

# The Gold IRA Guidebook

Precious Metals and Retirement Planning



2019 Edition  
Revised and Updated



**bullion.directory**  
THE METALS INVESTMENT PORTAL

# The Gold IRA Guide

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**Bullion.Directory advises you to always consult with a qualified and registered specialist advisor before investing in precious metals or making any investment decision regarding your retirement account/s.**

## The Gold IRA: Your Guide to Precious Metals IRAs

A Gold IRA can form an important element of any diversified portfolio, helping hedge a retirement plan from risks of market downturn and financial crisis.

Not only does gold in an IRA protect wealth, Gold IRA's are one of the most tax-efficient routes to buying gold. It makes sense for anyone with an interest in metals or coins to take advantage of this.

This PDF book aims to provide you with clear and impartial information examining the need for a Gold IRA, the rules behind opening and taking full advantage of a Gold IRA as well as looking at our [67 listed](#) Gold IRA Specialists.

*"Gold should be a bedrock asset in any investment portfolio – and retirement plans are no exception. Gold in an IRA isn't just a precaution, it's essential insurance."*

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## **Gold Ira Rollover**

The gold IRA rollover is a tax efficient way to add precious metals to your retirement portfolio

If you're looking to add gold in your retirement account – then chances are high that you'll need to use a gold IRA “rollover” or transfer.

It's important to have a good grasp of the gold IRA rollover process, either as part of a DIY approach, or to better track your IRA provider and custodian's progress (and see just how they earn their fees!)

The rollover process is usually relatively simple, and using the skills of a gold IRA specialist will ensure it's completely painless.

But before getting started with an IRA rollover, you need to ask yourself is gold in your IRA the right asset for you?

Gold is a proven hedge against risk and stock-market crashes and has been seen to maintain spending power across millenia – despite inflation. This is why gold is so popular as a wealth-preservation tool among the wealthy, and why it forms the bedrock of most central banks' assets.

But for all gold's great advantages, there is an inescapable fact – it doesn't pay interest or dividends.

Instead it acts as a stabilizer for more risky portfolio elements and because it will typically rise in value when paper assets decrease, it helps take away the pain of financial crises. In 2008 while the markets crashed and burned, gold saw massive growth.

By way of an example, a \$33k gold IRA taken out in 2001 would have been worth \$175,155 by 2013, while a paper-backed account would have struggled to \$42,570 as the markets began a slow recovery post-crash.

And thanks to inflation, by 2013 you would have needed \$43,432 to achieve the same spending power as that original \$33k in 2001 – meaning the stock-

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market investment would have made an overall loss in real terms. A loss, versus a 430% profit with gold.

You must ask yourself if you want to reduce the part of your IRA that rises with the stock markets and pays dividends, and replace that part with what amounts to an insurance policy.

If you don't – then gold is not for you.

## **What is a Gold IRA Rollover?**

You carry out a gold IRA rollover if your existing retirement plan is unable to contain physical precious metals.

When the IRS relaxed rules on bullion in retirement funds, precious metals immediately became an essential part of many retirement accounts. However even today a number of accounts can't or won't accept physical gold, hence the need for a rollover.

In essence a gold IRA rollover consists of three simple stages

**Gold IRA Rollover Step #1:** Select a custodian / trustee to accept your rollover.

Our directory lists 67 gold IRA specialists, some of which are metals dealers and some custodians, but any one of them will be able to set up an IRA tailored to allow tax-free investment in physical bullion. Popular specialists include [Regal Assets](#) and [Money Metals](#) (both category winners in the 2016 and 2017 Bullion Dealer of the Year)

To get started you fill in a simple form to create a suitable new self-directed IRA account (now known as a Gold IRA) – which will then be active in 2-5 days, sometimes sooner.





## **Gold IRA Rollover Step #2: The rollover of funds**

You now take a distribution from your existing retirement plan. You can ask your plan administrator to make the payment directly into your newly set up gold IRA. Alternatively the administrator will issue your distribution in the form of a check made payable to your new account. Either way there are no taxes withheld from your rollover.

## **Gold IRA Rollover Step #3: Buying precious metals**

Now the fun part! If you set up your account directly through Regal, Money Metals – or any of our [67 listed specialists](#) it's time to select the precious metals you want to buy for your gold IRA.

[Specialist IRA gold dealers](#) will help advise the best metals to buy in line with your needs (some portfolios can be built with an eye on potential capital appreciation as well as wealth protection) and lock the prices at a rate you're happy with. After this selection process your trustee wires the funds to the dealer.

Secure delivery sees your metals delivered directly into your trustees vault at a chosen depository and that's you – you've completed a gold IRA rollover!

## **When and why would you use a rollover?**

Ordinarily\*, a distribution (withdrawal of funds) from a retirement account is a taxable event. The amount of the distribution is added to your income for that year and taxed at your standard rate.

By rolling over your distribution from one plan to another or carrying out a direct trustee-to-trustee transfer, you generally don't pay any tax on it until you finally withdraw it from the new plan.

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The IRA rollover allows more of your money to continue growing thanks to being tax-deferred.

*\* (other than qualified Roth distributions and any amount already taxed) Remember the one rollover per year rule*

From January 1, 2015, you are only permitted to make one rollover from one IRA to another IRA in any 12-month period, regardless of the number of IRAs you own.

There are exemptions from this rule, that the one-per year limit does not apply to:

- rollovers from traditional IRAs to Roth IRAs (conversions)
- trustee-to-trustee transfers to another IRA
- IRA-to-plan rollovers
- plan-to-IRA rollovers
- plan-to-plan rollovers

You must include in gross income any previously un-taxed amounts distributed from an IRA if you made an IRA-to-IRA rollover (other than above exceptions) in the preceding 12 months. You may also be subject to a 10% early withdrawal tax on the amount you include in gross income if you are aged less than 59.5.

Full details of the One Rollover Per Year rules [on the IRS site](#).

### What IRAs can be rolled over?

	Roth IRA	Trad. IRA	Simple IRA	SEP-IRA
Roth IRA	YES <sup>1</sup>	NO	NO	NO
Trad. IRA	YES <sup>2</sup>	YES <sup>1</sup>	NO	YES <sup>1</sup>
Simple IRA	YES <sup>2</sup> (after 2 yrs)	YES <sup>1</sup> (after 2 yrs)	YES <sup>1</sup>	YES <sup>1</sup> (after 2 yrs)
SEP-IRA	YES <sup>2</sup>	YES <sup>1</sup>	NO	YES <sup>1</sup>

\*1: Only one rollover in 12 months

\*2: Must include in income

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## Gold Ira Transfer

Much like a rollover, a gold IRA transfer is a tax efficient way to add precious metals to your retirement portfolio

Rollovers are not the only game in town. Often an IRA transfer is the more appropriate approach to adding gold to your IRA.

A direct transfer of funds from one account to another sounds simple, but some providers don't always work well with other providers and need to pre-approve the transfer.

Another key difference between a gold IRA transfer and a rollover is that of fees and tax implications.

### When would you carry out a Gold IRA Transfer?

You carry out a gold IRA transfer if your existing retirement plan is unable to contain physical precious metals.

Despite it now being several years since the IRS relaxed it's rules on holding investment-grade bullion in retirement funds, there are still a significant number of trustees who can't or won't accept physical gold, hence the need for a transfer.

In essence a gold IRA transfer consists of three simple stages

**Gold IRA Transfer Step #1:** Select a custodian / trustee to accept the transfer.

If you don't already have a suitable IRA, our directory [lists 67](#) gold IRA specialists, some of which are metals dealers and some custodians, but any one of them will be able to help you set up a transfer to an IRA tailored to physical bullion. Popular specialists include [Regal Assets](#) and [Money Metals](#).

To begin the transfer process you would simply fill in an appropriate form provided by your specialist – this can be a paper form or be filled online.





## **Gold IRA Transfer Step #2: The trustee-to-trustee transfer**

If you're taking a distribution from an existing IRA, you simply ask the financial institution holding your current IRA to make the payment transfer directly from your IRA to another IRA or to a retirement plan, transferring the funds directly from one account to the other. Importantly there are no taxes withheld from this transfer.

## **Gold IRA Transfer Step #3: Buying precious metals**

If you set up your account directly through Regal, Money Metals – or any of our [67 listed gold IRA specialists](#) you now choose the precious metals you'd like to buy through your gold IRA.

Specialist IRA gold dealers can help advise the best metals to buy based on your needs and will watch the market prices locking the trade for you at a rate you're happy with and placing your order, before your trustee wires the funds to the dealer.

Secure delivery sees your metals into your trustees vault at a chosen depository and that's you – you've completed a gold IRA transfer.

## **Transfers are exempt from the one rollover per year rule**

From January 1, 2015, you are only permitted to make one rollover from one IRA to another IRA in any 12-month period, regardless of the number of IRAs you own. Gold IRA Transfers are exempt from this rule

This extra headache will no doubt see a reduction in gold IRA rollovers and an increase in gold IRA transfers



## **Gold Ira Rules**

Gold IRA rules are relatively simple, but a common mistake can quickly lead to unexpected taxation and penalties

Since the IRS relaxed it's rules on physical gold in retirement funds, precious metals have unsurprisingly formed an essential part of many American IRAs. Get your set up, content or distributions wrong however and you could be looking at double taxation – or worse.

You know the US Government and the IRS likes their regulations – so it's not surprising that setting up a gold IRA is no exception.

We've got up to date gold IRA rules listed below in plain English, so you don't have to be a lawyer or accountant to get to the bottom of these complex regulations.

### **IRA Basics: Contribution Limits:**

For 2019, your total contributions to all of your traditional and Roth IRAs cannot be more than:

- \$6,000 (\$7,000 if you're age 50 or older), or
- your taxable compensation for the year, if your compensation was less than this dollar limit.

For 2015, 2016, 2017 and 2018, your total contributions to all of your traditional and Roth IRAs cannot be more than:

- \$5,500 (\$6,500 if you're age 50 or older), or
- your taxable compensation for the year, if your compensation was less than this dollar limit.

The IRA contribution limit does not apply to rollover contributions or qualified reservist repayments

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## Required Minimum Distributions

Unlike with precious metals outside of a retirement account, you cannot keep retirement funds in your IRA indefinitely. You generally have to start taking withdrawals from your IRA, SIMPLE IRA, SEP IRA, or retirement plan account when you reach age 70½.

Your required minimum distribution is the minimum amount you must withdraw from your account each year.

- You can withdraw more than the minimum required amount.
- Your withdrawals will be included in your taxable income except for any part that was taxed before (your basis) or that can be received tax-free (such as qualified distributions from designated Roth accounts).

For IRAs (including SEP and SIMPLE IRAs) this starts at April 1 of the year following the calendar year in which you reach age 70½.

The IRS has prepared [worksheets](#) where you can easily calculate your minimum distributions.

For full details on distribution, early distribution and taxation, see the [Full IRS Guide](#)

By following these IRA rules and the following rules specifically looking at precious metals IRAs – you will keep your hard-earned retirement funds out of the clutches of the IRS



## **Rules Specific to Gold IRAs**

### **The Collectables Trap**

The Taxpayer Relief Act of 1997 allowed us to add gold and precious metals to our Individual Retirement Accounts, opening the floodgates to those desperate for a tax-efficient hedge in a diversified retirement portfolio.

Designed to be relatively simple to operate and set up, the gold IRA is an immensely popular vehicle, but there are still a number of potential pitfalls for the unwary in buying retirement gold.

As is typical with the IRS – this apparent simplicity can at times hide complicated rules and restrictive clauses in an otherwise perfect retirement plan.

As take-up of previously restricted asset classes, notably hard assets like gold and silver becomes widespread, these hidden rules and exceptions have begun to catch out more and more investors.

Adding to the problem – there's a huge amount of misinformation online and it's not unknown for unscrupulous dealers to take advantage, knowingly selling high mark-up coins as suitable for an IRA when they're absolutely not.

### **Collectible Coins and Section 408(m) of the Internal Revenue Code.**

When most people think of collectibles they tend to think of art, antiques and ornaments – so it's often a surprise when they realize a huge part of the precious metals market is classified as collectibles.

The simple mistake of buying the wrong gold coins for your IRA can result in a huge and unexpected tax bill.

For example if \$15,000 of your IRA funds are used to invest in coins classified as collectibles, the IRS will view your transaction as a \$15,000 distribution. This means the \$15,000 should be reported as being part of your gross income, and liable to income tax at your standard tax rate.



It gets worse. In addition to being hit for tax on the \$15,000 there's an additional 10% penalty tax if you're younger than 59.5.

But it doesn't end there. You've already paid tax on the distribution and a penalty on the price when you mistakenly added the collectibles. But fast forward to the eventual selling of these collectible coins and the proceeds of the sale being distributed to the IRA owner or beneficiaries.

As a prohibited transaction this sale will again form part of gross income for the year of the distribution, meaning a further tax hit, with no credit being given for previous penalty tax. Effectively double taxation.

### What is a collectible coin?

With the exception of a [few special US coins\\*](#), if a coin is sold on the basis of any special merit over and above the value of its precious metal content, then it's a collectible.

Rare coins, miss-strikes, antique coins, proof coins, slabbed coins, specially graded coins, limited edition coins, enamelled coins, coins in presentation cases – are typically collectibles and therefore not allowed in a gold IRA.

Play safe. Stick to buying standard bullion coins and rounds of sufficient purity, from mints recognized by the IRS. We list them here.

You'll know a coin is effectively standard bullion by its price. Standard bullion coins and rounds sell at the spot price, plus a small premium of 5-20%. To be extra safe, only buy coins listed as being definitively suitable for an IRA. Not coins that should be suitable or may be suitable.

### The Exception: Gold and Silver American Eagle Proofs in an IRA

Despite being very obviously "collectibles", there are gold and silver proof coins that can be added to a gold IRA but they must be American Eagle proofs.





Proofs are beautiful coins. The gleam with a true mirror finish and when looked at next to a regular bullion coin, the regular coin seems almost disappointing. Extra care goes into a proof coin's production, and they tend to be sold in display cases – adding to their overall beauty.

It's this beauty that commands higher premiums and greater dealer markups and commission. Is that beauty worth an extra 20%, 30% 50%, even 100% to you?

Will it be worth that same premium when you come to sell? Our experience says no.

A quick test – if you are looking to buy proof coins from a dealer, phone them and say you have say 20 gold proof eagles you're looking to sell. See what you're offered and compare it to their sale price.

Do the math and ask yourself if you want to take that kind of hit on your account for the sake of owning some slightly more shiny coins held in a distant vault.

### **Beware "Collectibles" that are not collectible**

Numismatic coins can make good investments outside of an IRA, but for the purposes of a gold IRA, remember all you're really interested in is the weight of precious metals in your account.

As we've mentioned before dealer margins on regular bullion coins and rounds are pretty low especially if you shop around.

So some dealers, will take steps to increase their margins. They will sell fairly common bullion coins as being special for some reason – be it last of a design run, first of a design, or will imply a limited production of "only" 10,000 coins or some other must-buy reason.

They can make a very convincing argument and it's easy to believe what these "experts" are saying if you're new to precious metals investing.

And these coins WILL be suitable for your IRA, despite being collectible.



Why? Because they're not collectible, or rare, or limited – or at least not in a sense that will give them a resale value over their basic intrinsic metal content.

But the dealer will have made a nice profit from you.

### Home Storage Gold IRAs are NOT allowed

Gold in an IRA must remain with your custodian or trustee at an approved depository.

You can take a distribution from your IRA, however this will be taxable and may carry additional fees and penalties.

In recent years some IRA companies have started promoting “Home Storage”, “Check Book” IRAs or “LLC” IRAs as a loophole to this rule, where the IRA holder forms a Limited Liability Company. This LLC then buys gold coins (not bars, and so far only American Eagle coins are used in the scheme), which can be in turn be stored at the new LLC company HQ – which will typically be the IRA holder's home.

However [IRS Publication 590](#) specifies that for all IRAs, “The trustee or custodian must be a bank, a federally insured credit union, a savings and loan association, or an entity approved by the IRS to act as trustee or custodian.”

Again [the IRS website states](#): *This rule [Gold in an IRA should be held at a bank etc] also applies to an indirect acquisition, such as having an IRA-owned Limited Liability Company (LLC) buy the bullion. [These] IRA investments... run the risk of disqualifying the IRA because of the prohibited transaction rules against self-dealing.*

Therefore storing Gold IRA products in the IRA owner's home or in a safe deposit box to which the IRA owner maintains a right of access is not within the letter or the spirit of the Internal Revenue Code – that is, the tax-advantaged IRA assets should be held outside the possession and personal control of the IRA owner until retirement or early distribution.



Some Home Storage IRA companies mention the Swanson v. Commissioner case in 1996, adding that the IRS and the Department of Labor have, through field service advisory letters, and DOL advisory opinion letters, consistently acknowledged the existence of the CheckBook IRA – however the Self-Storage IRA arrangement has not been approved or recognized by the Internal Revenue Service – formally or in a no-action letter issued by the IRS, Employee Plans Division. And now they've explicitly stated it is not allowable.

**In short, don't do it.**

Finally remember the one rollover per year rule

As mentioned above, from January 1, 2015, you are only permitted to make one rollover from one IRA to another IRA in any 12-month period, regardless of the number of IRAs you own.

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## Gold Ira Approved Metals

### The IRA-Approved Precious Metals List 2019

Unfortunately, you can't just add ANY old precious metals to your gold IRA. Investment grade metals for an IRA need to follow a set of strict criteria.

The bullion coins and bars that are accepted investments for a self-directed IRA are somewhat limited, but for good reason. Your long-term protection.

We list currently approved (2019) gold, silver, platinum and palladium metals below.

Precious metal IRAs may only contain bullion coins and bars from an ira approved precious metals selection. They must be [COMEX/NYMEX](#) accredited and must be sufficiently pure.

Bullion coins suitable for precious metal IRAs are valued on their precious metal content only. Slabbed / graded and numismatic or collectible coins (with the exception of American proof gold and proof silver Eagles) are not permitted.

## IRA Approved Bullion Coins & Rounds

IRA approved coins and rounds must meet minimum fineness requirements and be manufactured by a NYMEX or COMEX-approved refiner/assayer or a national government mint and be [ISO9001 Certified](#).

### Gold—official list

American Gold Eagle coins

U.S. Buffalo Bullion gold coins

Canadian Maple Leaf gold coins

Austrian Philharmonic gold coins

Australian Kangaroo/Nugget gold coins



Other examples of acceptable gold coins/rounds include:

Chinese Gold Panda coins  
Gold Incuse Indian rounds  
Gold Engelhard Prospector rounds  
Perth Mint Lunar Series gold coins

### **Silver – official list**

American Silver Eagle coins  
Austrian Vienna Philharmonic coins  
Australian Kookaburra coins  
Canadian Maple Leaf coins

Other examples of acceptable silver coins/rounds include: UK

Silver Britannia coins (\*after 2013\*)  
Silver 1oz Dodgecoin Wolf medallions  
Incuse Indian silver rounds  
Sunshine Mint silver rounds  
Canadian Silver Arctic Fox coins  
Australian Silver Kookaburra coins  
OPM Silver Bullion rounds

### **Platinum – official list**

American Platinum Eagle coins  
Platinum Canadian Maple Leaf coins  
Platinum Australian Koala coins

Other examples of acceptable platinum coins/rounds include:

Platinum Britannia coins  
Platinum Australian Platypus coins

### **Palladium – official list**

Canadian Maple Leaf Palladium coins

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## **IRA Approved Bullion Bars**

IRA approved bullion bars must meet minimum fineness requirements and be manufactured by a NYMEX or COMEX-approved refiner/assayer and should be ISO9001 Certified.

### **Gold bars .995+ fine that are accredited by COMEX/NYMEX / ISO9001 Certified**

Examples of qualifying gold bars are:

Perth Mint .9999 fine bars

Credit Suisse .9999 fine bars

PAMP Suisse .9999 fine bars

Royal Canadian Mint .9999 fine bars

Ohio Precious Metals .9999 fine bars

### **Silver bars .999+ fine that are accredited by COMEX/NYMEX / ISO9001 Certified**

Examples of qualifying silver bars are:

Royal Canadian Mint .9999 fine bars

Sunshine Mint .999+ fine bars

Ohio Precious Metals .999+ fine bars

Engelhard Hand Poured .999+ fine bars

Golden State Mint ISO9001 .999+ fine bars

### **Platinum bars .9995+ fine that are accredited by COMEX/NYMEX / ISO9001 Certified**

Examples of qualifying platinum bars are:

Credit Suisse .9995 fine bars

Scotiabank .9995+ fine bars

Johnson Matthey .9995 fine bars



**Palladium bars that are .9995+ fine that are accredited  
by COMEX/NYMEX / ISO9001 Certified**

Examples of qualifying platinum bars are:

Pamp Suisse .9995+ fine bars

Credit Suisse .9995+ fine bars

Baird & Co. .9995+ fine bars

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## Gold Ira FAQ

With more investors looking to add physical gold in IRA's we've produced a comprehensive set of gold retirement FAQ

### What is a gold IRA?

A Gold IRA is the name commonly used for any Individual Retirement Account (IRA) set up to allow the addition of gold / precious metals to the account.

Gold IRA's do not necessarily only contain gold or precious metals – they can include any IRS permissible investment from real estate to paper assets.

### Why would I want gold in my IRA?

Any investment portfolio should contain a balance of investment classes to help spread risk. This applies equally – and some would say more so – to your retirement account because your quality of life in later years hinges on its performance.

Any asset classes in a retirement account can be adversely affected by forces outwith your control at any time. Accounts can lose value for a wide variety of reasons from market crashes and recessions to political instability and war.

By balancing your portfolio you will typically limit your overall risk. This is because it's unlikely that any crisis will affect all your investments at once – in fact Gold is regularly used to balance portfolios for the very reason that it traditionally performs strongly when other assets crash.

### What types of gold can I add to an IRA?

As you'd expect with the IRS, you can't just go putting any old precious metals into a gold IRA. Metals must meet specific purity standards and be manufactured at approved facilities.

We list currently acceptable metals here: [IRA Approved Metals](#)



## Can I add gold I already own?

In short, no.

Except in cases of rollovers or transfers, contributions to your account can only be made in cash. You can only buy metals with money from inside your IRA, for direct delivery to your custodian's storage facility.

You cannot add metals you already own even if they otherwise meet all the requirements.

## Can I add other investment types to my gold IRA?

Yes, as long as your IRA provider has the ability or inclination to do so, you can add any of the officially sanctioned investments to your precious metals IRA.

Your IRA can include Real Estate, LLC's Private Loans, Private Equity, Mutual Funds, Stocks, Bonds and a whole lot more.

Notably for precious metals investors, collectibles are not allowed – so any metal valued for it's age, beauty or rarity rather than the intrinsic value of the metal itself will usually be unsuitable, although as usual there are some limited exceptions.

## Can't I just add gold to my current retirement plan?

You may be able to – it depends on what type of retirement account you already have.

The IRS allows an IRA, Individual 401(k), HSA or ESA to acquire some types of precious metals, but not all accounts will be managed or set up to allow this.

The best way to see if this is possible is to ask your provider. If they say no, then it should be a simple case to transfer or rollover your existing account into a gold IRA.

Alternatively, because you can have more than one retirement account, you can set up a separate additional account to house your precious metals, leaving your current account as is.



## Can I take possession of the gold in my IRA?

No. Gold in an IRA must remain with your custodian or trustee at an approved depository.

You can take a distribution from your IRA, however this will be taxable and may carry additional fees and penalties.

In recent years IRA companies have started promoting “Home Storage”, “Check Book” IRAs or “LLC” IRAs as a loophole to this rule, where the IRA holder forms a Limited Liability Company. This LLC then buys gold coins (not bars, and so far only American Eagle coins are used in the scheme), which can be stored at the company HQ, which in most cases is the IRA holder’s home.

However IRS Publication 590 specifies that for all IRAs, “The trustee or custodian must be a bank, a federally insured credit union, a savings and loan association, or an entity approved by the IRS to act as trustee or custodian.”

Storing Gold IRA products in the IRA owner’s home or in a safe deposit box to which the IRA owner maintains a right of access is not within the letter or spirit of the Internal Revenue Code – that is, the tax-advantaged IRA assets should be held outside the possession and personal control of the IRA owner until retirement or early distribution.

Some Home Storage IRA companies mention the Swanson v. Commissioner case in 1996, adding that the IRS and the Department of Labor have, through field service advisory letters, and DOL advisory opinion letters, consistently acknowledged the existence of the CheckBook IRA – however the Self-Storage IRA arrangement has not been approved or recognized by the Internal Revenue Service – formally or in a no-action letter issued by the IRS, Employee Plans Division.





### Can I own more than one IRA or retirement account?

Yes, you can own any number of retirement accounts – but your maximum total annual contributions would be the same for one account as for five.

Because many providers set minimum purchase limits, you could find yourself unable to add to a particular asset class in a particular account if you were spread too “thin” over multiple accounts, plus an added disadvantage of having too many accounts would be paying multiple maintenance fees.

### Can I transfer or rollover an existing retirement plan?

Yes. If your existing account is unsuitable for adding physical precious metals, it is a relatively quick and easy process to transfer or rollover into a new gold IRA in a tax-efficient manner.

All the gold IRA providers listed in our directory can provide transfer and gold rollover services.

### Where is my gold kept and is it secure?

Your trustee or custodian will keep your physical precious metals investments at a secure facility (depository) approved for IRA use.

These facilities use state of the art security and are insured to protect your investment.

### How much does a gold IRA cost?

Set up fees, storage and maintenance fees vary dramatically from provider to provider, with some charging based on total dollar value of your investment and others offer fixed rates, with zero-fee inducements.

Look out for low or zero fee deals however, as there’s no such thing as a free lunch. You will usually pay in some other way, typically through increased premiums on the metals themselves.



### Is there a minimum amount I need to purchase?

Many providers set a minimum purchase level, usually \$1000 or £2000 as below this there is unlikely to be any profit for them. Contrary to popular feeling, the margins in precious metals are tiny in relation to their price and turnover.

### Is there a maximum amount I can contribute?

Yes. Maximum contributions are set by the IRS.

For 2019 your maximum contribution is \$6,000 (\$7,000 if you're age 50 or older), or your taxable compensation for the year, if your compensation was less than this dollar limit.

Note that the IRA contribution limit does not apply to rollover contributions or qualified reservist repayments.

### What happens if I've contributed too much?

Provided you remove the excess funds from your IRA within the given tax year, excess contributions can be removed without penalty.

It is always advised to discuss your individual circumstances with a tax advisor.

### Is there a contribution deadline?

IRA contributions need to be made prior to April 15 with no extensions permissible.

A qualified plan will need to have been established by the last day of your fiscal year if you are to make any contributions for that year.

### Can I withdraw gold from my IRA in an emergency?

In an emergency, Hardship Withdrawal Rules allow those under 59.5 to borrow from their IRA account provided the monies are repaid within 60 days of the distribution, without a 10% penalty.

It is important you seek advice from your tax advisor as circumstances may vary.



### Can I take a loan from my gold IRA?

You may not borrow funds from your IRA without penalty unless you are under 59.5 and it is an emergency – and even then money must be repaid within 60 days to avoid a 10% early withdrawal penalty.

### Can I combine two or more retirement accounts?

Yes, two or more accounts can be combined or moved into a single account – however it is important you seek guidance from a tax advisor as you may wish to keep deductible and non-deductible contributions in their own separate accounts.

### Why is it important to choose the right dealer?

Precious metals dealers can and do go out of business, usually owing millions to their clients. Other dealers can be involved in fraud and other immoral sales practices – none of which ends well for customers putting their hard earned dollar into their pockets.

It is therefore essential to research your chosen gold dealer carefully, looking at their BBB rating, time in business, complaint history and even where possible looking at their accounts if published, to check current liabilities.

Dealers tend to show warning signs prior to suddenly declaring bankruptcy, and these can be anything from sudden shipping delays and unhappy customer ratings to active court cases and federal investigations.

Thankfully the internet (and our directory) is at your disposal and you can find out a lot about any given company very quickly.

### Why is it important to choose the right metals products?

Notwithstanding the importance of only buying permitted metals, other purchase decisions will center around premium and popularity.

Always try and buy investment metals at their lowest possible premium over the spot price.

This tends to be easier with larger purchases, either through a volume discount of small bars and coins, or because larger bars naturally have lower



premiums.

But even looking at similar bars or coins, there can be huge variety in markup from dealer to dealer. If you pay less at the start, you need a smaller increase in market prices to be in profit, or can bear a bigger drop in price without loss.

Popular coins and bars are simply easier to sell. No matter what the market conditions for example you can always sell well known and instantly recognizable coins such as a Canadian Maples or US Eagles at a fair market price.

### Is there a best time to buy gold?

In an ideal world the early 1980's!

But without the benefit of a time machine the lower you can buy gold at the better, typically after a major drop.

For example at the moment (July 2015) gold is trading almost 800 dollars lower than it's most recent peak, giving you a huge price advantage built into your investment.

Many speculators think it's likely that the current lull in price is simply gold catching it's breath before continuing it's climb to \$2000+ and onwards. Do you buy now, or wait for the next inevitable price correction?

Truth is most investors in physical gold buy to hold for the long term, not trade on dips and troughs, so therefore precise timing isn't essential. For this reason despite media hype or hatred of gold, any time is a good time.

Basically over time gold tends to hold and gain in value against weaker paper currencies and volatile paper assets.

For example \$33,000 put into a gold IRA in 2001 was worth \$175,155 in 2013.

By comparison, \$33,000 in the FTSE100 index climbed to \$42,570 – \$1000 lower than the initial dollar amount adjusted for inflation – at \$42,570.

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During this time period, yes absolutely the gold price rose and fell, but it's overall trend is typically upwards – and this is why gold bought at any price or time tends to be a great investment over the longer term.

Have gold IRA questions we've not covered?

**Ask our IRA expert partners on 1-888 981 7130.**

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## Gold Ira Companies

As gold's popularity as a retirement investment grows, so does your choice of top rated gold IRA companies

Bullion.Directory are the world's premier specialist precious metals dealer directory – so we list all the major gold IRA specialists and are currently working through listing the smaller gold IRA Providers out there.

[Every gold IRA company listed](#) can be rated and reviewed by real customers, and visitors can order listings to show all gold IRA companies as rated from highest to lowest in a single click.

You can find specific IRA providers or search all local gold IRA companies and major national listings with ease.

Consumer power and online ratings are keeping gold IRA providers on their A-game and it's you the customer who benefits.

Competition is fierce and it's clear the battle lies in customer service – in fact most of the three top rated companies in the Bullion Dealer Of The Year annual public votes are gold IRA specialists, known for their customer care, with multiple award winners [Regal Assets](#) topping the pack.

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## **Directory Listings: 20 Leading Gold IRA Companies**

These are our top 20 gold IRA companies listed, at time of publication. For all specialist Gold IRA companies listed in [Bullion.Directory](#) see our full [directory category](#) for detailed listings, contact information and reviews

Regal Assets

[Visit Website](#)

American Bullion

[Visit Website](#)

SilverGoldBull

[Visit Website](#)

Fisher Precious Metals

Money Metals Exchange

BGASC

Amagi Metals

Liberty Metals Group

Miles Franklin

A-Mark Precious Metals

Fidelitrade

Investment Rarities The

Gold Center

Royal Metals Group

Asset Strategies Int.

Atlantic Precious Metals

All Pro Gold

BullionWorks

Colorado Gold

Pacific Coin Exchange

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## Selecting your gold IRA provider

As with any purchase involving a significant amount of money, it's essential you carry out proper due diligence on your selected shortlist of gold IRA companies.

As an impartial directory we can't advise on picking a specific company, but the 2017/2018 Bullion Dealer Of The Year votes saw over 60,000 verified public votes cast, with 2 clear winners in the IRA categories – [Regal Assets](#) and [American Bullion](#).

Whichever company you choose to use for your precious metals IRA investments, carry out at least the following basic checks and safeguards:

- Examine the gold IRA company's profile, rating and reviews both here at [Bullion.Directory](#) and on our favorite 3rd party review site The Better Business Bureau. (To save time, many of our directory listings link to the corresponding BBB entry)
- Be wary of glowing company reviews on websites you don't recognize, especially reviews that end "don't buy from X, buy from Y". There are multiple ongoing court cases concerning 100's of fake review sites discovered to be under control of the companies being reviewed.
- Ensure the company lists a working phone number and physical company address on their site – the more methods you have to contact your chosen company the better.
- Check out the company listing on LinkedIn – most gold companies will have their own listing, or at least listings for their top employees and management. Do they seem an authority in their field?
- If the company is an LLC (Limited Liability Company) visit the website for the secretary of state or division of corporations of the company's state – and do a search on the company. You may be surprised at what you find out.
- Finally, phone the gold IRA company up – speak to someone and get a



feel for the company. Are you being given the hard-sell? Do they seem like the kind of people you'd hand over \$50,000 to?

While none of the checks can 100% guarantee you'll be in safe hands (three major US gold dealers went out of business in 2014, two in 2015 and two in 2018) at least you're not going in blind – after all with any investment, *knowledge is power*.

Remember – when you've dealt with your chosen gold IRA company, please share your experiences on [Bullion.Directory](https://www.bullion.directory), good or bad – and help future investors make the correct decisions for their retirement choices.

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## **An Alternative: The Silver IRA**

Gold is not for everyone. Silver is a strong investment, considered by many as significantly undervalued, and with major industrial uses it's not going away soon.

By combining or balancing silver and gold in an IRA it's possible to reduce silver's volatility giving a basket with excellent potential for growth.

A silver IRA gives the devil's metal a chance to shine in your retirement planning portfolio

Often overlooked due to it's more famous sibling, silver in an IRA can be an impressive performer.

Unlike gold, silver sees major industrial usage, so has a real value over simply being "precious".

Add the fact that silver's massively undervalued in 2015 and it's no surprise that silver IRAs are seeing such a growth in demand.

## **Why add silver to your IRA?**

### **#1 Reason for Silver in an IRA: Silver is undervalued**

As mentioned at the top of the page, silver is undervalued. Any investor is always searching for commodities that can be bought below their true value, so just how undervalued IS silver?

We need to look at a trading ratio – the gold:silver ratio. Typically throughout history an ounce of gold has been worth a certain multiple of an ounce of silver – 15, the gold:silver ratio traditionally being 15:1.

Today that ratio stands at 74:1, meaning you now need 74 ounces of silver to buy one ounce of gold, not 15. Bear in mind we're seeing this unusually high ratio, even with gold's price having fallen fairly hard the past couple of years.



But even ignoring price ratios, silver is literally a steal in dollar terms.

It is down from a high of nearly \$50/oz in 2011 and is currently trading below it's mining and refining cost at \$14.

There is just so much potential upside in the metal, that it's not surprising mints are selling out almost as quickly as they can produce.

And that's just investment silver...

## **#2 Reason for Silver in an IRA: Silver's industrial demand is in deficit**

What this means is more silver is consumed by the needs of industry than is produced. By produced, we mean ALL production, be that mining and recycling combined – and by consumed we mean gone, used – the silver is no more.

This has been the situation for over 50 years

Silver is used in multiple industries, particularly electronics and green energy – both of which could fairly be described as growth markets, so unless a wholly new way is invented to carry out 1000s of industrial and chemical processes, this deficit is set to continue.

## **#3 Reason for Silver in an IRA: Silver is more rare than gold**

It almost makes no sense, given silver's current low value and massive use in industry, but there is less available silver in the world than gold.

Adding up all mined, refined silver and known reserves Theodore Butler, silver analyst at Butler Research estimates that there are approximately 1 billion ounces of silver in global inventories, compared to 5 billion ounces of gold – a ratio of 5 to 1 in gold's favor.

For clarity – there's only 1oz of silver in existence for every 5oz of gold – and industry consumes millions of silver ounces a year.

Supply and demand forces guarantee a change in silver's fortune, when the





world realizes how seriously it has undervalued and under-protected this essential commodity.

### What types of silver can I add to a Silver IRA?

The official IRA list says American Silver Eagle coins, Austrian Vienna Philharmonic coins, Australian Kookaburra coins and Canadian Maple Leaf coins can be added to an IRA.

The IRS's relaxed guidelines states a number of requirements for silver IRA coins, which means other non-listed coins may be added if they meet these requirements, such as UK Silver Britannia coins (\*after 2013\*), Silver 1oz Dodgecoin Wolf medallions, Sunshine Mint silver rounds, Canadian Silver Arctic Fox coins, Australian Silver Kookaburra coins and OPM Silver Bullion rounds.

Bars need to meet minimum fineness requirements and be manufactured by a NYMEX or COMEX-approved refiner/assayer – and should be ISO9001 Certified. Silver bars that are .999+ fine and meet the NYMEX/COMES/ISO9001 criteria include Royal Canadian Mint .9999 fine bars, Sunshine Mint .999+ fine bars, Ohio Precious Metals .999+ fine bars, Engelhard Hand Poured .999+ fine bars and Golden State Mint ISO9001 .999+ fine bars.

*AS WITH ANYTHING TO DO WITH THE IRS – CHECK CURRENT LEGISLATION BEFORE BUYING ANY METALS FOR YOUR SILVER IRA.*

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