

Author: Kerry (aka: KAK) [Email:](#)

I have a degree in history and archaeology. I've written manuals and museum publications and try to write simply and concisely. I have been fascinated with metal detecting since I was eight but I only bought my first detector, a Bounty Hunter Landstar nine years ago. I do a LOT of research so I could make the right choice for my needs and got the Minelab Explorer 2 five years ago. I decided to get into beach hunting because although I found lots at parks, it didn't add up very fast. I started reading the forums last December about beach hunting and ended up getting the Infinium. I was hoping that its growing pains were over and the current model and coils had all the bugs worked out. I just got my Nuttall scoop too and I'm impressed. Much easier than sloshing around in the wet sand with a shovel.

IDing Gold

On the plus side I did learn there are many tests (thanks to other posters and some research) that you can carry out to identify gold.

1. If it comes out of the ground or the beach clean and looking like gold it probably is. Most anything else will probably be crusty or tarnished.
2. Check for k markings inside the ring or on the clasp for jewelry.
3. Gold is not magnetic but that material the item is made of may not be magnetic either.
4. Look for any wear and discoloration as it may be plated.
5. Lick it. If it's brass, you'll get a taste of copper. If it's gold, you'll get little or none. (the nugget passed this test)
6. Wait a long time. Brass will tarnish. Gold does not tarnish. Or
7. Dip it in vinegar and leave it for 30 minutes to speed up the tarnishing process. If it looks cleaner or has a red tint it is brass. Gold is not affected. (the nuggets darkened)
8. Gold is very soft and can be scratched or cut easily with a knife. It can also be pounded with a hammer and will flatten. Pyrite will break. (the nuggets were scratched and cut easily)
9. Rub it on an unglazed tile or the bottom of a cup or plate. (Thanks JDknight34) Gold will leave a yellow streak. Copper leaves a red streak. I guess brass leaves a yellow streak too
10. Thanks Bubbles. I read your notes on specific gravity (<http://www.findmall.com/read.php?26,1162810>) and the nugget came out to about 1.22. (dry 4.9g, hanging in water 4.3) Gold is 15.6.
11. Apply nitric acid, which will eat away everything but the gold. (I can't get nitric acid here)
12. If you're still unsure, check with a reputable jeweler who can do non-invasive test.