

How To manage Torn bank Notes

Shashank V. Parulekar

Torn bank-notes (what the Americans call bills) get into your wallet when you don't exercise enough caution when receiving money from any one. You have to get rid of them because no one accepts them as money. There is no point in holding onto them because holding onto money that cannot be used as money is meaningless. The only thing you can do with them is to get rid of them, and have notes that are usable as money.

The most standard method is to return them to a bank that is approved to exchange torn bank-notes for good ones. But usually the list of such banks is small, and often you end up in the apex bank itself, standing in a long queue. That is loss of valuable time, and loss of time is loss of money. So you must have easier methods.

Doctoring a torn bank-note is not a crime, but to mother a bank-note is a crime. The former means repairing a legal but torn bank-note. The latter is counterfeiting. Feel free to repair torn bank-notes. Novices do it by putting cellotape on the back of the torn note. Don't do it. The shiny tape is obvious to all but the blind. Put a paper tape of light brown or cream color, measuring 2 mm in width and of length equal to the torn segment of the note. Put it on the front rather than on the underside of the note, because they always inspect the underside. Rub a little dust over the tape as a finishing touch. A well-doctored note can be passed successfully to the worst of shylocks.

There are some posh banks that have machines for counting bank-notes. You can put your doctored bank-notes in the middle of a bundle and deposit it in the bank. The machine will count all and the teller/cashier will accept them all. Do not put pieces of paper in place of bank-notes to cheat the bank. That is a crime.

Hawkers are notorious for passing torn or doctored bank-notes to customers. Most probably you received one from one of them. Feel free to pass it back to one of them, if you don't remember which one gave it to you. Go shopping late evening when the ambient light is poor. Select a hawker who has a number of customers and is too busy to inspect the notes he receives, unless they feel torn. Pass him a well-doctored note, and he will take it. Don't feel guilty. He will pass it to another customer as soon as he realizes that he has one. That customer will pass it to yet another hawker after he visits our website and learns a few tricks.

A bus conductor is another person who passes doctored bank-notes around. He also troubles commuters in different ways. Feel free to pass one to him. It will make you feel good too, since you must have been troubled by one or more bus conductors in the past. You cannot just give him a doctored note. He is always alert and spots one immediately. Give him a large denomination bank-note. He will return smaller denomination bank-notes to you. Substitute one of them with your doctored note quickly, keep holding the remaining change in your other hand, and ask him to give you a better one instead of the doctored one that he gave you. He won't believe his eyes when he sees that, because he normally knows when he gives out doctored bank-notes. Look indignant, and he will give you a good bank-note.

The most daring method is to pass it to a bank cashier or teller. There are two ways of doing it.

One way is to withdraw some money from your account, in the same denomination as your doctored-note. Then give it to the cashier/teller, and tell him that he gave you that one. Ask him to give you a better one. He will.

The other method is for a very badly torn note. deposit some money in the bank. Put this note in the middle of a bundle. Select a teller who counts the notes in a flourish. Usually he manages to tear it into two in his flourish. Then he says that the note is torn. Look into his eyes and declare 'Yes, NOW it is.' He will fume, but is forced to accept it because he tore it. If he doesn't manage to tear it, you are forced to take it back and give him a better one. Well, you can always use some other trick for that note.