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## Bullion for Bytes

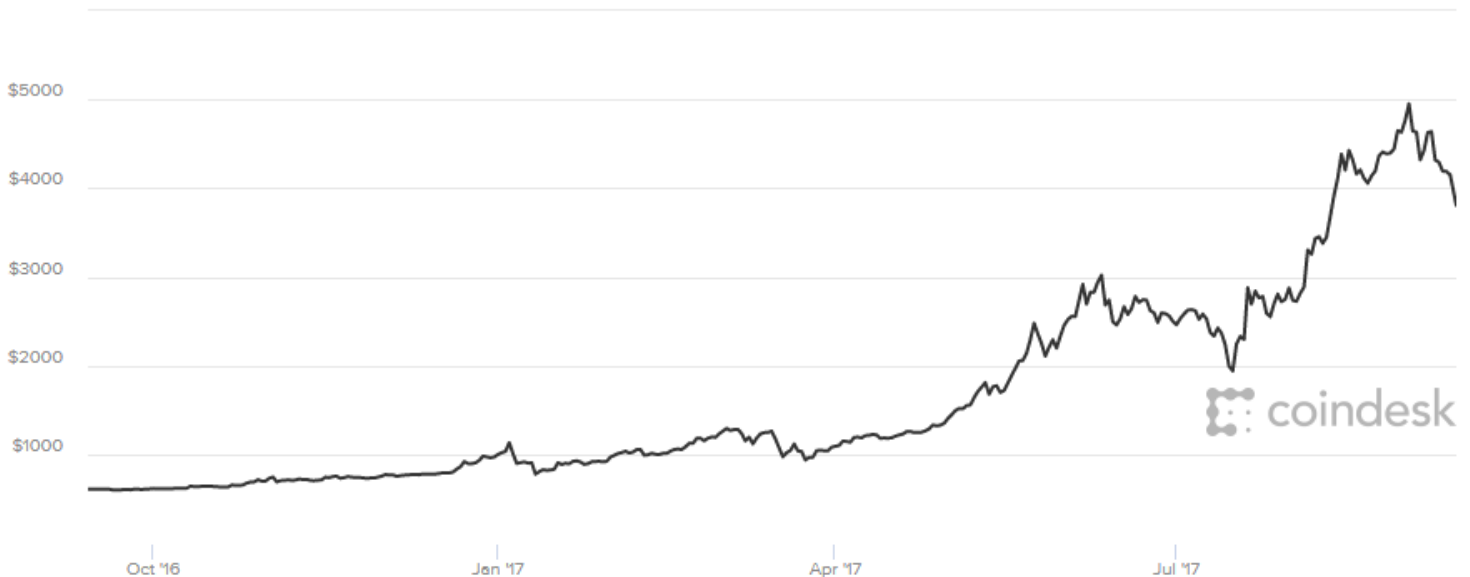
Currency has been a medium of exchange for millennia. From Rai stones in Palau, to knives in China, to jewelry in Egypt and all the way to our current fiat system, money has been the agreed upon way to store value to exchange for goods and services later. The currency/commodity's worth stems from the value society places on the medium. As history has progressed, various commodities such as gold and silver, have been perceived as currencies, for people to have an alternative to systematic currency. Regardless of country specific success or detriment, people perceive gold as being a tradeable asset (a currency) for goods or services, thus giving it value. Recently, a digital, alternative currency called Bitcoin, has been created. It is competing to become a new alternative currency.

Bitcoin was based on the idea of having a secure, digital way to transact with others in a peer to peer system. Where physical money could be stolen and credit/debit cards were being hacked, Bitcoin was built on a technology called blockchain, to ensure safe, secure and autonomous transactions. Simply put, blockchain takes multiple transactions at one time, compares those to all accounts within the system, makes sure the transaction followed proper protocol and completes the transaction between parties. Using blockchain, Bitcoin allows people to do things from buying a pizza to booking a flight in a more secure manner than traditional digital transactions. Within Bitcoin's niche market, the currency has seen great success and gained more mainstream acceptance.

As a newcomer though, when compared to the likes of gold, Bitcoin has faced many challenges to become successful. Originally, the currency was only mere numbers on a screen, but as it gained traction out of a very small market, more and more businesses such as Expedia and Overstock.com have started accepting it as payment. Hackers have demanded it in return for unlocking stolen data, known as Ransomware, making people wary of whether Bitcoin is a safe currency to use. Politicians across the world are considering Bitcoin's impact on their monetary and regulatory systems. This has created new regulations, such as recent small reform in China and the denial of a Bitcoin ETF via the SEC here in the United States. Throughout these trials, the exchange rate and future of Bitcoin has been very volatile, but thus far has continued to appreciate in value.

For all its success, Bitcoin is right now the epitome of a Bull and Bear case. From the first real-world transaction of Bitcoin in 2010, where 10,000 Bitcoins were traded for two Papa John's pizzas, to now where one Bitcoin is worth more than \$4,000 (that's some expensive pizza), Bitcoin has seen great user growth and acceptance. However, given its rise, other digital currencies have popped up and a cloud of potential regulation looms overhead. In the future, the real value of Bitcoin may only have been the testing of blockchain technology or society may accept Bitcoin as a true alternative currency for transacting. The future value of Bitcoin is clearly uncertain, but the impact it has had on industries and technology is certainly here to stay.

## Bitcoin / USD Price



Source of chart: [coindesk.com](https://www.coindesk.com)

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