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# **Finding, Buying and Selling Stamps: Starting Your Collection**

## **Topics Covered:**

Collector, Dealer Etc. Stamp Supply

Getting Stamps from a Reputable Supplier

Buy and Sell Stamps

Tips on How to Get Started with Your Stamp Collection

Grab Free Stamp Collecting Catalogues

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# Finding, Buying and Selling Stamps: Starting Your Collection

## Collector, Dealer Etc, Stamp Supply

Stamp collecting has been one of the most favorite legacy hobbies among stamp enthusiasts. This hobby dates back to as early as 15th and many interesting stories related to this hobby abound.

Although the usual technique of collecting stamp specimens is through the conventional correspondence exchange, modern stamp collectors have found a new way of getting the items necessary to add on to their existing collections.

### **Get Connected!**

The Internet offers a valuable place to where you can sell, shop, and even barter stamps. The dealer and collector sections provides interested philatelists (people who collect stamps) the ability to sell their duplicate stamps and give other a copy of it.

Individual inventories are sold through various means aside from the internet, usually through the more primitive means by sending hard copies of advertisement through household who have previously registered or have expressed interest in any of symposium or stamp museum exposition.

Special philatelic publications and local post offices may, from time to time, provide a specific date in which local philatelist organizations meet, advertise, sell, buy and even barter stamps among enthusiastic members of the community.

### **Be part of a Huge Search Database**

Database should not be misconstrued to the modern electronic database. Although this must be true in all transactions today, some, if not most, manual search database for social information are detailed in a more conventional bookkeeping, manuscript-type procedure.

But it must be put into emphasis that this same search database contains substantial information in locating dealers and fellow philatelists who are interested in learning, bartering and exchanging ideas regarding the same hobby.

Considering the fact that the same hobby has a long history, most people who got largest collection are typically the people with advanced age. Unless you have obtained your existing stamps as a gift from an old chap, you will not be able to gain the necessary numbers of stamps which will tell the story of how you have exerted effort in searching for them.

## **Deal with Dealers**

Dealers either online or offline are valuable resources in your effort to build your own stamp inventory. If you are a beginner, you can take advantage of the services of dealers in getting the right starting collection for you.

Dealers, being well connected to a large number of people who take on the same interest as you do, will be able to build connections which will allow you to make business with these same individuals without you experiencing all the hassles of searching.

They will, in theory, connect you to the people who will satisfy your interest and in turn, satisfy the interest of another. For example, if John is interested in selling his spare or duplicate stamps, the stamp dealer will connect John to people who are interested in business on purchasing stamps to build their own set of inventories.

Dealers and collectors benefit from a strong bond of partnership and this partnership is the same reason why more and more dealers are working hard for the improvement of services and provide services to stamp collectors without the typical hassles.

## **Knowing the Trends and Channels in Stamp Buying**

With the modernization of society, the additions to the number of ways by which you can collect stamps have evolved as well. Auctions, Mail Order Expositions, Affiliations or Club, Shows, fairs and post offices all provide such service.

Philatelic sites such as the American Philatelic Society provides valuable information on stamp collecting, tips and guides, if you are a beginner, on how you will go about starting the new hobby.

These same Internet channels also provides sites and related links to which you can visit in order to receive information on stamp collecting.

## **Care**

Stamp collecting is not all about "collecting" per se, it is also about maintaining the beauty of your stamps so that others will be able to appreciate it as well. Proper care and maintenance is the key towards this process.

One way to do this is through using approved stamp supplies which helps retain and resist damage and maintain their integrity when being traveled from one place to another.

Improper handling will cause delicate stamps to wrinkle and lose some their original color. In short, aside from collecting, you should also be aware of maintaining them and keeping them from the normal process of wear and tear.

## **Getting Stamps from a Reputable Supplier**

The internet has changed how people send mail. Until such time that technology finds a way to transport packages in the same manner, stamps will still be used to get documents and parcels from one destination to another.

Stamps are not just used for packages when it goes through the post office. People also collect it for the artwork and detail on each which has historical value.

This is the reason that a lot have made this into a hobby even if there is not that much money that can be made.

Since the collector cannot always rely on mails being sent to the home and people don't trade it often, it is best to find someone who will supply the hobbyist with it to expand the collection.

This supplier is someone who collects stamps and sells it off to other people at the same time. This individual should be knowledgeable about the subject since other people know what to look for when conducting business.

A lot of these individuals can be found in the classified ads of the newspaper. These people always have sufficient stock and are willing to trade with those who have appreciation for stamps.

There are also websites in the internet that act as a supplier to the hobbyist. Some of these only deal with local stamps that have been around since the 19th century. Others offer both local and foreign that also dates back to the same period.

The supplier also has a price catalogue that is carried at all times. This is the basis where the person will decide how much to sell it to the hobbyist. Since this can easily be bought at the local specialty store, the stamps have standard value in the market.

In terms of taking care of stamps, these people are no different than the hobbyists. The suppliers have to make sure that these are handled carefully. Dirt, oil or any elements must not damage the inventory since this will make it difficult to sell at a good price.

The suppliers also handle the stamps with care, which includes the use of tongs in giving the stamps to its new owner. The magnifying glass is also another tool these suppliers use to make sure that these were given in good condition and no one can complain after the transaction has taken place.

Suppliers store these surplus stamps in room temperature storage areas. When the times comes that a deal will be made, this is the only time it is brought out for the prospective client to look at.

There are two ways that transactions happen. The first meeting the supplier at the desired meeting place. This person will be carrying a few binders that the hobbyist can look at then arrangements will be made for the deal to push through.

The second is meeting the supplier in the office. This is because that person can only carry a number of binders during a sales meeting. It will be good idea for the hobbyist to visit the office to see other designs that are worth adding to the collection.

Suppliers also get some stamps from the post office since these are sold in rolls. These people get it at a discount for ordering in bulk then profiting from it when the hobbyist orders a page or two.

These people also frequent auctions and exhibits. Since this is like a business, the steady flow of customers will ensure the success of being a supplier to the hobbyists.

There are many stamp clubs around and asking fellow members how to get in touch with the supplier will help a lot in making the collection bigger.

By using everything to get hold of the supplier, the person can be sure that the stamps are of good quality. This is a win-win situation since everybody gets something out of it.

Stamps are easier to obtain now compared to how it was years ago. This is because the circulation of these items is more commonplace. By finding someone who can be trusted to get it from, it will not be difficult for the hobbyist to expand the collection that already exists at home.

## **Buy and Sell Stamps**

Stamp collecting is considered to be one of the most popular hobbies in the world. This is despite the fact that there is not that much money that can be made from it even if the person has some of the oldest stamps dating back to the 19th century.

Even if there isn't that much money that can be made, there are individuals who take advantage of it and buy a lot of stamps then sell it to people who want it for a little profit.

It has made these people both collector and dealers of stamps.

Just like the regular hobbyist, the dealer has to be careful in handling these. Should any dirt, oil or any damage happen to the inventory, it will be difficult for the person to sell it at the desired price.

The dealer will need the proper tools to handle it. This includes the tweezers to transport the stamps from one place to another. It will really come in handy when the person passes it to the hobbyist who will pay some money so that it can be added to the collection.

Since the dealer has to get stamps from other people to be able to sell it again, this person also needs a magnifying glass so the true value of the stamp can be assessed and proper pricing for those want it can be made.

Storing the stamps till people come and buy it must be stored in an album. The dealer can get this from a variety of places and the nearest are those sold in the local bookstore and at some specialty shops. Since the contents inside are fragile, this should be stored in room temperature and away from direct sunlight.

Dealers need to practice how to use these instruments. Using an old letter with a stamp on it is a good exercise similar to the real thing. By practicing the proper way of handling it, the dealer can make a profit by selling these in good condition.

This begins by putting it the part of the envelope with the stamp in water. When the two begin to separate, the dealer should use the tongs to pick up the stamp. This should be dried using the air and no water must be present anymore when it is placed into the album.

Another place where the dealer can get stamps is at the post office. Since these are sold in rolls and some people are too lazy to go there, the person can buy it then deliver it to the collector with a little profit.

The collector and dealer of stamps can also be found at auctions and exhibits of these small goods. These people can sell a set or in bulk to those who are willing to buy it at the right price.

Another way to get customers will be to advertise in the newspaper by leaving some details and contact numbers. Since there is a demand for stamp collecting, calls will start coming in and deals can be made.

The internet is another venue where the dealer and collector can advertise to hobbyists.

By using everything at the person's disposal to get in touch with those who want to expand the existing stamp collections, the individual will be making a good income that will be used to buy more stamps and make this cycle continue.

The dealer must have a price catalogue at all times. This will make it easy to get it from other suppliers and give the person an idea how much to sell it to the hobbyist. This can be bought at the local specialty store, which gives its standard value in the market.

Stamps are easier to acquire now compared to how it was years ago. By knowing what the hobbyists want regardless if it is old or new and finding the means to get it, money can be made.

Stamp collecting will continue to flourish as long as people need to send parcels and documents to different places in the country and in the world. This will provide the dealer with something to buy and sell with and in the process make some money.

### **Tips on How to Get Started with Your Stamp Collection**

Collecting stamp is a very famous hobby. It is a very easy activity that provides fun to many. If you would like to start your own collection of stamps, here is how to get started:

1. To get started with the hobby, you need to decide first on what kind of topic you would like to use for your collection. It is also recommended to start general but it is more exciting to choose a specific theme for your stamps. If you would like to collect postage stamps from other countries, you may start narrowing down your collection from stamps coming from a specific country that interests you.

2. You may also start by buying new stamps from the market. You can start the collection by choosing a specific country that you would like to choose. This will help you get a good start on your collection and this will also prevent duplication of your collection. Buying a whole pack will give you different designs that will make it interesting for you and motivate you to collect more.

3. If money is limited while starting the collection. You may want to consider asking your friends and relatives to give stamps that they are no longer using. They can also help you in asking their friends to donate their stamps to you. This will also be exciting since the stamps came from people who are special to you. This will make you value the stamps more because of their sentimental values.

4. Once your friends and relatives have learned that you are collecting stamps, you will learn that they will give you stamps as gifts for any occasion. This will make the collection easier for you. Some may even exert the effort of getting special editions or commemorative stamps to make you happy.

5. You may then narrow your collection by considering whether you like new or old stamps. Many people prefer old stamps in their collection. New stamps, on the other hand, are easier to find and manage. Once you have decided on what stamps to keep for your collection, you should not throw away the others since you can still exchange them with other collectors.

6. One benefit of stamp collecting is that you will not spend much money for the hobby. You may buy inexpensive tools and supplies needed for your collection. For starters, an album is the first thing to acquire. The most popular kind is the loose-leaf album. A loose-leaf album has a binder that has removable sheets. This will make the stamps easier to manage and compile.

7. It is also important that you should know how to remove the stamps from envelopes before you can place them in your album. You may cut the stamp from the envelope around the stamp but it is important to still leave a space between the scissors and the edges of the stamps. You can then place the stamp with the face turned down on a bowl of warm water. You may then peel the stamp, let it dry and place it in the album.

8. There are many resources where you can get information about stamps and stamp collecting. The Internet is the most effective way to search for stamps and determine where you can get the cheapest and even those that are hard to find. You can also make use of the Internet to make friends with other stamp collectors. This will help you become more interested in the hobby and they can help you in finding the stamps you are looking for. You can also exchange stamps with one another making your collection bigger and more exciting.

The best part of the collection is displaying them to your friends and loved ones. Once you have your own collection, you can show them to your friends and families. You may even have

your own exhibit in the future. One way to let people know about your collection is by putting up your own website. You can make the website a place where you can exhibit all your stamps and you may also provide stories about the stamps and how you got them.

## **Grab Free Stamp Collecting Catalogues**

Stamp collecting is a worthwhile hobby. Stamp collecting and philately as well are popularly shared by many people all over the world as their favorite past time. It is one educational endeavor where a person can spend considerable effort and time.

### **What Is Stamp Collecting?**

Stamp collecting is concerned with saving postage stamps from the letters. It involves earnest efforts to search out old stamps. It also includes the collection of objects related to stamps like envelopes with stamps on them. The stamp collector is very likely to find another stamp collector just about everywhere due to the popularity of the past time. In United States alone, the population of stamp collectors reach 20 million.

Stamp collecting, however, must not be confused with philately. Philately is the study of the stamps. Studying the stamp does not necessarily include the collection, nor does stamp collection necessitates the study. Most collectors simply enjoy the act of acquiring stamps.

### **Ways of Collecting Stamps**

Most serious stamp collectors are not just into accumulating the stamps. They choose a certain aspect or detail and focus on it. There are just so many ways by which a stamp collector may narrow down his or her focus.

One way is to collect only the stamps of a certain country, it may be of the own country or a foreign one.

Some would be interested with the illustration featured in the stamp, for example cats, butterflies, airplanes or religious figures.

There are people concerned only with stamps released on a certain year, like the year they were born or when a certain historical event took place. This can be more challenging yet still very much rewarding.

### **The Challenge**

With the onset of the email technology, people now are less likely to receive a letter in their mailboxes. Thus the chances of acquiring more stamps are lessened. Still, the search goes on even if one cannot convince enough distant family and friends to communicate through snail mail.

## The Stamp Catalogue

A stamp catalog or also stamp catalogue is a list or directory of postage stamp types. This will simply consist of a register of descriptions and prices of the stamps. This is not to be undermined. This is an essential tool for any serious philatelist.

Initially, this catalogue was just used to help the dealers with the prices. Stanley Gibbons, for one, still uses the stamp catalogues for that purpose.

As time went on, philately as a past time developed as well the function of the stamp catalogues. The catalogues started featuring additional details regarding the stamps. It can include the date the stamp was issued, the color variations and many more. Philatelist recognized its significant purpose that it cannot help but to become widespread to most people.

Stamp catalogues have different coverage. Only a handful is out there that cover the worldwide coverage: Michel catalogue, Stanley Gibbons catalogue, Scott catalogues and Minkus catalogue.

This worldwide coverage is very considerable given that there are thousands of new stamps released every year from different countries. Each new stamps will have to be described. Furthermore, the prices of the stamps must also be taken into account. For some publishers, the prices are determined by collecting the data from dealers and auctions.

Some catalogue publishers even give out specialized volumes. These contain additional details, most of the time according to nationality.

Most countries would have their own catalogues or their "national catalogs." The postal administrations may come up with these catalogues. The experience with them however is that they do not supply the full details of the stamps featured. The leading dealer or publisher in the country can also initiate the effort to put up a catalogue.

Some examples of the "national catalogs" are the Brusden-White in Australia, Ma catalog and Yang catalog in China, Facit in Sweden and Anfilis in catalog in Spain.

Stamp shops have stamp catalogues that can be purchased. At present, thanks to the Internet technology, stamp catalogues can easily be accessed for purchase online. Most web sites on stamp collecting can link to another site that offers these stamp catalogues. The price range would usually depend on the kind of stamp catalogue.

Discounted rates can also be offered by some web sites. Take note however that the discount may only apply to certain catalogues, usually those that covers a certain period only.

What may sound better is a free stamp catalogue. Free stamps are usually offered by stamp companies or even a particular web site on stamp collecting. Some would offer free copies of their catalogues. The free stamp catalogues may not be as comprehensive as the worldwide catalogues but they can still be very useful resources for a dedicated stamp collector.

One can easily avail of these free stamp catalogues offer as they are often used to promote the web site or to serve as a token for being a regular in the web site. So, simply grab the chance of this offer. There is nothing to lose only a free stamp catalogue to gain.

### **Getting Stamps from a Collecting Company**

Stamp collecting is an interesting hobby. The person can start this at any age and have a collection of both local and foreign postage.

There are a lot of places where the collection can begin. The first place is usually through the mail that the person has received over a period of time. Since this is a slow process and other ways of acquiring stamps have to be done.

The person can buy this from the postal office, become a member of a stamp club, check out exhibits and auctions or simply find a stamp collection company.

There are many stamp collection companies in the internet that can provide a large collection both local and foreign that date back from 1800's until the present. Some of these are no longer in circulation, which makes it difficult for the collector to acquire it from other sources.

Aside from stamps, accessories and other equipment use in preserving the collection are also available.

These include tongs that enables the collector to safely transfer it from the envelope to the album after it has been cleaned. This helps avoid the occurrence of smudges, dirt or oil on any part of the stamp that will make it lose its value.

A magnifying glass is also needed to check on the quality of a stamp before buying it or trading it with a fellow collector. This will help check if the stamps are still in good condition and all the perforations are intact which will ensure the person that it has never been used.

The stamp collecting company also sells albums. These special binders at times are of better quality than those sold at the local bookstore or at some specialty shops. Since the collection is very delicate, it is important to find something strong for it to be stored in.

The stamp collecting company offers a lot of things to its members. Since some stamps are really hard to find, the stamp collecting company also provides assistance to its members in searching for it. The person should just type the kind of stamp then press the search icon. Within a few seconds, the site will provide the collector leads as to where these can be acquired.

The member can also post an ad in the site to trade an excess quantity of a certain stamp in exchange for another kind that other members are willing to give up.

The value of a certain stamp is higher if it has some historical significance connected to it. Since these are no longer in circulation, the stamp collection company that has a lot of these sometimes gives out special offers to its members.

If the market value of these could reach a \$100, the company can sell a bunch to the member for half the price.

The stamp collecting company can also help the hobbyist assess the value of the stamps in the collection. By bringing the album to the office or taking pictures of it and uploading it into the computer, the person will know how much it is worth and perhaps sell some to get better stamps for the collection.

The stamp collecting company is not only found in the internet. Some of these are in the neighborhood and looking through the classified ads or asking someone from the hobby store will help out a lot.

Most of these offer the same things and the difference among these groups is the collections that are present and how much it would cost to get it.

The collector can be a member of more than one stamp collecting company, which will really be good in order for the person to expand it. This will mean more albums to get a bigger storage area for it.

Though stamp collecting may be an old hobby, there are still those who give support to those who want to have one. This is even as technology has allowed people to send messages faster via the internet than through snail mail.

As long as people still send packages and other documents using the post office, stamps will still be produced. Collectors can still add these to the existing collections making it still grow through the years.

## **How the Stamp Collector Should Work**

Stamp collecting is a very old hobby and is considered to be one of the most popular hobbies in the world. Though there is not that much money that can be made from this hobby unlike collecting coins, some people just do it for the fun of it.

This hobby involves delicate work. A little smudge, dirt or oil on any part of the stamp loses it value. This will make it hard to trade it with other people should the person want to trade it in exchange for something else.

The first thing that a person needs when working with these little objects is the proper tools. Stamps should be handled using a tong. This is similar to tweezers but has a flat edge. This will make it easy for the collector to transfer it from the envelope to the album.

A magnifying glass is also needed to check on the quality of a stamp before buying it or trading it with a fellow collector. Stamps of good quality should have all the perforations intact which is the way of making sure it has never been used.

The album is a special binder that is used to store stamps. This can be bought at the local bookstore or at some specialty shops. Since the contents inside are very delicate, this should be stored in temperature and away from direct sunlight.

The best time to practice using these instruments is with letters that the person has received from people. The stamps are usually located on the upper right hand side and to get it out; the area around it must be cut out and placed in water.

After some time, the envelope and stamp will separate. Using the tongs, the person should pick up the stamp, dry it in the air to make sure all the water has been taken out the inserting it in the album. This practice should be done every time there is a need to extract it from a glued surface.

Another place where the person can get stamps without using a pair of tongs is by buying it from the post office. This can be bought per sheet and taken out later should the collector want to trade it with something that another collector has.

There are also people who do business like this that can be found in the newspaper and in the internet who sell stamps in sheets for a price. It just takes some time for the individual to look around and find it.

In order for the collector to have a wider network that can aid in the stamp collection, it will be a good idea to join a club. The benefits of being a member allow the person to trade with other members and stay informed about upcoming exhibits and fairs where further exchanges can be made.

Stamps can also be acquired at auctions. All it takes is for the person to know when it will happen and be ready with some money to bid for it.

The best way to determine if the stamp that is about to be bought is at a good price is by checking a price catalogue. This can be bought at the local specialty store, which gives its standard value in the market.

Stamp collecting is both a hobby and a business. Should the person have a lot of a certain kind, to be able to get others to add for the collection, this can be sold just like how other people do it to make some money.

The best place to do it is the internet. The person can advertise it and have sort of an online auction. This can also be exchanged for other stamps.

Stamps these days are circulated more often that it was years ago. Because of this, there is not that much money to be made even if the person has a very good collection.

The internet and other ways of sending messages have made snail mail obsolete. Though this has not erased the use of the postal office or of stamps, it is still used in places where technology has not changed things.

Stamp collecting is fun and looking some through old letters could be the beginning of something big.

### **The Real Deal About Stamp Collecting Prices**

Stamps have been a ubiquitous part of everyday life. After all, stamps are one of the ingenious ways devised by the postal services in order to facilitate payment for the delivery of letters, mail equivalents, packets, and the like. Because of the ubiquity of stamps, it is inevitable that many individuals over the years took interest in collecting these stamps.

As many stamp enthusiasts and scholars (otherwise known as philatelists) would argue, stamps are one of the best ways in order to study the history of any nation.

Individuals who collect stamps have, over the years, banded together in order to help each other ease whatever external difficulties would be had in collecting stamps. As early as the year 1886, American philatelists already came together to establish the American Philatelic Society. To date, it is the biggest congregation of stamp enthusiasts in the world with its over 44, 000 members.

The reason they banded together, aside from trying to get together people with similar interests, was to alleviate difficulties in stamp collecting. Admittedly, there are true benefits both financial and emotional to stamp collectors; however, they do come at a cost.

Stamp collecting, as a start-up hobby, may not be half as expensive as the stamp collecting practiced by those who've taken it to heart. Usually, amateur collectors only go as far as collecting the various stamps attached to the letters they receive daily. Therefore, in the level of acquisition, there's very little expense incurred.

However, while building a bigger and more comprehensive stamp collection, an amateur collector may find that the daily mail delivery may have turnover rates too slow to say that there is significant progress in building a collection.

This is where it's important to know where to go to look for cheap sales of used stamps. Usually, organizations and offices that receive huge amounts of mail from all over the world sell the stamps in bulk, known to stamp collectors as kiloware. Kiloware is the collective term used to refer to stamps attached to a small portion of the original envelope where it was used, and sold in batches or bulks.

This is one of the cheapest ways to build collections, as the stamps are sold at prices less than their face value. Moreover, companies aren't really intent on making huge profit out of enthusiasts, but just to make some money out of stamps, which they would have otherwise thrown away.

Soaking or lifting stamps in order to remove them from where they are originally attached is a relatively costless process that would require more skill than money.

However, in order to properly care for stamps, there are some overhead costs that must be covered. For example, many collectors do not handle their stamps manually. Handling of stamps is instead done with the aid of a trusty pair of tongs. This is because the hands secrete a natural oil that may prove damaging to the stamp in the long run.

Moreover, part of the requirements of stamp collecting is proper storage and care. Stamps, unlike books or CDs, cannot be stacked or left lying around a room gathering dust. It has to be contained in a case that will allow the stamp to breathe (an airtight container will cause the stamp to deteriorate to dust). Stamps must also be protected from dust that can damage the stamp, and fluorescent light and direct sunlight that can cause discoloration in the stamp's design.

Another important factor to be considered in storage is that the storage facility must not cause the stamps to stick against each other (and in effect, humidity must be controlled in some way), or destroy the gum at the back of the stamp when it is lifted or removed from containment. Moisture and water are enemies of stamps as they are perishable in nature and would obviously be ruined with continued exposure. If one were to collect huge volumes of stamps, it would also be important for storage to occupy a limited space.

Glassine envelopes, which are see-through envelopes, are available at relatively cheap prices and may be used to temporarily contain stamps until one is able to transfer them to an album. Albums free with any form of plasticizers are perfect investments for stamp collectors because even if they would come at a higher price than other ordinary albums or storage books, these would help ensure the safety and protection of the stamp.

When buying, selling, or trading stamps, be guided by stamp catalogues like Stanley Gibbons. These stamp catalogues, found in most libraries, contain information about various stamp issues, alongside a good estimate of the worth of a stamp. Usually, dealers sell well below catalogue price, so it is important to be knowledgeable of this estimate.

Philatelic clubs and associations, for a minimal membership contribution, provide for services that greatly reduce collecting costs and prices. They afford the services of expert philatelists to its members, and provide access to stamp shows for its members to meet other enthusiasts and get good bargains on their collectibles.

At the end of the day, the price to be paid in stamp collecting may be small compared to the fulfillment it would bring. However, it won't hurt knowing how to cut back costs to better enjoy the experience!

### **What's the Buzz on Stamp Collecting?**

In most states and counties, it is common to find a variety of groups catering to the hobby of collecting stamps. People engage in stamp collecting as a general interest; other times they are

in it because of the possibility of profit in collecting rare stamps. This profit comes from the fact that stamps hold a degree of history of a community, or even an entire country.

While some people collect stamps without regard for its quality or details, the more dedicated stamp collectors who understand this profitability pay attention to a variety of details that would determine the worth of the stamp.

## **Condition**

The first and most simple rule of thumb is if the stamp is damaged, it's likely to be worth very little, or worth nothing at all. The condition of the stamp plays a huge factor especially with dedicated collectors.

A used stamp in excellent condition is one with its complete set of perforated edges and is not torn, has the design centered in the stamp, still retains a degree of vibrancy of color as when it was issued, has a very light cancellation stamp (as with used stamps), and the gum or adhesive of the stamp as close to intactness as possible, and is not creased or folded in any way.

A stamp without its complete set of perforated edges has lesser value than its counterpart with less physical damage.

Meanwhile, a stamp with equal spaces placed between the perforation and the stamp's design is considered "centered"; its value marginally decreases when it is poorly centered, and greatly decreases when the perforation runs through the design.

The vibrancy of the colors of the design, on the other hand, is affected by the soaking or lifting method used on the stamp to remove it from its original envelope attachment, or by exposure to sunlight. Obviously, the more vibrant the colors are, the greater the value of the stamp.

The cancellation of a used stamp plays a vital role because if the stamp is too heavily cancelled, there is a huge possibility that the visibility and clarity of the design is compromised.

Lastly, a stamp with the gum or adhesive as close to being intact has greater value. Hinges, or the marks left by heavy licking and attachment to paper, greatly affect the value of the stamp. A lightly hinged stamp would be of higher value than one that is heavily hinged.

Unless one is an expert in stamp lifting or soaking, many stamp collectors opt to keep their stamps attached to a small portion of the envelope they were originally attached to. The first reason for keeping the stamp attached is the fear of tearing or damaging the physical wholeness or condition of the stamp, which may happen when removing the stamp with insufficient or no soaking at all.

Another possibility is that of the ink of the stamp running. This happens usually with stamps issued before the 1940s. During this period, fugitive ink, which runs in water, was used to print the designs on the stamps. Some of the ink used in canceling stamps may also run in water onto the design and completely ruin the stamp completely; therefore with the difficulty of identifying the ink used in stamp cancellations, stamp collectors either resort to stamp lifting or

simply keeping the stamp in its original form. Soaking stamps may also cause the design to fade and lose its vibrancy.

## **Uniqueness**

The second consideration that must be put to mind is the uniqueness of the stamp. The profitability of the stamp comes from the fact that many collectors seek out particular designs.

A unique stamp may be three things: a stamp from a much earlier period, and thus holds a great historical value, a stamp that was released in limited numbers over a short period of time, and a stamp that features a particular historical or social event of note to collectors and the general public. The fewer of the stamp available for acquisition in the free philatelic market, the likelier the stamp enthusiasts will bid higher for it.

In relation to this second consideration is the DEMAND for the stamp. This is usually indicative of the market value that a stamp can go for, and is usually revealed in stamp catalogues. Stamp catalogues, which are accessible from most libraries, will not only reveal the possible selling price of the stamp (although most sellers mark their stamps at a lower price), but also how many of the stamp was issued, where it was issued, and how it may be classified.

Some popular stamp catalogues available in libraries include the Scott, Stanley Gibbons, Michel, OCB, Hibernian, and Sakura catalogues. The price quoted in the catalogue will clearly imply how much collectors are willing to pay to get that stamp.

At the end of the day, a professional stamp dealer may help in the valuation of the stamp. The valuation of the stamp may be subject to the experience of the professional dealer and his or her knowledge of its demand; however, he or she will still return to the basic three listed above. This is because among all else, these are universal standards by which a stamp's worth is measured.

## **Beginner's Guide To Stamp Collecting And Stamp Values**

Through stamp collecting, one discovers educational information about sports, science, history, arts, currency, animals, rituals and customs of different countries and their people.

The hobby of collecting stamps, also recognized as philately, is among the world's most interesting and popular hobbies. Collectors find them attractive and fascinating at the same time educational.

Some collect traditional stamps or "by the country" and others collect topical stamps which are stamps by design and some collect copies of only one kind of stamp (specialist), and there are some who collect stamps from all parts of the world or all types of stamps that they can find (worldwide).

It all really depends on one's interests. For example, when one is fascinated with boats, one can collect stamps of boats and ships. Or any theme that interests you.

There are a lot of stamp collectors that specializes in collecting presently existing "commemorative" as their past time. Commemoratives are special stamps, which are released for a restricted time by the "post office." They generally commemorate or celebrate special events or people, such as artists, wild life, antiques, and many others.

A beginner philatelist or collector can start collecting stamps that arrive on the mail. To take off a stamp the envelope, cautiously rip the envelope away surrounding the stamp, careful that the stamp is well preserved. Then soak it in warm water and the piece of the envelope that is attached to it will just turn loose and allow you to carefully lift out the stamp with the use of tongs. On a piece of absorbent paper, set the stamp and set down a thick book over it when dry so that to flatten it.

As a hobby, collecting stamps requires neatness and precision. Place the flattened and dried stamp in your album with hinges, or store it inside small "glassine envelopes" designed for stamp collecting.

### **Stamp values:**

Stamps do not become automatically more valuable or expensive as they age. Valuable stamps are types of stamps that have been always holding a high value; in time, these can possibly increase their value, however ordinary stamps, common ones and of no or low value will stay in that low value regardless of time.

Collections of valuable stamps--one's having high value--will be the ones which are considered precious or expensive today. Simply put, if the original stamp collector was purchasing stamps that were valuable and expensive before then up to now, the stamps will hold a great value.

You can usually tell what kinds of stamps are displayed in the collection by just simply looking quickly at the collection's presentation. When presented in a careful and meticulous manner, then there is the possibility that some stamps in the collection are valuable.

So if one has some commercially ordinary stamp albums with several gaps omitted on its pages, you do not have a "valuable collection"; whereas, if your albums have crafted pages with many complete sets as well as duplicates with "minor variations," etc then most probably, you have a good collection of valuable stamps among them.

Perhaps you have inherited a collection of stamps that you have no interest with and just want to sell them, sad to say, you will get just a very small amount for it, and certainly much less than how much you think it would cost.

Almost all stamps of most countries, especially Russian stamps, are of very little value whether used or new.

Certainly, you can purchase unused, extremely old mint, "US postage stamps" for not more than their "face value." Used stamps usually are worth much less than new stamps, though old stamps with clear mints can at times add to the used stamp's value.

If a collection of stamps are all sold at one time, the value may sometimes depend on how the collection are displayed and stored.

If the collection are displayed and kept in such a manner that every stamp is assigned with a catalogue number, then, this becomes easy for somebody who is buying the collection to view it and know what they want to add in their collection. When the stamps are loose, then they are of very, very little value.

In stamp collecting, the most basic rule is to just enjoy what one is collecting, to get satisfaction and pleasure from it. Value is not necessarily a factor here. So go ahead and collect whatever stamps that interest you and display your collection in whatever manner you like.

### **The Truth Behind Stamp Collecting and Value**

As the old adage goes, you will never see or realize the value of something unless it is gone.

In stamp collecting, stamps do not have to disappear or go kaput before somebody knows or understands their value. In fact, people had long been knowledgeable about the value of stamps that is why stamp collecting was born in the first place.

Simply put, if not for the value, stamps would have remained the usual miniature section in the envelope that bears no significant value except for the charges that a person has to pay before their letters will be sent.

However, history has it that the value of stamps had been inclusive since the postage stamps were born in May 6, 1840.

From that time on, stamp collecting had gradually transformed into a more profitable hobby as more and more people find the value of the stamps increasing as the years pass by. Most of these valuable stamps are rare and hard to find, hence, most stamp collectors consider them as authentic collector's items. Hence, they are more than willing to buy the item even if it will cost them lots of money.

Since then, stamps had undergone many enhancements. From the original stamp that was first created in 1840 up to the latest design of stamps, stamp collecting continues to put up with the demands of the society, as they remain valuable in history and in the society.

For this reason, most experts contend that stamp collecting is not just a simple example of a hobby. For most, it is one good way of diversion or relaxation. For others, stamp collecting is a highly profitable venture that they even converted this hobby into an extremely profitable business.

In this context, stamp collecting is seen as a tool for financial advancement. Because of the value that the stamps hold, many people are finding their way into earning more money simply by trading some rare stamps or those that have higher value than what others think of.

With the value that goes with it, stamps are deemed as valuable as the coins. In fact, additional features on the stamp surface add more value to the item. Such additions were perforations and artistic designs.

Since July 1, 1845, the value of stamps have increased from 5 cents with over 300 miles travel distance and the letter's weight amounting to  $\Omega$  ounce, to 34 cents, the 2001 value of stamps based on the 1st ounce. As it values increases, so thus its economic value.

As a matter of fact, many economists claim that stamp collecting puts more value to the country's economy more than any kind of hobby available in the society.

Here is a list of some of the reasons why stamp collecting is deemed valuable in the community:

### **1. Good investments**

Stamp collecting is considered by most businesspeople as something that triggers good investment opportunities. This is especially true when people are into rare stamp collecting. Rare stamps are more valuable than the ordinary stamps. The reason behind this is that the more the scarce a particular stamp is, the greater the demand for that stamp.

Consequently, if the demands are higher, contrary to the law of supply and demand in economics, the value of the stamps increases. This does not necessarily mean that the older the stamp is, the higher the value. This is a common misconception among stamp collectors.

The main idea here is that by the time old stamps are no longer seen or are hard to find these days, their level of scarcity increases. But what most collectors do not know is that the value of the rare stamp will still depend on the amount that is associated with it back in history.

For instance, a "used copy" of a \$5 stamp can almost cost a stamp collector \$2,000, and because the production of these stamps back then was only limited, the level of scarcity is increased and will continue to increase as the demands for this particular stamp continues to grow.

### **2. Good sources of revenues**

Stamp collecting is considered as a good basis for revenues especially on countries that have inadequate or restricted production of stamps. This is because since stamp collecting is very popular, most stamp collectors would try to find their way to more valuable stamps in just about anywhere.

Hence, small countries are able to generate more profit by simply creating more stamps that are not necessarily used for postage stamps. Most of these stamps are solely made for stamp collecting.

Indeed, stamp collecting is a highly organized activity that generates benefits and profits not only for the collectors but for the whole community as well.

## **How Collectors Price Their Stamps**

Stamp collecting is not exactly a new trend sweeping through the world; In fact, philately (or the study of stamps), and stamp collecting have been of interest to many enthusiasts for over centuries. In fact, the American Philatelic Society (APS), which is the biggest congregation of philatelists and stamp enthusiasts in the world with over 40, 000 members, was established in the year 1886.

However, the standards by which the marketability and collectable worth of stamps have more or less remained constant. Stamps, generally, are determined as worthy of being collected on the basis of the quality of the stamp and rarity.

Under the qualification of quality is firstly the physical wholeness of the stamp. In effect, it must not be creased, folded, and must still have complete perforated sides. In addition, considerations on its centeredness have the capacity to jack the prices up or drive them down. Centeredness means that the design is placed in equal distances from the perforated edges on all sides. An alternate definition for centeredness is that the perforated area under the design is much larger in measure than the one at the top.

Color also plays a huge factor in the quality of the stamp. Consistent exposure to the sun and wrong storage methods can cause the color of the design to fade. Moreover, many amateur stamp collectors make the mistake of soaking stamps to remove them from the paper without taking into consideration the ink used to print the stamp and the ink of the cancellation on a used stamp.

Stamps issued before the 1940s were printed using fugitive ink, which runs in water. Other times, a used stamp will have a cancellation that runs on water. Soaking the stamp will cause the cancellation's ink to run into the design, completely compromising the quality of the stamp.

Aside from that, the condition of the gum or adhesive film at the back of the stamp is also taken into consideration. A stamp with its gum more or less still intact is much better than one that has been severely damaged by licking and sticking.

As for rarity, this is rather obvious. How rare it is would more or less imply the degree of difficulty posed upon a collector to acquire the stamp.

A mint or unused stamp has equal chances of being as expensive as a used stamp, and this is best determined by the availability of the stamp. A stamp with lesser propensity of being used on letters would be more expensive if it were acquired as a used stamp; a stamp, on the other hand, that was used in letters in huge volumes would obviously be much more expensive in its mint condition.

The exception to this general rule of thumb is stamps that were already acquired at a steep price. These stamps, acquired expensive even when they are used, will likely to have prices hiked if the great demand to acquire it continues to increase.

However, there may be great difficulty in trying to assess objectively the possible market value or worth of a stamp. Expert philatelists who are connoisseurs in stamp valuations are most likely able to objectively assess the worth of the stamp.

These expert philatelists are not very hard to find. They are usually some of the stamp enthusiasts who've had much experience in trading, selling, and collecting stamps. Their services are made most accessible to members of philatelic clubs of which they are part. Some associations that afford their members the services of expert philatelists include the American Philatelic Society (APS), and its member organizations in various states and cities.

On the other hand, other options are of greater accessibility especially to amateur stamp collectors. Across the country, most libraries have more or less an extensive collection of stamp catalogues that help guide stamp enthusiasts in finding out the various stamps issued under a particular theme or subject classification. Moreover, stamp catalogues contain a wealth of information as regards a certain price level for which these stamps are sold in the market.

Usually, stamp prices are a little bit higher than how they would be sold by individual sellers. Nonetheless, these catalogues are useful guides when it comes to at least being aware of what price range the stamp would fall under.

The most commonplace stamp catalogues available in the libraries include the US-based Stanley Gibbons, Britain's Michel, and Germany's OCB.

## **The Ultimate Price Guide in Stamp Collecting**

Stamp collecting is the act of gathering the stamps. Stamps are basically the labels placed on the letters as charge for the postal delivery. They are issued by the country or by the post office.

It is considered as the one of the most popular hobbies in the world. This is an undisputed facts. Millions of stamp collectors share the enthusiasm and desire. In the United States alone, there are at least 20 million Americans who pursue the hobby.

Philately is another endeavor related to stamp collecting, although not to be confused. The goal of stamp collecting is to simply collect. Philately on the other hand is the study of postage stamps and other matters related. This does not necessarily includes the act of collecting stamps nor does stamp collecting necessarily includes the study of it.

## **Stamps**

The first stamp was issued in United Kingdom. The idea was put forth by an English civil servant Rowland Hill as a postal reform. This suggested for a uniform prepaid rate in the postage of letters. This is to make the system more efficient and less expensive.

It was 1840 when the first one-penny stamp was issued in the UK. It was called the Penny Black and it displayed a monarchy, Queen Victoria. After the issuance of the first stamp, the country witness a large increase in the amount of mails sent.

The quest to collect stamps came next, just some time after the first postage stamp was issued. It was claimed by some that the act of collecting increased when the first lists were issued in 1861. Major collectors then began to consciously pour their efforts into acquiring more for their collection.

The good thing about collecting stamps is that apart from their aesthetic appeal, they give a lot when it comes to history. They are in some way records too of the many aspects, like geography, politics, art or religion, of a certain civilization.

### **Ways of Collecting Stamps**

It is fairly easy to collect stamps. Simply collect all the stamps used in the mails sent to you, especially those coming from other countries and you get your first collection with no expense at all.

Once you have started, you will have a glance of different stamps, their various sizes, illustrations, countries of origin and colors. From this point on, some would choose to narrow down their choices in collecting. Some would go for stamps of a particular country. Some would collect only stamps of a particular decade. Others would be more interested with the hard to find ones.

If there is enough number of stamp collectors in your network, you can easily make trades for the ones you have. You can exchange whatever you have in doubles. You can also ask from other people who are not into collecting. They can simply give to you the stamps used in the mails they received.

The usual way by which serious and advanced stamp collectors acquire the additions to their set is to purchase stamps. Stamps can be bought in stamp shops, auctions and even from other people or collectors.

### **Purchasing Stamps**

Definitive stamps are the common type received in the mail. They are generally printed daily. They can be easily bought from the postage service. There is no need for price guide for these stamps. They are indicated by the face value.

The special type is called the commemorative stamp. It is issued only for a limited time. Commemorative stamps are issued to celebrate an event or anniversary or honor a person or historical figure.

They can be acquired from stamp dealers. Stamp dealers are point persons you can ask questions about the stamps, including the price of certain stamps and even the valuation of your collection. The prices however will vary when it comes to commemorative stamps and some can be really expensive, especially the hard-to-find ones.

## **Stamp Price Guide**

Any serious stamp collector would know that the stamp catalogue is the ultimate guide when it comes to postage stamps details and especially the price. Comprehensive stamp catalogues could provide the prices of old stamps to the ones recently released.

The stamp shop is the traditional refuge when searching for the stamp catalogues. It can even have its own price list or price guide for the local stamps or for any special stamps the shop may choose to showcase.

There are also further options now, especially with the help of technology. The Internet is a good resource to know the prices of stamps. Stamp catalogues can be purchased online already, some even for free. Web sites dedicated to stamp collecting offer also features like viewing the stamps and indicating their prices. Some can even go as far as classify the stamps.

With the encouraging environment given now by technology and by other stamp collectors to the market, it is not difficult anymore to start the hobby of stamp collecting. Price guides for one educate enough a beginner to know what to expect when buying stamps for the collection. Despite the changes brought about by technology in communications, definitely stamp collecting is still here, to stay.

## **The Encyclopedia of US Stamps**

The art and craft of stamp collecting is widely shared by millions of stamp collectors all over the world. This fact is very much recognized. The popularity and worth of the stamp collecting as a past time cannot be disputed anymore.

When it comes to stamp collecting, the United States ranks among the first. In US alone, the population of dedicated stamp collectors number to at least 20 million. This love for the hobby is passed on to the other members of the household. No wonder that despite the onset of the Internet and email technology, collecting stamps lives on and continues to spread. Actually, the Internet even paved the way for stamp collectors to meet together and propagate their enthusiasm.

## **The US Postage Stamps**

Given that millions of stamp collectors reside in the United States, it is inevitable that a huge chunk of that millions will also desire to collect US postage stamps.

## **The United States Postage Stamps**

The US postage stamps share and showcase as much history as the nation itself. As such, the stamp collectors are offered a huge selection of models and designs to choose from. It is one fact that makes stamp collecting a more interesting and challenging hobby.

The first postage may not be issued in the United States. Still, the US postage experienced many points too. It was in the 1920s when stamp collecting became so widespread. At the same year, the stamps issued in United States that time had been given considerable value.

This led most Americans in the 1930s to hoard mint US stamps. They hoped to sell this later on for a higher price. This never happened. Up to present, stamps issued in the 1930s are still of the ordinary value. They are even used by some in mailing letters. Since then, most of the stamps issued are generally of ordinary value.

Yet, every now and then, high face value stamps would come out. This made the stamps more interesting and definitely worth more money. Some of the sought after stamps are the souvenir sheets, those with errors in printing and those with hard to find plates.

Today, there are still many to look forward to. Plate blocks of US postage stamps are still bestsellers. They even are what most collectors really aim for, especially the traditional ones. Another hard-to-find type of US stamps are those that come in pairs and groups.

There are older United States postage stamps that can be acquired for very affordable values. Cancelled ones are also available. Definitely, those blocks of stamps that were barely cancelled are valuable still to the collection.

### **The Encyclopedia of United States Stamps and Stamp Collecting**

This encyclopedia is not only good but a comprehensive almanac of the United States postage stamps and stamp collecting. It leads the reader to the a full scope of everything related to the US stamps.

The Encyclopedia of United States Stamps and Stamp Collecting begins with the "stampless covers" or those mails sent before the stamps came about. It then progresses to introduce the various stamps, starting from the first one issue, the 1845 Postmasters' Provisional down to the stamps of the 21st century.

It gives details too of the history of the Postal Service as well the different stamp printers. There is even a section allotted for the Bureau of Engraving and Printing. The almanac also showcases the stamps issued for special delivery, revenue purposes and postal stationery. Even more interesting is the feature on the technological innovations in producing the stamps, the history of the movement of the mails and the markings, meters and machine postages.

This is presented and made possible by a non-profit organization, the United States Stamp Society. The organization is dedicated to the study of everything related to US postage stamps, being the successor of Philatelic Plate Number Association.

The United States Stamps and Stamp Collecting encyclopedia is definitely worth your money and time. It consists of 62 chapters usually set according to the historical era. The hard-bound book has 730 pages in it complete with colorful illustrations and materials.

It is a worthy for the serious stamp collectors and very helpful for the beginners. More than being a good book on stamps, it is actually another view of the American history, its politics, values, technology and culture.

The Encyclopedia will be available starting June. Better secure an order now, to be the first to get hold of it. It can now be ordered online. Do not hesitate. Grab hold of this worthy resource.

### **3 Things to Do When Stamp Coin Collecting Becomes Profitable**

Ever since the world began, humans were born to get busy. This is the main reason why most of the people are engaged into different activities life sports and different hobbies especially if they have nothing to do.

One of the greatest and most preferred types of hobby is collecting. It is one form of hobby that entails the acquisition of certain items, particularly those that have value especially as it gets older.

Take for example stamp and coin collecting. Most of the people who are engaged into this kind of collection sees and knows the value that is entailed within the coins and the stamps. The collectors know that as they collect their stuffs, the value gets higher especially for those rare items.

However, the focus of the collection is not basically centered on the value itself. Most of the stamp and coin collecting activity has its focal point based on the interest of the collector. This goes to show that the vastness of the scope and the gravity of the purpose of stamp and coin collecting may vary from one person to another.

By the time the passion for such collections grows deeper, some stamp and coin collectors were known to have their stuffs enter a trade with the other collectors. That is the time when they see the real value of this kind of hobby.

As soon as they start collecting money, they finally realize the extent of income-generating potential of their collections, and so, they convert their stamp and coin collecting hobby into a more profitable endeavor. Therefore, what was once a mere hobby becomes a business in the end.

However, engaging into such kind of activity can be very risky for any one who is into stamp and coin collecting. With so much fraudulent activities happening in the society these days, getting into a stamp and coin collecting trade can put the collector in a very unsafe situation.

Nevertheless, once they get the hang of it and as soon as they were able to know the important things to consider when opting for a more profitable aspect of stamp and coin collecting, profits will surely start coming in.

In order to ensure safety in every transaction, here is a list of some tips that every stamp and coin collector should know before engaging into a trade:

### **1. Make sure that the trader is trustworthy**

That is the best assurance that you can get. With all those unscrupulous people lurking around, looking for some victims, you just have to learn to find someone who is trustworthy enough for your trade.

The best way to do that is to identify if the stamps or coins presented for trade are authentic. This kind of skill can be very tricky for the beginners, but once you get the hang of it, evaluating and identifying valuable, real coins and stamps would be very easy.

Just keep in mind that it would be safer and definitely better to buy or trade your items from somebody who had been in the business for quite some time now.

### **2. Verify the state of the coins and the stamps**

In trading, it would really do you good if you will be able to identify and confirm the condition of the stamps and the coins that you are about to buy or trade.

Take note of dented coins or the absence perforations. This will definitely degrade the value of the item. Hence, it is definitely a useless trade. But if you still want to have them just because you know that they will still be an added feature in your collection, be sure that you will be getting them for a lower fee.

### **3. Learn to spot a good item from the bad one**

Identifying a stamp or a coin during trade can be very difficult especially if you do not know anything about the proper classification of stamps and coins.

Knowing these kinds of classifications can really affect the market value of the items. Hence, if you are into stamp and coin collecting, and have not been engaged in any kind of trade or has not yet been able to classify your stuffs, try to do it now. There is no better time for learning how to classify stamps and coins than today.

Boiled down, stamp and coin collecting can be a very profitable hobby once you know its Ins and Outs. But until then, get more facts and study more. Once you have the confidence and the knowledge to join such transactions, go ahead and earn yourself some dollars.

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