

## **What is the meaning of leaving coins on graves?**

This is an ancient tradition, though nowadays, it has been adapted to new needs and practices. If you have a loved one who was buried at Arlington National Cemetery, you've likely seen these piles of shiny coins yourself. So, what do they mean?

It has become increasingly popular for visitors to leave coins on the headstones of deceased soldiers. Blue Star Mothers of soldiers explain that this tradition had its start during the Vietnam War, as a way for visitors to let the deceased soldier's family know of his or her remembrance.

When you see a coin on the grave of a serviceman or woman, this is a sign that another member of the military paid their respects recently. According to tradition, there is a meaning behind each coin. Here's a breakdown:

- Penny – A penny at the gravesite means you visited. You have no formal relationship with the deceased, but you honor their service and their family.
- Nickel – a nickel is left if you and the deceased person trained at boot camp together.
- Dime – in the case of a dime, you served with the deceased person in some capacity.
- Quarter – Finally, a quarter indicates you were with the deceased when he or she died.

This language of coins is a way for active servicemen and women to communicate with the families of those who served. Since they might not have the opportunity to speak in person, this is a way to pay respects without overstepping boundaries.

What happens to these coins that are left on graves? After Memorial Day, all the coins that are left at the graves are collected and applied toward cemetery upkeep. The service people who leave these coins understand they're going towards this use, and this is one of the reasons to continue leaving coins.

Ultimately, coins are a sign of respect for military members and their families. They show the family of the deceased that their service is remembered. This is an honorable way to show support in memory of the deceased.