

# Gold

Gold has been used to store wealth for more than 3,000 years. Why? Because gold is very rare – and gold today is becoming ever-more difficult to find and mine.

Gold is six times more rare than platinum, and 18 times rarer than silver. Gold is also very nearly impossible to destroy. Unaffected by oxygen or hydrogen sulfide, gold cannot rust, tarnish or decay. Nor will gold melt below 1063 degrees Celsius. Gold is only dissolved by cyanide.

After 30 centuries of gold mining, new gold deposits are becoming ever harder to find. South Africa, the world's largest gold producing nation, has seen its gold output more than halve in the last decade.

Since 2008, the cash cost of mining one ounce of gold has doubled for North American gold miners. The rate of inflation for gold miners' all-in costs worldwide reached 27% last year.

The total amount of gold above-ground, however, is growing by just 1.6% per year.

## How to buy gold safely

The guide to gold includes articles that explain why gold is the original tool for trade, why every single gold based currency has failed, how much gold has ever been mined and why it's rarity leads it to be a useful store of wealth/value.

The guides also explains the key differences between unallocated and allocated gold and the importance of not only being able buy gold swiftly but also to be able to sell gold without delays or price penalties.

You will also be able to learn about alternative methods to gain exposure to gold and fluctuations in the gold price such as through gold bars and coins, certificates, ETFs, futures and mining stocks and shares. You will quickly learn and understand the pitfalls of some of these methods to owning gold.

The guide to gold also contains a nine-point checklist for gold buyers for consideration prior to purchasing gold for the first time.

## How do the gold markets work

You will discover the importance of Good Delivery gold bullion bars and their role underpinning the professional bullion market. We explain why BullionVault's membership of the LBMA (London Bullion Market Association) is advantageous to you and why owning insured gold safely in a vault enables you trade gold24/7 even when the markets are closed.

What is the London Gold Fix and how does it work? We will explain how individuals can access the fix through BullionVault and trade at this daily price as desired.

## Why people own gold

The majority of private investors see gold as insurance against bad central-bank policy, high government spending, and financial instability. Gold tends to appeal strongest when real returns on cash and bonds are negative and falling, whether or not nominal interest rates are rising.

Prudent gold investors ensure that they pay the lowest costs to purchase and are able to sell their gold quickly and easily for full value as circumstances change.

Read BullionVault's independently collected [reviews](#) and [case studies](#) to understand the type of person that fully researches the options available and then decides to purchase gold using BullionVault, the reviews often highlight the speed and efficiency of their bullion trading.

# The Ultimate Guide to Gold as an Investment

## **Introduction**

Gold has long been revered as a symbol of wealth and prosperity and it has an intrinsic value as well as being used as a currency as a method of supporting the fiat money of various countries when people lose faith in that nation's paper currency.

Gold is primarily viewed and used as an investment and also enjoys enduring popularity through the jewelry created with the precious metal. It is also used in some industrial applications such as a component in computers.

## **Buying Gold as an Investment – why should you invest in gold?**

### **Holding value**

A significant reason why people invest in gold is that it has performed admirably in holding its value over the long-term in comparison to other assets like paper currency, some coins or even stocks, which can lose their entire value if the company goes bust.

### **Inflation hedge**

The traditional view, which is supported by historical evidence, is that gold offers an excellent hedge against inflation and if you were to look at the years where inflation was at its highest since the second world war, you would see that gold outperform the Dow Jones by some margin on each occasion.

This aspect of gold prices tends to encourage investors to think that the only time to invest in gold is when inflation is on the rise or in times of financial uncertainty or when the political climate is volatile.

You can find statistics to support the theory that gold prices often rise when confidence in governments is low and it is sometimes referred to as the *crisis commodity*, due to the fact that investors tend to seek the comfort of gold in times of tension in the world.

### **Supply and demand**

Production of new gold from mines has actually been in decline since we entered a new millenium and a large percentage of the supply of gold introduced into the market since the 1990's has actually come from gold bullion sold from the vaults of central banks.

There has been a slight revival in production output recently but as it takes anywhere between 5-10 years to bring a new mine into full production, so we are yet to see the impact of this in the market.

The general rule is that a reduction in the supply of gold will help to fuel an increase in gold prices, based on simple supply and demand principles.

### **Growth in demand**

An increase in the wealth of emerging economies and a subsequent rise in the so-called middle-classes, has certainly helped to boost the demand for gold.

It should also be remembered that gold is deeply ingrained in the culture of some countries and India is the best example of that, being one of the largest gold-consuming countries on the planet.

China deserves special mention too, as gold bars are a traditional form of saving. The growth in wealth of consumer in China will help to fuel growth in demand for gold for the foreseeable future.

Investors are also demonstrating an appetite for gold as more of us seemingly take the view that a commodity such as gold should be viewed as investment class worthy of consideration and want to make it part of their allocation of funds.

Evidence of this interest in gold can be seen by learning that one of the largest ETF's in the United States, joined the ranks of the largest holders of gold bullion, just four years after it was launched.

### **Part of your investment portfolio**

Not everyone likes the case for gold and Warren Buffet is rather famous for not liking gold as an investment, but many other shrewd investors consider it to be an essential part of a diversified investment portfolio.

We take a look at how to invest in gold on other pages of this website and you can consider the merits of either investing in physical gold such as buying bullion or coins or speculating using ETF's amongst other ways of gaining an exposure to this popular precious metal.

It should be noted that although the price of gold can demonstrate volatility in the short term, history has so far shown that it is more than able to maintain its value over a longer period. It also does often provide a good hedge against inflation and the potential erosion in the value of major currencies, so it is an investment that needs consideration.

## **The Pyramid of Gold Investment**

### **Gold Bullion Facts**

1. A reasonable percentage of long term investors tend to add some gold to their investment portfolio and whilst many are aware of the fact that adding a precious metal like gold which is not correlated with other asset classes enhances their risk/reward profile, there are some facts about gold bullion that they may not be aware of.
2. The term bullion actually applies to either coins or bars and it is also interesting to note that gold is one of the heaviest metals and is over 19 times heavier than water.
3. One of the reasons why gold tends to retain its perceived rarity value and hold its value over time, is the fact that the world's gold supply only increases by an average of 2,000 tons per year.
4. Despite the amount of gold produced throughout our history, you could still fit the entire world's supply of the precious metal into a cube that measures just 65.5 feet.
5. The most popular coin in terms of volume of sales is the American Eagle which was first produced in 1985 and the heaviest gold bullion

coin that you could acquire is the Australian Kangaroo, which weighs 32.15 ounces.

6. The material value of gold is influenced by three specific factors, condition, purity and weight.
7. Gold bullion represents the purest form of the precious metal and it can be acquired as bullion bars (also known as ingots) or coins.
8. If you see a dealer advertising 100% pure gold, you should be suspicious. This is because bona-fide gold dealers never advertise 100% pure gold, due to the fact the forging process used introduces small traces of other substances and therefore makes it impossible to declare absolute purity.
9. The highest quality bullion that you can obtain is 99.99% pure and collectors and investors should ideally search for proof-quality coins which bear no marks from wear or use.

## **How to Buy Gold**

If you are interested in buying gold as part of your investment strategy, there are numerous ways to acquire a physical holding or gain exposure to the precious metal through a fund or trading platform.

### **Gold bullion**

If you want gold that offers a combination of intrinsic and potentially rising investment value, your primary consideration should be to consider gold bars or coins.

Gold bars come in metric sizes and are available to purchase at the prevailing gold price for that day, plus a premium to cover manufacturing and marketing. The important thing to remember is that the smaller the bar you buy, the higher the premium you will probably have to pay.

A one-gram bar could have more than a 40% premium attached to it for the retailer whereas a 1 kg bar will obviously cost you considerably more to acquire, but the markup is probably more likely to be in the region of 5%.

We recommend [BullionVault](#) – the world's #1 online bullion dealer.

## **Coins**

Gold coins are popular with buyers and 22-carat sovereigns enjoy enduring popularity, especially amongst British investors.

The value of these coins varies according to their intrinsic value as well as when they were minted, having an influence on their price and value.

Modern coins dated from 2000 onwards will cost more than their immediate value but sovereigns that were made in the late Victorian period can offer the potential for greater gains due to their rarity, but this means they will also be more expensive to acquire.

## **Exchange-traded funds**

It could be argued that gold ETF's are not technically funds, due to the fact that they follow a single security.

The purpose of an ETF is to track the gold price via the stock exchange and you can speculate whether the price is going to rise or fall and profit or lose according to how right your opinion was in a specific period of time.

ETF's are regulated financial products and you can expect to pay a dealing commission on each trade that is probably around 0.4%.

### **Unit trusts and investment trusts**

There are specific unit trusts and investment trusts listed on the stock market which invest in the shares of gold mining companies and other commodities.

Investing in one of these trusts can provide you with exposure to gold without the need to actually buy any of the precious metal itself. You will find that these specialist funds can be quite volatile and gold mining equities can often be more volatile than the gold price, but patient investors might be rewarded with a mixture of patience and good-timing.

### **Gold shares**

You might decide that you would prefer to invest directly in a publicly-quoted company and buy shares of companies that trade or mine gold.

The share price of individual companies is no less volatile than investing in a unit or investment trust and you can expect plenty of noticeable fluctuations in the value of these companies, but they could still be a reasonable portfolio diversifier if you have the right risk attitude to tolerate the volatility.

A number of investors who are looking to buy into gold, will often question which is the better option, gold bullion or coins?

## **Investing in Gold bullion vs Gold Coins**

It is hard not argue with the fact that for a fairly serious and large-scale investor, buying gold bars is a very simple and efficient method of obtaining direct exposure to the precious metal.

Economies of scale often mean that the larger bars are usually available at the lowest premium to their actual intrinsic value. Smaller value gold bars generally cost more per ounce in order for the seller to maintain a profit margin and to account for production costs.

[Buying a kilo bar of gold](#) may well work out cheaper than buying smaller bars but you will often find that your choice of buyer is restricted due to the size and value of the gold you have in one bar, meaning you may well end up selling to a dealer who deals in greater quantities than a private buyer.

There are a number of advantages and benefits to buying gold bars.

The main advantage it offers is that gold bars are relatively easy to trade, so you should always be able to find buyers and sellers in the market, which is not the case when it comes to some gold coins.

Another key selling point is that the premium you pay when buying gold bars is normally lower than you would pay when acquiring coins. if you are prepared to negotiate the best deal, it is often possible to acquire a gold bar at close to the spot price of gold with a small premium added.

The other reason why gold bullion is so popular with a number of investors, is that you are holding physical gold, so it provides a level of comfort that you are holding something of value that remains yours whatever happens to the economy and stock markets, although its value will rise and fall in response to the influential factors.

## **Gold coins**

There are millions of gold coins being bought and sold on a regular basis and they are relatively easy to acquire with numerous dealers and outlets selling different types of gold coin to investors and collectors.

Gold coins should have a high level of gold purity and certain coins like the American Eagle and the Canadian Maple Leaf are popular with buyers.

There has been a shift away from coins towards investing in gold through ETF's but there are signs more recently that sentiment may well be returning to trading in coins like the Maple Leaf, which is attractive to investors as it weighs in at a manageable 24 carat gold.

There are certainly disadvantages to investing gold coins and one aspect that is off-putting to investors is the fact that prices have been seen to fluctuate fairly wildly at certain times, so timing can be critical to when you make a purchase.

It should be noted that gold coins as an investment, should be held for a minimum of three years in order to see any potential upside in their value and buying coins should not therefore be viewed as a short term strategy.

You also need to be vigilant when it comes to buying coins and arrange to keep them yourself rather than agree for someone to store them on your behalf.

Although there are many reputable dealers who will not sell you gold coins that don't exist, there are some scams around that agree to hold what turn out to be non-existent coins on your behalf and take your money, so always take physical possession of your coins in the first instance.

### **Coins vs bullion**

There are pros and cons to buying coins and the same comments apply to buying bullion, especially if you are looking at buying larger quantities.

There are certain situations where some coins might offer a better resale value compared to bullion and although a larger percentage of investors would probably come down in favor of buying bullion over coins, you should also consider that older types of coins can often be sold at a premium.

It all depends on what your personal preference is with regard to collecting and holding gold, but from a cost perspective, larger gold bars are often the most cost-efficient way of acquiring physical gold.

Certain coins can turn out to be a better investment than bars and there is also the fact that more dealers, jewellers and individual collectors worldwide will be wanting to buy coins than there are bullion dealers, so it is potentially giving you more options for selling.

Both gold coins and bullion often attract a premium when you are buying them so you need to factor this into your sums when you are deciding whether to buy coins or gold bars.

## **Investing in Gold Bullion vs Gold Stocks**

A common dilemma posed to investors who want to gain some exposure to gold, is whether they should acquire some physical gold in the form of bullion or invest in some stocks for gold producers.

As with a lot of these either or questions, the answer has a lot to do with timing and market sentiment rather than being simply a matter of one option being better than the other.

### **Gold stocks take the lead**

If you take a snapshot of the performance of gold bullion and stocks in the third quarter of 2014, this is the point where gold mining stock returns were able to outpace bullion for the first time in about 24 months.

As of August 2014 the NYSE Arca Gold BUGS Index was displaying a 22.31% return for gold stocks whereas the yellow metal itself, was lagging behind at 7.74% for the same period.

### **Which is the better investment?**

It would of course be foolish and financially dangerous to take a set of figures in isolation and try to make a case on the strength of the numbers, however impressive they appear.

As with any form of investing, it is always better to take a longer term view in order to try and establish how you might want to invest in gold.

If you took a look at the position in 2012 for example, you would have noted that the price of physical gold had gone up by 110% from where it was in 2008, whereas the BUGS Index had only risen by 15% and the Market Vectors Gold Miners ETF (GDX) had only increased in value by 7%.

These two sets of figures illustrate that market sentiment and economic conditions can influence whether gold bullion or gold stocks rise or fall and one can do better than the other at certain points.

### **Understanding the market**

Some investors are of the opinion that mining stocks offer leverage and when you look at how they perform during a bull market, you can see the merit of that argument.

If you bought gold bullion in 2001 and held on to it until 2006, you would have seen its value rise by 92%. In the same period, the BUGS Index rose by 648%.

If you had maintained your investment in gold stocks, you would have benefitted from a further 39% rise in value up to 2012, but in the same period, the price of gold rose by 232%.

What you can probably gauge from these figures is that when miners are doing well, the price of gold is also likely to follow suit. Sentiment does not appear to have changed that much over the years and when economic conditions get

tough, such as the global financial crisis in 2008, investors often seek the comfort of holding physical gold as a hedge against underperforming markets.

### **Gold season**

It is also worth taking into account the fact that there is a time of the year when physical gold is more in demand than usual.

Autumn sees the gold jewelry industry replenish its stock and when you have world events going on at the same time that threaten market confidence, such as unrest in Ukraine and the Middle East, this can cause the gold price to spike.

These market conditions and the potential for turbulence in supply chains can actually benefit not just investors in bullion itself, but also the mining stocks as well.

The reason for this potential win/win situation is that mining companies have the ability to action some cost-cutting initiatives in order to maintain their profit margins.

### **Price fluctuations**

The best investment strategies are often those that plan for the medium to long term and investing in gold bullion or stocks is generally considered to be a long term play if you are going to reap the full rewards on your investment.

Gold is the same as other precious metals in that prices and values can often be susceptible to adverse economic or political events, which is mainly down to the fact that it is an investment viewed in isolation and therefore can come under

the scrutiny of investors and analysts, who collectively could influence prices in the very short term.

There is an argument in favor of gold bullion in certain conditions and there is also an equally compelling case to be made for gold stocks as well, when you look at the past performance of both.

The general consensus of opinion amongst gold analysts and traders who operate in this sector, is that a balanced mix of both physical metals and mining stocks will probably you serve you well and allow you to gain from various market responses rather than just the one scenario that could influence the price of gold and miner stocks.

It is also considered prudent that give the potential volatility of gold prices, that you should limit your total exposure to gold to between 5% and 10% of your investment portfolio.

## **Top 5 Physical Gold Savings Accounts**

### **1) Royal Mint**

[The Royal Mint](#) is asking the public to trust its new service aimed at those looking for an online solution to buying, storing, and selling gold. The Ministry of Defence holds all of the Mint's precious metals for the service, which is guarded 24 hours a day by armed guards.

### **2) GoldMoney**

[GoldMoney](#) is an online precious metals dealer that contracts with (primarily) Via Mat for storage. It's audited annually by an independent accounting firm. But, it's operations look more like a "gold bank" than anything else.

The company sets up an online trading account for you, where you're able to deposit money, earn interest on domestic and foreign currencies, buy and sell precious metals, and arrange for storage or delivery.

Prices are very competitive and the customer service is what you would expect from a gold dealer. Like most gold dealer and depository arrangements, you own the precious metals outright. GoldMoney has no equitable, or legal, ownership or interest in your gold or silver. When you buy gold, through GoldMoney, you are engaging the company to act as an agent for the purpose of contracting for physical custody of your metal.

GoldMoney's holdings are fully allocated, which means that there is physical metal in a vault that is specifically yours. This differs from unallocated arrangements which are popular with some online services. Unallocated holdings mean that there is a pool of gold, but there is no specific delineation or separation of your gold from someone else's.

### **3) Bullionvault**

[Bullionvault](#) is the major competitor to GoldMoney. It was started in 2005 and today is owned by Galmarley Limited and registered in Great Britain, doing business on the 12th floor of the Landmark House, Blacks Road, Hammersmith, in London.

Like Goldmoney, it operates as a dealer and arranges for storage of gold through Via Mat. In 2009, the company won the Queen's Award for Enterprise (Innovation) for its use of technology in making the bullion market efficient and reliable for private customers.

Then, in 2013, it was again awarded the Queen's Award for Enterprise for growing overseas sales by 140 percent in 3 years.

The company boasts over \$2 billion in stored bullion with 34 tonnes of gold – more reserves than most of the world's central banks.

#### **4) Kitco**

[Kitco](#) is one of the most trusted online sources for gold and silver (all precious metals really). Its gold savings accounts come as both allocated and unallocated. The unallocated account, called the Kitco Pool, allows investors to purchase gold at a low cost with no storage fees and a low spread.

Investors can upgrade to allocated storage for a small premium.

#### **5) Everbank**

[Everbank](#) flies under the radar. Beginning in 1999, the company was started as an alternative to traditional banking, being one of the first traditional banks to also host a suite of competitive online banking products that mirrors traditional banking products.

But, in 2002, the company was sold to First Alliance Bank of Jacksonville. Rather than hurt the bank, it helped it grow into one of the largest privately

held banks in the country. Today, it offers gold and silver bullion at 1 percent over the spot price paid by the bank.

This is one of the cheapest options in the marketplace. They'll also arrange for storage and redemption, turning a basic gold holding account into what amounts to a gold savings account. Since they're based in Jacksonville Florida, it's also easy to step into a branch location, which isn't always possible with online gold dealers.

### **How To Choose A Gold Savings Account**

You need to look at gold as a long-term savings. Short term fluctuations spook many savers, and it keeps them from really appreciating the long-term potential of precious metals. If you have a short to intermediate-term need for savings, keep this money in a traditional savings account or use an investment account denominated in your domestic currency.

If you're willing to hold gold for more than 5 to 10 years, choose a company that will be around for that long, at least. Smaller dealers and firms tend not to be as stable as larger firms in this respect, precisely because the business's longevity is tied to the owner of the business.

With larger firms that contract out to established vaults for storage, your risk is minimal. Start small, and save as much as you feel comfortable with. Most savers would do well not to overallocate in gold, so if you're unsure about how much you should invest, talk to a financial planner who specializes in precious metals.

## **Investing in Gold Stocks**

There are a number of different ways in which you can gain exposure to gold stocks these days and here is a look at the options and what risks or potential benefits they offer to investors.

### **Gold miner stocks**

The most direct way of investing in gold other than buying bullion itself is by buying gold miner stocks.

This is generally considered a more speculative and therefore riskier method of investing in gold, mainly because you are gambling on the fortunes of one or several gold mining companies rather than the market as a whole.

Mining stocks can demonstrate as much as a three-to-one leverage in comparison to the spot price of gold, both on the upside and downside. The fundamental reason why gold miner stocks can be such a risky proposition is that they are trading within the broader equity market and therefore can be susceptible to general stock market sentiment as well as the outlook for gold.

In addition to this, each stock will be scrutinized for their gold production performance and the perceived quality of their reserves as well as the strength of the management team. All of these factors can heavily influence their share price and especially when there has been a general decline in global gold production since the beginning of 2000.

### **Speculating on the minnows**

A common theme amongst more novice investors is to invest in small gold miners who are in their exploration phase and have little to offer in the way of cash flow or inventory.

What this can mean is that if you get lucky and pick a stock that literally strikes gold, it can make your investment look very shrewd as the stock price rockets, but this is a big gamble as only a small percentage of these trades even strike gold, let alone turn a profit.

These stocks are referred to as Junior Miners and as the name suggests, they are young companies who are trying to become a major source of future mining supply at some point in the future.

if they succeed in finding a source of gold that is economically viable to produce, the very promise of their find is often enough to send the share price soaring. You will be able to find companies who invest heavily in using highly trained geologists and geophysicists in order to improve their odds of success, but investing in any junior mining stock has to be considered as highly speculative and any financial exposure to this type of stock needs to be a very small percentage of your total portfolio.

### **Quality over quantity**

Analysts with the expertise in this sector often advocate the policy of choosing quality over quantity and limiting your portfolio to a spread of no more than 10 different companies in total.

Look for companies with strong production figures and reserve growth and another possible positive indicator is when your target company is demonstrating a policy of buying smaller-cap companies in order to maintain their production levels and continue to grow their profits.

if you are looking to get a spread of gold stocks, investing in up to 10 different companies should give you an opportunity to take a few risks with some more junior miners while having the relative safety net of a strong performing major player in the gold sector.

You will need to be aware that investing gold stocks directly will involve some volatility in prices. if the price of gold drops by 10%, you can often see gold stocks fall by as much as between 20% and 30%.

This level of movement needs to be expected at certain times and some investors sell too early as a result of getting nervous about their investment, which is why investing in gold stocks should be viewed as a long term and speculative play.

### **Gold Mutual funds**

If you are reluctant to invest directly in specific stocks or feel that you do not have the required market knowledge to choose the right portfolio, it may be that investing in a gold mutual fund is the right choice for you.

Investing in a gold mutual fund will give you exposure to a chosen portfolio of gold stocks that will often comprise of some senior gold stocks, which is the

description given to a large well-capitalized company with a proven and profitable track record over a number of years.

This type of investment is often considered to be a more conservative approach to gaining some exposure to gold in your investment portfolio and should prove less volatile.

Many experienced investors still take the view that investing in gold through ownership of gold mining stocks or mutual funds, as well as buying gold bullion too, provides them with a direct counter to the performance of the dollar.

## **Your Guide to Gold IRAs**

If you are of the opinion that you need to take action to protect your wealth and retirement savings from an unpredictable economic future, you would be one of a considerable number of investors who consider that gold and other precious metals should form part of their diversified portfolio.

One of the least risky and tax-efficient ways of investing in precious metals like gold is to convert part of their 401 (k), annuity or IRA to a physical gold bullion backed IRA, which is also referred to as a gold IRA rollover.

The fundamental point about a gold IRA is that you are acquiring ownership of physical assets rather than financial assets

When you choose to invest in a gold IRA it is essential that you understand how you want to invest the funds you have available and also fully comprehend how your chosen investment strategy will impact your planning needs.

The most important and basic question that you need to be asking yourself is what are your reasons for deciding to invest in physical bullion?

The answer to that question may well consist of a number of key points but the three most salient reasons are as follows.

You are looking for a better balance of your portfolio through diversification and you also want an element of protection too. If you have an investment portfolio that is heavily biased towards stocks, bonds and mutual funds, you are leaving yourself exposed to how the financial markets perform whereas an allocation of up to 10% of your total funds being invested in gold and other precious metals would help redress the balance of risk and provide another layer of protection against adverse stock market conditions.

Another reason why some investors look to invest some of their money in a gold IRA is that they are fearful of the performance of major currencies like the US dollar and want a hedge against it.

The third principle reason for investing in a gold IRA is the fact that there is the opportunity for future profit if you believe that the price of gold will continue to rise in the future.

### **IRS restrictions**

Before looking in greater detail at how to choose and set up your gold IRA, it is worth pointing out that the IRS has some restrictions in place and strict rules about what you can invest in when it comes to physical ownership of bullion and precious metal coins.

The Internal Revenue Code permits IRA's to own specific gold, silver and platinum coins and bullion, which meet their applicable fineness standards.

Some of the most popular coins such as the American Eagle, Canadian Maple Leaf and Silver Eagle coins as well as gold and silver bars, would qualify provided they are certified as at least 99.9% pure.

These purity restrictions will exclude some well-known coins like the South African Krugerrand which don't come up to the required standard and the same applies to any bullion bars that fall below the specified purity level.

Any coins or bullion that you acquire for your IRA will have to be held by the IRA trustee and not by you directly, which means you can't hold gold in a safety deposit box in your name for example and still qualify for the tax advantage of an IRA.

### **Your existing retirement vehicle**

A good starting point when looking at the possibility of investing in precious metals such as gold through your existing retirement vehicle, is to verify what type of scheme you are currently subscribed to and what limitations or options apply to you in relation to achieving a gold IRA rollover.

