

# Stamp Collecting

## Merit Badge Workbook

Merit badges are earned by doing: reading the pamphlet, practicing the skills, and showing your counselor what you have learned.
This workbook gives you a place to organize your notes and track your progress along the way.
**Merit badge counselors may not require the use of this or any similar workbook.**
You still must satisfy your counselor that you can demonstrate each skill and have learned the information.
Use the space under each requirement to note what you have done and what you want to talk about, not to write out full answers.
When a requirement says discuss, show, tell, explain, or demonstrate, that is what you must do.
No one may add to or subtract from the official requirements found on scouting.org (Guide to Advancement 7.0.4.8).

Scouting America last updated this badge's requirements page on September 19, 2025.
*Requirements change from time to time. Double-check scouting.org before you start.*

Scout's name: _____ Unit: _____ Date started: _____

Counselor's name: _____ Phone no.: _____ Email: _____

*Links marked "Scouting America resources" are the ones Scouting America shares on its official badge page.*
*This workbook is unofficial and not endorsed by Scouting America.*

---

**1.** Do the following:

**Scouting America resources:** Stamp Collecting (video)

**(a)** Discuss how you can better understand people, places, institutions, history, and geography as a result of collecting stamps.

**Scouting America resources:** Stamp Collecting Is for Old People (Just Kidding) (video) · Stamps: A World of Fun (video)

**What collecting stamps helps me understand**

| Topic | How stamps help me understand it (my examples) |
|---|---|
| People | |
| Places | |
| Institutions | |
| History | |
| Geography | |

**(b)** Briefly describe some aspects of the history, growth, and development of the United States postal system. Tell how it is different from postal systems in other countries.

**Scouting America resources:** A Chaotic History of the US Postal Service | Illustrated U.S. History (video)
History of US Mail - From the Beginning (video)

**History, growth, and development of the U.S. postal system**

**How it is different from postal systems in other countries**

Requirement 1 completed on _____ counselor initials _____

**2.** Define topical stamp collecting. Name and describe three other types of stamp collections.

**Scouting America resources:** What To Collect? (website) · Topical Stamp Collecting (video)

**What topical stamp collecting means**

**Three other types of stamp collections**

| Type of collection | What it is |
|---|---|
| | |
| | |
| | |

Requirement 2 completed on _____ counselor initials _____

**3.** Show at least ONE example of each of the following:

**Scouting America resources:** Beginner's Guide to Stamp Collecting - Key Terms (video)

**(a)** Perforated and imperforate stamps

**Scouting America resources:** American Perforate and Imperforate Stamps (video) · A Quick History of US Imperforate Stamps (video)

Perforated example _____ Imperforate example _____

**(b)** Mint and used stamps

**Scouting America resources:** The Characteristics of Used Stamps Can Affect How You Collect (website)

Mint example _____ Used example _____

**(c)** Sheet, booklet, and coil stamps

**Scouting America resources:** America's First Airmail Coil Stamp (video)

Sheet _____ Booklet _____ Coil _____

**(d)** Numbers on plate block, booklet, coil, or marginal markings

**Scouting America resources:** First US Commemorative Stamp Booklet (video)

My example and which kind of marking it shows _____

**(e)** Overprint and surcharge

**Scouting America resources:** Precancels, Overprints, and Occupations (video) · Overprints on Stamps (video)

Overprint example _____ Surcharge example _____

**(f)** Metered mail

**Scouting America resources:** What is Metered Mail? (video) · Postage Meter Stamp Basics (website)

My metered mail example _____

**(g)** Definitive, commemorative, semipostal, and airmail stamps

**Scouting America resources:** A Crash Course on U.S. Stamp Categories (video) · A Quick History of US Definitive Stamps (video) A Quick History of US Commemorative Stamp (video) · A Quick History of US Airmail Stamps (video)

Definitive _____ Commemorative _____

Semipostal _____ Airmail _____

**(h)** Cancellation and postmark

**Scouting America resources:** Postmarks and Cancels (video)

Cancellation example _____ Postmark example _____

**(i)** First day cover

**Scouting America resources:** Collecting Stamps On Cover (video)

My first day cover

**(j)** Postal stationery (aerogramme, stamped envelope, and postal card)

**Scouting America resources:** 4 Helpful Stamp Collecting Tips for Beginners (video)

Aerogramme | Stamped envelope | Postal card

Requirement 3 completed on | counselor initials

**4.** Do the following:

**(a)** Demonstrate the use of ONE standard catalog for several different stamp issues. Explain why catalog value can vary from the corresponding purchase price.

**Scouting America resources:** What is Grading In Stamp Collecting? (video)
Stamp Collecting Basics - The Scott Catalogue: More Than Just Stamp Values (Pt 1) (video)
Stamp Collecting Basics - The Scott Catalogue: Reading Stamp Listings (Pt 2) (video) · Scott Stamp catalog (website)

Catalog I used | Edition or year

**Stamp issues I looked up**

| Stamp issue | Catalog number | Catalog value | Purchase price, if known |
|---|---|---|---|
| | | | |
| | | | |
| | | | |
| | | | |

**Why catalog value can vary from the purchase price**

**(b)** Explain the meaning of the term condition as used to describe a stamp. Show examples that illustrate the different factors that affect a stamp's value.

**Scouting America resources:** Stamp Collecting Basics - The Scott Catalogue (video)

**What condition means for a stamp**

**Factors that affect a stamp's value**

| Factor | The example I showed |
|---|---|
| | |
| | |
| | |
| | |
| | |

Requirement 4 completed on | counselor initials

**5.** Demonstrate the use of at least THREE of the following stamp collector's tools:

☐ **(a)** Stamp tongs

**Scouting America resources:** Stamp Collecting Tools Ep3 - Top 3 Everyday Use Tools for the Philatelist (video)
Stamp Collecting Tools - Talking Tongs - Best Practices & Features of Tongs for Philatelic Use (video)

Date demonstrated _____ What I used it for _____

☐ **(b)** Water and tray

**Scouting America resources:** How to Soak Postage Stamps off Paper (video)

Date demonstrated _____ What I used it for _____

☐ **(c)** Magnifiers

**Scouting America resources:** Stamp Collecting Tools Ep3 - Top 3 Everyday Use Tools for the Philatelist (video)

Date demonstrated _____ What I used it for _____

☐ **(d)** Hinges and stamp mounts

**Scouting America resources:** How to Trim Self-Adhesive Stamps for Mounts (video)

Date demonstrated _____ What I used it for _____

☐ **(e)** Perforation gauge

**Scouting America resources:** How to Use a Perforation Gauge (video)

Date demonstrated _____ What I used it for _____

☐ **(f)** Glassine envelopes and cover sleeves

**Scouting America resources:** Even Stamp Collectors Need the Right Tools (video)

Date demonstrated _____ What I used it for _____

☐ **(g)** Watermark fluid

**Scouting America resources:** How to Find Watermarks on Stamps (video)

Date demonstrated _____ What I used it for _____

Requirement 5 completed on _____ counselor initials _____

**6.** Do the following:

**Scouting America resources:** How Do You Mount Your Stamps in an Album (video)

**(a)** Show a stamp album and how to mount stamps with or without hinges. Show at least ONE page that displays several stamps.

**Scouting America resources:** How to Trim Self-Adhesive Stamps for Mounts (video)

Album I showed _____ Hinges, mounts, or both _____

☐ Showed a stamp album
☐ Showed how to mount stamps
☐ Showed at least one page with several stamps

**(b)** Discuss at least THREE ways you can help to preserve stamps, covers, and albums in first-class condition.

**Scouting America resources:** 3 Attractive Ways to Store and Display Your Stamp Collection (video)

**Ways to preserve stamps, covers, and albums**

| Way to preserve them | Why it helps |
|---|---|
| | |
| | |
| | |

Requirement 6 completed on _____ counselor initials _____

**7.** Do TWO of the following:

☐ **(a)** Design a stamp, cancellation, or cachet.

**Scouting America resources:** Creativity in Cachets (video) · Pictorial Postmarks (video) · What Makes a Good Stamp Design (video) Designing Your Own Stamp, Cancellation or Cachet (PDF)

What I designed (stamp, cancellation, or cachet)

**My design (draw here or attach)**

☐ **(b)** Visit a post office, stamp club, or stamp show with an experienced collector. Explain what you saw and learned.

**Scouting America resources:** Visiting a Stamp Show (video) · The Great American Stamp Show 2024 Wrap Up! (video) The Great American Stamp Show 2025 (video)

Place I visited | Date | Experienced collector

**What I saw and learned**

☐ **(c)** Write a review of an interesting article from a stamp newspaper, magazine, book, or website (with your parent or guardian's permission).

**Scouting America resources:** Linn's Stamp News (website)

Article | Where I found it

**My review**

☐ **(d)** Research and report on a famous stamp-related personality or the history behind a particular stamp.

**Scouting America resources:** History through Cachets (video)

Personality or stamp I researched

**Notes for my report**

☐ **(e)** Describe the steps taken to produce a stamp. Include the methods of printing, types of paper, perforation styles, and how they are gummed.

**Scouting America resources:** Stamp Production (video)

**How a stamp is produced**

| Part | My notes |
|---|---|
| Steps to produce a stamp | |
| Methods of printing | |
| Types of paper | |
| Perforation styles | |
| How they are gummed | |

☐ **(f)** Prepare a two- to three-page display involving stamps. Using ingenuity, as well as clippings, drawings, etc., tell a story about the stamps and how they relate to history, geography, or a favorite topic of yours.

**Scouting America resources:** Have Lasting Fun: How to Create an Exhibit and Enter It Into a Show (website)

The story my display tells _____ Number of pages _____

**My plan for the display**

Requirement 7 completed on _____ counselor initials _____

**8.** Mount and show, in a purchased or homemade album, ONE of the following:

**Scouting America resources:** How to Make Your Own Stamp Album Pages! (video)

☐ **(a)** A collection of 250 or more different stamps from at least 15 countries

Number of stamps _____ Number of countries _____ Album used _____

☐ **(b)** A collection of a stamp from each of 50 different countries, mounted on maps to show the location of each

Number of countries _____ Album used _____

☐ **(c)** A collection of 100 or more different stamps from either one country or a group of closely related countries

Country or group of countries _____ Number of stamps _____

☐ **(d)** A collection of 75 or more different stamps on a single topic. (Some interesting topics include Scouting, birds, insects, the Olympics, sports, flowers, animals, ships, holidays, trains, famous people, space, and medicine.) Stamps may be from different countries.

My topic _____ Number of stamps _____

☐ **(e)** A collection of postal items discovered in your mail by monitoring it over a period of 30 days. Include at least five different types listed in requirement 3.

Start date _____ End date _____

**My 30-day mail log**

| Date | Postal item I found | Type from requirement 3 |
|---|---|---|
| | | |
| | | |
| | | |
| | | |
| | | |
| | | |
| | | |
| | | |
| | | |
| | | |

Requirement 8 completed on _____ counselor initials _____

## Counselor sign-off

Your counselor signs your blue card or approves the badge in Scoutbook, and your unit records it. This line is for your own records.

Counselor's signature _____ Date completed _____

## Official Scouting America resources

**Scouting America resources:** Stamp Collecting merit badge page (requirements and resources)
Stamp Collecting merit badge pamphlet (free PDF) · All merit badges

Made by Cole at ScoutSmarts.com, an Eagle Scout who loves helping Scouts.
Spot an error or a requirement change? Tell me at scoutsmarts.com/contact.
Requirement text © Scouting America. Workbook layout © 2026 ScoutSmarts.com, free to copy for Scouting use.