

Collector's Journal

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2008 Martin Van Buren Presidential Dollar

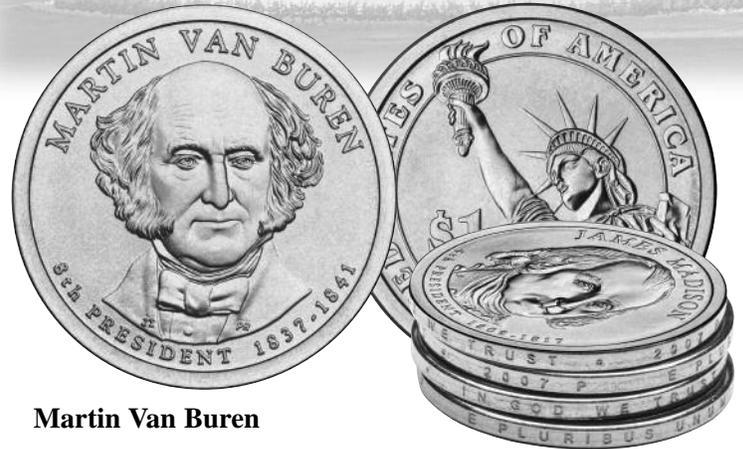
Eighth in the Presidential Dollars Collection

The Martin Van Buren Dollar is the fourth and final coin issued in 2008 in the U.S. Mint's Presidential Dollars collection. It was released in November 2008.

The Presidential Dollars collection started in 2007 with the first four coins honoring the first four Presidents: George Washington, John Adams, Thomas Jefferson, and James Madison. The three coins preceding the Van Buren Dollar in 2008 were James Monroe, John Quincy Adams, and Andrew Jackson. The four coins to be issued in 2009 will honor William Henry Harrison, John Tyler, James Knox Polk, and Zachary Taylor, the 9th through 12th Presidents, respectively.

Under the terms of the Presidential \$1 Coin Act, each deceased U.S. President will be featured on a separate coin, provided he or she has been dead for at least two years at the time the coin is issued. Coins are issued at the rate of four per year, and in the order in which the Presidents served. Only one coin is issued for each President for his or her period of service, no matter how many consecutive terms of office the President served. A separate coin will be issued for each period of service if a President served two or more nonconsecutive periods. When the series started, the only President to serve nonconsecutive periods was Grover Cleveland.

The Van Buren Dollar features a portrait of Martin Van Buren based on the official White House portrait by George P.A. Healy. The original portrait was completed in 1864 after a life study of Van Buren made in 1858. Healy was commissioned by Congress in 1857 to paint a series of portraits to provide a visual record of former Presidents for the White House. The reverse of the coin shows an image of the Statue of Liberty, as required by the Presidential \$1 Coin Act.



Martin Van Buren

Martin Van Buren was born on December 5, 1782, in Kinderhook, New York. He was the first President born after the Declaration of Independence – and therefore the first to be born an American citizen. All previous Presidents were born as British citizens.

Van Buren was elected to the New York State Senate in 1813, served as Attorney General of New York State from 1815 to 1819, and served in the U.S. Senate from 1821 to 1828. He was elected Governor of New York, but he was in office for only about 10 weeks in early 1829 before he resigned to become Secretary of State under President Andrew Jackson.

In 1832, Jackson selected Van Buren to be his Vice President for his second term in office. Van Buren ran for President in the 1836 election and defeated William Henry Harrison to become 8th President of the United States. Shortly after Van Buren assumed the Presidency in 1837, the United States was gripped by a financial panic and economic depression. Van Buren was blamed for the problems and lost to Harrison in his bid for reelection in 1840. He failed to win the Democratic party's nomination in 1844, but he ran for President again in 1848 as the Free Soil candidate. Following a crushing defeat in 1848, he retired to Kinderhook, New York, where he died on July 24, 1862.

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