

Roman Coins: Facts & Figures



Aureus (gold)



Denarius (silver)



Sestertius (brass)



Dupondius (brass)



As (copper)

1 Aureus = 25 Denarii (plural of Denarius)

1 Denarius = 4 Sestertii

1 Sestertius = 2 Dupondii = 4 Ases

What's it worth today?

1 Denarius had roughly the purchasing power of £30.

A Roman Legionary soldier earned 300 Denarii a year, whilst a Centurion earned 4500 Denarii a year. A stone mason could earn 50 Denarii a day, farm labourers earned 25 Denarii a day, whilst a teacher could earn up to 250 Denarii a month per pupil!

What could it buy you?

One loaf of bread = $\frac{1}{2}$ a Sestertius

$\frac{1}{2}$ litre of olive oil = 40 denarii

$\frac{1}{2}$ litre of fine wine = 30 denarii

1 lemon = 25 denarii

1 chicken = 30 denarii

1 lb of beef = 8 denarii

Pair of boots = 60-100 denarii

1 male slave = 30,000 denarii

1 lb of pure white silk = 12,000 denarii

1 racehorse = 100,000 denarii

Sources:

<https://sites.google.com/a/saintmarksschool.org/grade7rome/roman-money/what-can-i-buy-with-a-denarius>

<http://ancientcoinsforeducation.org/content/view/79/98/>