

# Piggy bank mechanical recorder

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Collections / piggy bank



Mechanical money box. The metal case is rectangular and mounted on a base. The piggy bank is black in color. The front features a clock and a mechanical counter. Instructions are written on the back. A slot is located on the top edge. An opening is located under the base.

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Accession Number 2020.02.871

Fabricant / Éditeur Bankers Development Corporation

Period 20th century

Materials metal

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## Historical context

From the last decade of the 19th century onwards, many American financial institutions adopted the portable piggy bank system developed in 1890 by the American Charles Owen Burns. These boxes became one of the banking institutions' preferred means of promoting savings. The boxes remain the property of the bank and are rented to depositors so that they can fill them up and deposit their savings in the bank.

A variety of piggy banks appeared in the first quarter of the 20th century. Manufacturers filed numerous patents: some models even had several features, such as this mechanical money box with a clock.

The idea behind the clock-based piggy bank was that saving money is

not a one-off operation, but an activity that requires a rhythm. Manufacturers insert clock or alarm mechanisms into their piggy banks, enabling users to check the time as soon as they deposit a coin in the box.

The idea behind cash registers (automatic and mechanical) stems from the fact that savers want to know exactly how much money they have accumulated before their piggy bank is full. In the case of mechanical models, coins are inserted into a slot and a counting mechanism indicates the amount accumulated.

Compared with automatic moneyboxes, these mechanical models have not been a hit with American financial institutions, or anywhere else in the world. This may be due to the complexity of the counting mechanism and their unreliable operation.

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Photo by Daphnée Bouchard

On display