



Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)

The Bank of Mauritius (Bank) has put into circulation polymer banknotes as from 22 August 2013. In accordance with Section 35 of the Bank of Mauritius Act 2004, the Bank of Mauritius has the sole right to issue Mauritius currency notes. These currency notes shall be legal tender in Mauritius.

Q.1 Why is the Bank issuing new banknotes?

- A core function of the Bank is to ensure that the banknotes it issues keep abreast with international best practices as well as the latest banknote technology to stay ahead of counterfeit.
- The banknote must demonstrate integrity and must be easily recognised by the public.

Q.2 Why is the Bank issuing polymer banknotes?

- Banknotes printed on polymer (a type of plastic) are robust, last much longer than paper banknotes and are more cost effective.
- They have innovative security features specifically designed for the polymer material, thus providing landmark reductions in counterfeit worldwide.
- Polymer banknotes are expected to meet the needs and expectations of the public and cash handlers as far as durability, appearance, cleanliness and ease of handling are concerned.

Q.3 What are the benefits of polymer banknotes?

- Security and effectiveness: Their pioneering security features are easy to verify and difficult to counterfeit.
- Durability: They last longer than paper banknotes, thereby reducing processing, replacement costs and environmental impact.
- Innovation: The inclusion of a transparent window makes for one-of-a-kind currency.
- Feel: The new banknotes feel different from paper banknotes, but are just as simple to use.
- Cleanliness: Polymer banknotes do not absorb moisture and can easily be wiped with a damp cloth.

Q.4 What are the new banknotes going to look like?

- The designs largely remain the same as the existing paper banknotes, but additional security features, which are easy to recognise, have been added to make the banknotes more secure.
- The denomination structure, size and dominant colours of the banknotes remain the same.



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Q.5 What are the security features on the new banknotes?

- Transparent window (prime security feature).
- Shadow image “Watermark”.
- Vision impaired feature (Domino) on the Rs25 and Rs50 polymer banknote.
- Fluorescent feature (ultra violet light required).
- Raised printing - unique feel (rough).
- Microletters/Microline (can be viewed through a magnifying glass).
- Unique numbering.
- Latent image.
- Colour shifting ink.

(Please refer to our posters for the detailed security features.)

Q.6 Can polymer banknotes be counterfeited?

- The majority of counterfeit polymer banknotes are re-produced on paper. Counterfeits attempted on plastic substrate are rare and it is more difficult to successfully print on plastic than on paper.
- Counterfeits reproduced on paper ‘feel’ different from polymer banknotes.

Q.7 Are polymer banknotes more durable compared to paper banknotes?

- A polymer banknote
 - a) is durable and able to sustain a high level of “wear and tear”,
 - b) is resistant to continuous handling and folding while the structure of the note is retained, even at the end of its useable life,
 - c) succeeds in the world’s harshest banknote environments and performs very well in all climates, especially in hot, humid countries,
 - d) does not absorb dirt, moisture or liquids since the polymer banknote is a non-absorbent substrate,
 - e) is tough. It is very difficult to initiate a rip in a polymer banknote. However, once a tear is started, a polymer note will rip easily.

Q.8 Why does the Bank view these banknotes as environmentally friendly?

- Polymer banknotes do not absorb dirt, moisture or liquids.
- They are proven to be more hygienic to handle (study done in the Netherlands).
- Clean banknotes help ensure recognition and verification.
- Polymer banknotes can be washed with soap and water.
- Waste material is recyclable.

Q.9 Are the polymer banknotes difficult for public to handle?

- The polymer banknotes feel slightly different from paper banknotes. However, the differences are minor and should not be a major problem. Some people may initially consider the polymer banknotes to be more slippery than paper banknotes and a little different to fold. But we expect that people will soon become familiar with handling and using the polymer banknotes and confident with the new banknote technology.
- Handling the banknotes may need some flexibility in approach – use handling methods and processes that are most comfortable and effective.



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Q.10 How to handle polymer banknotes?

Recommended:

- Keep the polymer banknote flat.
- Use paper bands when packing the polymer banknote.
- Clean the polymer banknote with soap and cold water if it is stained with oil, beverages, sweat or chemical.
- If a tear is noted, mend it with tape.

Not Recommended:

- Do not expose the polymer banknote to high temperatures by placing on a very hot surface.
- Do not fold the polymer banknote by applying heavy pressure.
- Do not use rubber bands to bundle the banknote during packing.
- Do not use staples and pins with the banknote.

Q.11 Will the polymer banknotes be extended to other denominations?

- The extension to other denominations will be envisaged by the Bank in due time.

Q.12 How many countries are issuing polymer banknotes?

- Polymer banknotes are used in more than 20 countries.

Q.13 Does polymer banknote work in Automatic Teller Machines (ATM) and other dispensing machines?

- Yes, polymer banknotes can be used in banknote dispensing machines.

Q.14 Can I still use my paper banknote for transaction purposes?

- The polymer banknote will run concurrently with the existing paper banknote and both shall be accepted as legal tender.

