULE

A nickel with a neat-looking mark is not automatically an error. A nickel with measurements, repeatable markers, clean photos, and a conservative claim becomes a collectible object people can trust.

HONEST VALUES, SOLD COMPS, AND SUBMISSION MATH

THE PRICE LADDER

The nickel market is split into lanes. Common circulated nickels, silver melt pieces, known key dates, attributed varieties, dramatic mint errors, and certified Full Steps condition rarities do not price the same way. The mistake is mixing auction-record headlines with raw pocket-change coins.

Lane	Examples	How to price honestly	Submit?
Face/low-dollar common	Most worn modern and common-date Jeffersons.	Face value to small collector lots unless silver, key, or visible error.	No.
Silver/melt lane	Common circulated 1942-1945 war nickels.	Use current silver melt as floor plus collector demand.	Usually no unless high grade/variety.
Key/date lane	1938-D/S, 1939-D/S, 1942-D, 1950-D, better early dates.	Use PCGS/NGC price guide and recent sold comps by same grade.	Only if condition supports premium.
Attributed variety lane	1943/2-P, 1943-P DDO, 1945-P DDR, known RPM/OMM/DD listings.	Value switches on attribution quality and grade.	Yes when variety is strong enough to cover fees.
Mint-error lane	Off-center, broadstrike, clip, lamination, cud, wrong planchet.	Compare size, visibility, date, eye appeal, and certification.	Major errors: often yes. Minor: often no.
Condition-rarity FS lane	High-grade Full Steps coins.	Only comparable to certified FS coins; raw FS claims are discounted.	Yes only if truly gem with clean steps/surfaces.

SUBMISSION MATH FORMULA

- Expected certified value - raw value - grading/shipping/attribution fees = possible upside.
- If upside is not at least 2-3x total fees, keep it raw or sell as a candidate.

SOLD-COMP RULES

- Use completed/sold, not asking prices.
- Match date, mint, grade, FS/no FS, attribution, holder, and eye appeal.
- Use at least 3 comps if possible; disclose if there are too few comps.

REALISTIC VALUE LANGUAGE

Say: "Current sold comps for attributed examples vary by grade and certification; raw examples should be priced below certified comps until verified." Avoid: "This could be worth thousands" without the exact variety, grade, photos, and comparable sales.

NEXT BUILD TARGET: YEAR-BY-YEAR NICKEL PAGES

BUILD THE TRUE ATLAS FROM THIS TEMPLATE

The next version should turn this guide into true year-by-year pages for every date/mint: your own microscope photos, exact die markers, normal-vs-error comparisons, and sold comps updated at publication time. This page is the production blueprint for Volumes 09-10.

Field	What each year page must include
Date/mints	All mintmarks issued, design type, composition, normal weight/diameter, mintmark location.
Known varieties	DDO, DDR, RPM, OMM, overdate, reverse type, proof varieties, FS notes.
Marker photos	Your microscope photos: date, mintmark, motto, eye/profile, Monticello, steps, rim/edge.
Damage filter	At least one "not this" photo: machine doubling, scratch, corrosion, dryer damage, or hit.
Value lane	Common raw, better raw, attributed raw, certified, Full Steps, and major error lanes.
Publication comps	3-5 sold comps with sale date, grade, service, attribution, source, and screenshot/archive note.

PHOTO CHECKLIST

- Full obverse/reverse, straight on.
- Closeup of date and mintmark.
- Closeup of suspected marker with arrows in final layout.
- Monticello steps and windows.
- Weight/diameter screenshot or written measurement.
- Comparison against normal example.

RESEARCH LINKS TO VERIFY

- PCGS CoinFacts and PCGS Price Guide.
- NGC Coin Explorer and NGC Price Guide.
- Variety Vista Jefferson DDO/DDR/RPM pages.
- Wexler Doubled Die Files and RPM/OMM pages.
- Error-Ref for mint-error definitions.
- GreatCollections, Heritage, eBay sold, and other completed sales.

CLICKABLE SOURCE LINKS

These links are starting points, not final value proof. Sold comps must be updated when the ebook is published.

U.S. Mint Nickel History: https://www.usmint.gov/learn/coins-and-medals/circulating-coins/nickel

PCGS Jefferson Nickel Price Guide: https://www.pcgs.com/prices/detail/jefferson-nickel/84/most-active

NGC Jefferson Five Cents Price Guide: https://www.ngccoin.com/price-guide/united-states/nickels/25/

Wexler RPM/OMM listings: https://doubleddie.com/1468940.html

Variety Vista Jefferson Nickel hub: https://varietyvista.com/

Error-Ref index of mint errors: https://www.error-ref.com/index-of-entries/

GreatCollections Jefferson archive: https://www.greatcollections.com/Auction-Archive/US-Coin-Prices/7/Nickel-Five-Cent-Pieces/24/Jefferson-Nickels