

# Gold solidus of Valentinian II (375-392AD)

This is the only Roman gold coin in the museum's collections. Although it has been slightly damaged in the past it is still a beautiful item. Because the coin has not corroded the image and text is clear on both faces, showing how coins were used to spread messages and to promote individuals as well as providing a means of financial exchange.

## Obverse (front or *heads*)

This side of the coin shows the bust (head and shoulders) of the emperor facing right. He is wearing a diadem (a small crown) and is draped with cloth held at the shoulder with an ornate brooch.



**DN - DOMINUS NOSTER** meaning Our Lord  
**VALENTINANUS** the nominative form of the emperor's name Valentinian.

**PF - PIUS FELIX** meaning dutiful and fortunate.

**AUG - AUGUSTUS** The name of the first emperor and used as an honorific title by all emperors thereafter.

## Reverse (back or *tails*)

The reverse of the coin shows the two emperors in power at this time; Valentinian II in the Western Empire with Theodosius 1 ruling in the Eastern Empire. They are holding an orb, a symbol of power, between them and have a winged Victory above them.



**VICTORIA** Involving the goddess of that name.  
**AUGG** (although damaged, the second G is just discernible). The double G indicates there were two emperors sharing power at the time the coin was minted.

**COM** The mint mark showing where the coin was struck. At the time this coin was being produced, COM was one of the marks being used at Mediolanum (Milan) on gold coins.