

Old coins

Theatre tickets, rail fares and prices in adverts featured in this resource are in Imperial currency – in use until February 1971 when the United Kingdom adopted ‘decimal’ currency.

This was based on pounds, shillings and pence, abbreviated to £ s and d.

There were twelve pence, or pennies, in a shilling and twenty shillings in a pound (240 pence in a pound).

Three shillings would be written as 3s or 3/-

Three shillings and fourpence would be written as 3s.4d or 3/4d

Three pounds would be written as £3

Three pounds and four shillings would be £3.4s. or £3.4/-

Three pounds, four shillings and five pence would be £3.4s.5d or £3/4/5d

Pronouncing these terms

When used after pounds or shillings the following are pronounced:

- 1d penny
- 2d “tuppence” (contraction of two pence)
- 3d “thruppence” or “threppence” (contraction of three pence)
- 4d fourpence
- 5d fivepence
- 6d sixpence
- 7d sevenpence
- 8d eightpence
- 9d ninepence
- 10d tenpence
- 11d elevenpence

- ½d “hayp’ny” (contraction of half penny)

Putting them together:

- 2½d “tuppenny-hayp’ny” or “tuppence-hayp’ny”
- 3½d “threppence hayp’ny”

Try pronouncing £13/14/11/½.

(Isn't Decimal currency so much easier? And there's less need to learn the twelve times table.)

Coinage

Serving this currency were these coins:

Half penny (hayp'ny)

Penny

Thre'penny bit

Sixpence

Shilling

Florin (two shillings)

Half crown (two shillings and sixpence)



Then it was paper money. Ten shillings or the ten bob note and the pound note.