

# Pondering the Power of Pennies

## A MILE OR A TON?

If someone offered you a choice between a ton of pennies and five miles of pennies lined up with touching edges, which would you take if you wanted the most money? Here are some facts to help you decide:

A Penny weights .09 ounces

A Penny's diameter is .75 inches

Five miles of pennies are worth more than the ton of pennies. Use a calculator to find the inches in a mile, then 5 miles.  $316,800 \text{ inches} \div .75 \text{ inches} = 422,400 \text{ pennies}$ , or \$4224.00. One ton =  $32,000 \text{ ounces} \div .09 \text{ ounces} = 355,555.55 \text{ pennies}$  or \$3,555.56.

## How many pennies fit into a 1 gallon milk jug?

(This is an estimate- Have your classes figure it out mathematically.)

(From a family that completed the task)

We actually did this. As part of a high school challenge, each year was attempting to collect the most for charity. My youngest daughter, being a sophomore, started to get a bit serious.

So we started collecting, and as I her father have a thing for wheat back pennies, I gleaned these out of the incoming sources. As a result, we counted the pennies before each pile of 500 or 1,000 was added to the jug. We drew a line every \$5 or \$10. As we approached the top, we hit \$60, or 6,000 pennies. I feel compelled to add that this is probably +/- 0.5%, at most. We might have been able to add as much as another 100 or so before capping, but it was time to go to the school for the grand addition. (Video is available.)

While this applies to a basic bottle design currently in use, I'm sure it won't deviate much regardless of design.

6,000 - 6,100 pennies in a 1 gallon milk jug. The weight was close to 34 pounds.

**The URL below contains an entire curriculum about PENNIES- Elementary level (paste in browser)**

<http://www.gale.cengage.com/pdf/TeachersGuides/PENNYGuide.pdf>