
THE

SOVEREIGN

EXPERT GUIDE

TO COLLECTING GOLD SOVEREIGNS







Alex Hanrahan
Managing Consultant

Managing Consultant Alex Hanrahan shares his guide to collecting Gold Sovereigns

More CPM clients choose to build a collection of Gold Sovereigns than any other coin available to date.

But with two centuries of Gold Sovereigns to choose from, **how do you create a meaningful collection worthy of passing on to your children and grandchildren?**



*Reverse side of
1817 Sovereign*



*Obverse side of
2017 Sovereign*



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Let's start with the question of **“Why collect Gold Sovereigns?”**

Why Collect Gold Sovereigns?

Quite simply the Gold Sovereign is without rival as the **United Kingdom's premiere Gold Coin**. Struck from 22 Carat Gold to the exact same specification since 1817, **it epitomises all that is British**.

Traded across the world during the 19th Century and early 20th Century, it became known as “The Chief Coin of the World”, whilst today’s modern Proof Sovereigns show **consistent collector interest and regular sell-outs**.

What’s more the Gold Sovereign remains both popular and accessible, with many options to create meaningful collections at affordable prices, even going right back to George III’s reign.

"So how do I ensure I create a meaningful Gold Sovereign collection?"

The key is to select an element that ties together the Gold Sovereigns in your collection to create a historically meaningful collection.

Here are my **top 5 recommendations** for building a Gold Sovereign collection. To give you some sense of affordability and ease of completion, I have rated each out of 5 stars.



Collection 1 | *The Monarch Sovereign Collection*

Chart the history of the Gold Sovereign by selecting a coin from every Monarch, from George III to Queen Elizabeth II, a total of 8 coins. (There were no Sovereigns issued prior to Edward VIII's abdication).

For the more dedicated collector, you can broaden the collection to include the main Gold Sovereign effigies from each of the Monarchs. Victorian Gold Sovereigns, for example, have three different effigy designs – Young Head, Jubilee Head and Old (or Veiled) Head.



This expands your collection to 16 Gold Sovereigns, creating one of the most comprehensive collections available.

Basic Set: *Difficulty:* ★

Cost: ★★★

All Types: *Difficulty:* ★★★★★

Cost: ★★★★★

Collection 2 | *The Empire Sovereign Collection*

For me, this is one of the most interesting collecting opportunities. Many Sovereign collectors are not fully aware of the Gold Sovereign’s role across the world as an internationally recognised unit of payment.

In response to international demand for the Gold Sovereign, The Royal Mint started to establish branch mints across the Empire, starting with Sydney in 1855 and eventually incorporating Mints in Melbourne, Perth, Ottawa, Bombay and Pretoria. From 1871 all branch mints struck the same Pistrucci St. George & the Dragon design as London, only identified by a small “mint mark” to the bottom right of the design.



The best collection to own is for George V, which enables you to own all the Empire mint marks from a single monarch.

Difficulty: ★★★

Cost: ★★★

Collection 3 | *The Victorian Sovereign Collection*

As I have explained, the Gold Sovereign saw its heyday during Victorian times, so there can be no better monarch to concentrate a collection on than Queen Victoria.

There are five key coins that you should own, starting with the first design of her reign, the “Shield Back” Gold Sovereign. Whilst today most people see St. George & the Dragon as synonymous with the Gold Sovereign, that has not always been the case. In fact, just eight years after it was first introduced in 1817, The Royal Mint changed the design to a Shield, only reverting to the St. George & the Dragon in 1871.



*Queen Victoria Young Head
Shield Back Sovereign*

Your Victorian collection would then be completed by the three Queen Victoria effigies on St. George & the Dragon Sovereigns along with the first Australian Sovereign, struck in Sydney from 1855.

Difficulty: ★★

Cost: ★★★

Collection 4 | *The Queen Elizabeth II 'Special Reverses'*

Some of the scarcest Gold Sovereigns ever to be issued are the Queen Elizabeth II “Special Reverses”. In total, the current reign has seen five specially created reverse designs. The first was issued for the 500th Anniversary of the Sovereign in 1989, whilst Golden and Diamond Jubilees have also seen one-year-only designs. The latest special reverse is the 2017 Bicentenary of the Modern Sovereign.

The collector importance of these special reverse issues is significant. Selling out in record times, the Special Reverses have all become true modern classics and today they number among the most valuable and difficult to get hold of Gold Sovereigns.



The five 'Special Reverses' - 1989, 2002, 2005, 2012 & 2017

Difficulty: ★★★★★

Cost: ★★★★★

Collection 5 | *The Annual Proof Sovereign Collection*

Of course, the joy of the Gold Sovereign is its reliability. It is one of the few coins that you can commit to building a collection of annual new issues. However, with the Proof Sovereign sometimes selling out in a matter of a few weeks, I always recommend joining our Priority Reservation List, which guarantees you each year's new Sovereign as soon as it becomes available. After all, missing out and having to fill a difficult gap is almost certainly going to cost you much more.



Difficulty: ★★

Cost: ★★

Get in touch

Our dedicated team of consultants are on hand to help. So, if you would like us to assist you in selecting the right coins for your collection, please get in touch.

 **0330 900 1180**

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Numismatic pieces should be owned primarily for collector interest.
CPM does not offer them as an investment and makes no guarantees in terms of future value.

Appendix | Recommended Gold Sovereign collections:

The Monarch Sovereign collection

- **George III**
- **George IV** - Laureate (1821-1825) | Bare Head (1825-1830)
- **William IV**
- **Victoria** - Young Head (1838-1887) | Jubilee Head (1887-1893) | Old (*Veiled*) Head (1893-1901)
- **Edward VII**
- **George V**
- **George VI** (*Proof*)
- **Elizabeth II:** Gillick (1957-1968) | Machin (1974-1982) | Maklouf (1985-1997) | Rank-Broadley (1998-2015) | Jody Clark (2015-) | James Butler (2016)

The Empire Sovereign collection

- **George V** - London (*None*) | Melbourne (*M*) | Perth (*P*) | Sydney (*S*) | Ottawa (*C*) | Bombay (*I*) | Pretoria (*SA*)

The Victorian Sovereign collection

- **Young Head Shield Back** (1838-1887)
- **Young Head** (1871-1887)
- **Jubilee Head** (1887-1893)
- **Old (*Veiled*) Head** (1893-1901)
- **Sydney Mint** (1857-1870)

The Queen Elizabeth II “Special Reverse” collection

- **500th Anniversary Tudor Rose design** (1989)
- **Golden Jubilee Shield Reverse by Timothy Noad** (2002)
- **Adjusted St George & the Dragon by Timothy Noad** (2005)
- **Diamond Jubilee by Paul Day** (2012)
- **Bicentenary Proof Sovereign** (2017)

About CPM

CPM specialises in precious metal coins issued by the world's leading mints, including the US Mint, Royal Canadian Mint, South African Mint and the Royal Australian Mint as well as, of course, the British Royal Mint.

With over 20 years' experience in the international numismatic market, there is no-one better to select some of the very best gold and silver issues to suit your individual interests and requirements.



*Alex Hanrahan
Managing Consultant*

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"Very satisfied with the service. No hard sales. Professional company to deal with"

"Excellent service providing interesting coins from reputable sources, with no-quibble return policy"



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