

How can you tell real gold apart from fool's gold?



Pure gold is actually quite soft. If you bite it you can actually leave a tooth-mark. If you try to bite fool's gold, on the other hand, you're looking at some expensive dental work.

Another difference is that if you hold a piece of fool's gold in the flame of a Bunsen burner, it'll turn black, smoke and start to smell like rotten eggs. This is because fool's gold is made out of iron and sulphur atoms chemically bound together. When you burn fool's gold, the sulphur disassociates and you can smell it. Gold is made out of nothing but gold atoms and doesn't react when you hold it over a Bunsen burner. If you get it really hot it melts, of course.

