

Disclaimer. The investment cost for detectors and accessories are high lighted in this article's investment cost table and are based on prices found on the internet. The detector brand, detector model and accessories you chose may reflex a different price than what is shown in the investment cost table and this would be normal. The dollars amounts in the investment cost table should only be considered a benchmark for you to follow; your final dollar investment may be either greater or less than the value shown in the cost table. No specific detector brand or model are high lighted since this article is not trying to provide direction on any specific detector or accessory to purchase just hobby investment cost.

Introduction. *Have you every wanted to know what it cost to enter the metal detecting hobby and start detecting?* The following article and investment cost table will provide you with some insight to this question with cost benchmarks associated with each of the different areas of metal detecting. The investment cost table should provide you with a two column analysis (good and best) for an area, however, for some areas there will be just one cost analysis column. One column will define a good investment and the other column a best investment each column has dollar figures for comparison.

Before getting involved in metal detecting you should do some up front research rather than just go out and purchase a metal detector. Your first detector need not be expensive but should be purchased for a specific type of detecting. The various areas and sub-areas of detecting are high lighted below and are used for the column headings in the investment cost table at the end of the article.

Metal Detecting Areas

- **Coinshooting**
- **Jewelry**
- **Beach and Water**
 - ✓ **Freshwater Beach & Water**
 - ✓ **Saltwater Beach**
 - ✓ **Saltwater** (Scuba Dive Detecting is not Covered in the Investment Table but Discussed in the Article)
- **Relic**
 - ✓ **Relics and Old Coins**
 - ✓ **DIV**
 - ✓ **Cache** (Cache Detecting is not Covered in the Investment Table but Discussed in the Article)
- **Gold Prospecting**
- **Competition** (Competition Detecting is not Covered in the Investment Table but Discussed in the Article)

You may make a decision to start the hobby by *Coinshooting* for newer clad coins. Newer clad coins are usually found near the surface and therefore it probably would not make sense to purchase a detector from \$1,700 to \$2,300 dollars. A detector with a much lower price could do the job just as good if not better with a shorter and faster learning curve for you.

One mistake that people make entering the hobby is that their first purchased detector is too complicated and they rapidly get discouraged. Thus, after a very short period of time they exit the hobby. The decision to exit the hobby leaves you with a large investment just gathering dust in a closet. So keep your first detector purchase cost low.

In this article you will find an investment cost table that lists a summary cost for each one of the various areas of metal detecting. Across the top of the table you will find the eight different areas of metal detecting and along the left side of the table a list of generic detectors and accessories.

Listed for each detector and accessory is a price found on the internet for that particular item. I suggest you study this table to gain a better understanding of metal detecting cost for each of the areas and you will find that there is no universal detector that fits all areas of detecting. Also take note that each area of metal detecting may require different accessories. The investment cost can vary either up or down based on the detector brand and model you choose.

Coinshooting for the newer clad coins is an entry level position into the hobby. Coinshooting should not be confused with metal detecting for very old coins and relics. The detector and accessories used for this level of metal detecting have the lowest investment cost making this area a very good starting point for the novice. In the attached investment cost table you will find two columns of potential cost for *coinshooting*. The two columns (good & best) provide a range of investment dollars that you could expect to spend for metal detecting clad coins.

Jewelry metal detecting is a step up from coinshooting. Jewelry can be found while coinshooting but to be very good in this area of the hobby a greater dollar investment is required from the detectorist.

Gold jewelry requires a very good detector that is sensitive to very small jewelry items like a one gram ladies gold ring, small gold earrings that are usually less than one gram and gold chains the most difficult of all to detect. Getting involved in jewelry metal detecting can be financially rewarding to the detectorist and helpful to those that have lost personal jewelry items.

Beach and Water metal detecting is divided into three separate areas of metal detecting (Freshwater, Saltwater Beach and Saltwater Water itself). On beaches you will be metal detecting for coins and jewelry and therefore the previous comments about *coinshooting* and *jewelry* detecting generally apply here.

- ✓ **Freshwater Beach & Water** metal detecting requires the least investment cost for detecting on a beach. The conditions at a fresh water beach are usually compatible with many lower cost detectors. Detecting in the water will require an additional investment for a waterproof detector. The investment cost table takes this into consideration in the cost for *freshwater beaches* but additional accessories will also be required for *freshwater beach and water* detecting. Due to heavy trash conditions on freshwater beaches (PI) pulse induction detector purchases are discouraged.
- ✓ **Saltwater Beach** metal detecting has some additional requirements to overcome to be a successful detectorist. The dry sand can usually be detected by most detectors in the \$500 to \$800 dollar range. However, detecting the saltwater beach wet sand will require a detector that can handle the mineralized sand of the beach mixed with saltwater. If you are thinking about detecting saltwater beaches purchase the detector that can handle the wet sand. This decision will provide you with the best *saltwater beach* metal detecting solution.
- ✓ **Saltwater** metal detecting will require one last investment. To move into saltwater you will need a very good waterproof detector that can operate almost flawlessly underwater without causing false target signals to be transmitted. Saltwater is very hard on equipment so always rinse your equipment off with freshwater after being in saltwater.
 - ❖ **Scuba dive** metal detecting will require an additional investment for air tanks, regulators, mask, fins, wet or dry suit, detector dive handle and dive school for Scuba Certification. This cost is not cover in the investment cost table. [Never Scuba dive without prior Scuba Certification.](#)

Relic metal detecting covers three major aspects of detecting: *Relics and Coins*, *DIV hunts* and *Cache detecting*. Each of these three areas will be expanded upon below. To be very successful in old site *relic metal detecting* the equipment and accessory investment cost is not the only investment you must consider.

Please Note. All National Parks, Monuments, Recreational Areas, Historical sites / Archaeology (National, State, City) sites and other National Lands are off limits to metal detecting. Also many but not all state parks lands and city / county parks / school areas may not be open to metal detecting.

A key aspect of *relic detecting* is to first research historical documents, old newspapers, etc to locate sites that should provide relic targets for you. Research requires personal time and in some cases developing an extensive library of books and research materials. Books and research material cost are not covered in the investment cost table. Research is especially important for *cache detecting*. Without research there is no *cache hunting*.

- ✓ **Relic and Old Coin** metal detecting is a very popular area of detecting. The investment cost, the expertise in operating a detector and the learning curve is much greater for this aspect of detecting. The detectorist must have a very good understanding of their detector's capabilities and how to adjust the detector to gain the greatest return from any relic site. Knowing your detector and its capability's is extremely important to be successful in finding those very old coins and relics. *Relic detecting* is usually done at old town sites, mission sites, home / farm sites, fairground & drive-in sites, school sites, railroad sites and etc, the list of potential sites can be endless.

The detector should be capable of very good depth, provide good target separation from iron masking, have audio and display target ID and have a good variety of coils available for changing ground conditions.

- ✓ **DIV** metal detecting is usually associated with a fee based sponsor hunt limited to a select number of detectorist on leased land. *DIV hunts* may be for Revolutionary and Civil war relics and are held on private land; never on public lands. The detectors used for these type of hunts can be a high quality VLF detector or medium price PI detector or a very high quality gold prospecting detector. Gold prospecting detectors will usually provide for greater depth and sensitivity. In the investment cost table there is a PI detected of medium to high price listed for *DIV* hunts. Note: If greater depth and sensitivity is required look at investing in a high quality gold prospecting detector.
- ✓ **Cache** metal detecting is not included in the investment cost table, however it is a very important aspect of metal detecting. You will also need to provide a lot of your personal time for research and then spend a good deal of time in the field to locate the cache. Detectors for *Cache detecting* can be a very high quality VLF detector, a high quality (PI) Pulse Induction detector and / or Ground Penetrating Imaging Radar.

Robbery Caches (Gold and Silver) of the 1700 and 1800 hundreds can be buried very shallow in the ground especially if the cache was buried while thieves were on the run from authorities. Other caches buried by individuals can be several feet deep and may required a much greater dollar investment to locate the cache. If you are going for cache hunting I would suggest purchasing the best detectors that money can buy because the dollar return on finding a cache can be huge.

Caches can be buried in a metal, wood, glass and / or a cloth container so you may be detecting for the container and not necessarily for the gold or silver it self which would be inside the container. Each cache will probably be hidden differently.

Gold Prospecting with a metal detector is an alternate approach to mining for Gold. The investment cost table list two columns - good and best. The investment for Gold detecting can range from \$1,300 to \$6,900 but the return to the detectorist should track the investment cost plus more. Investing greater dollars should be based on one's commitment to locating Gold with a detector or to a prospector the investment cost may be just an extension to their mining quest for Gold.

Competition metal detecting is not listed in the investment cost table since many detectorist just use their personal detector to participate in these events. If you really want to be highly successful in *competition* metal detecting you should have a detector that is dedicated to this aspect of detecting. A detector that:

- is simple to use,
- is an extremely fast responder,
- has good EMI (Electro Magnetic Interference) rejection,
- is light weight.

A Second, Third, Fourth, Fifth Detectors or MORE. Once the decision has been made to try metal detecting a decision point will present itself some time in the future.

Either you will drop out of the hobby because there is a lack of interest on your part or you will drop out because you can not gain the proper understanding / knowledge to master your detector.

The other side of the decision point is that you have become very interested and successful in metal detecting and want to advance to other aspects of detecting. This is where the investment cost in the hobby now becomes greater and can grow fairly extensive over time. The result may be that you could now own two or more detectors and all their related accessory gear. This decision to own more detectors will make you heavily invested in the hobby.

A detectorist must be very careful not to have too much money invested in the hobby. Please note that there will always be a new detector with new capabilities and features, so take your time before buying that next new detector and have a plan to downsize what you already own.

The suggestion is to try and make some of your detecting gear purchases as (used gear) from metal detecting classified forums or to purchase used gear from club members. Using the metal detecting classified forums also provides an avenue to sell older gear before purchasing more new detecting gear.

Target Recovery is another very important investment that a new detectorist must make and master. This investment takes the form of gaining the expertise to remove targets in the proper matter from the ground. The detectorist must take the time and make the effort to practice, practice, and practice target recovery. The goal should be to leave no target recovery footprint in the soil or tuff once the target has been removed.

Summary: If you are thinking about investing in the hobby or are new to the hobby take the time to study the investment cost table. This investment cost table will provide you with an understanding of what your out of pocket expense dollars will be to participate in any given area of metal detecting.

There are no cost in the investment table for fuel, auto expense, batteries, permit fees and other indirect variable cost associated with the hobby.

