

# Boy Scout Stamp Collecting Merit Badge Workshop



By  
Aimee Devine

Based on Material  
from Brian Jones  
And  
Carol Edholm

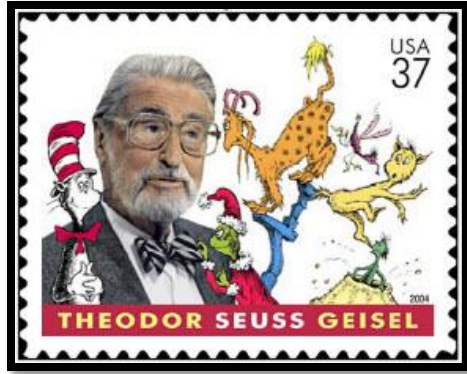


# 1a. Discover the World Through Stamps

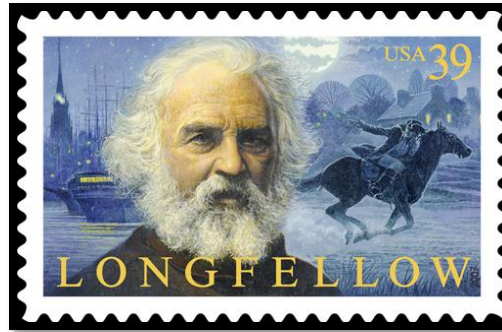




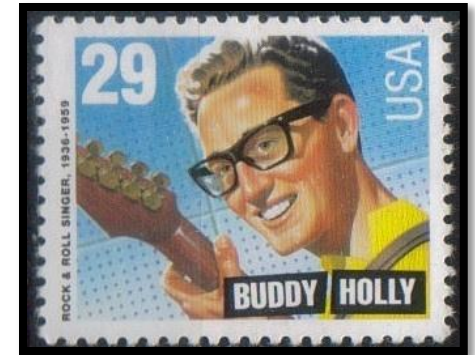
# People



**Authors**



**Poets**



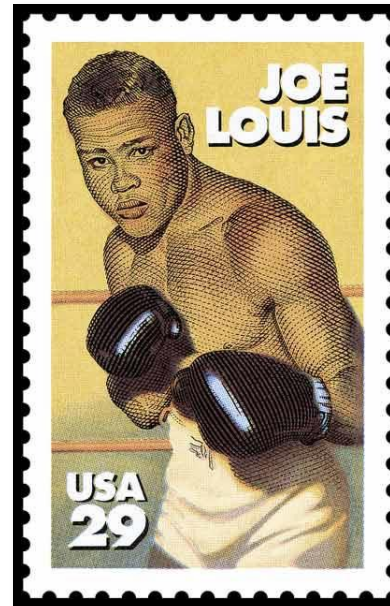
**Entertainers**



**World  
Leaders**



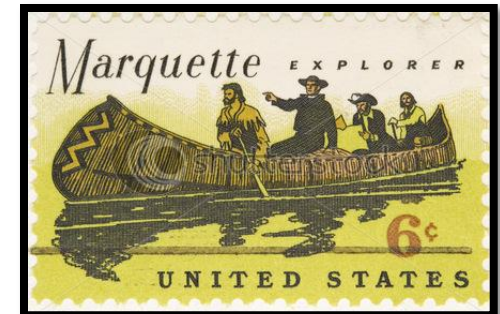
**Scientists**



**Athletes**



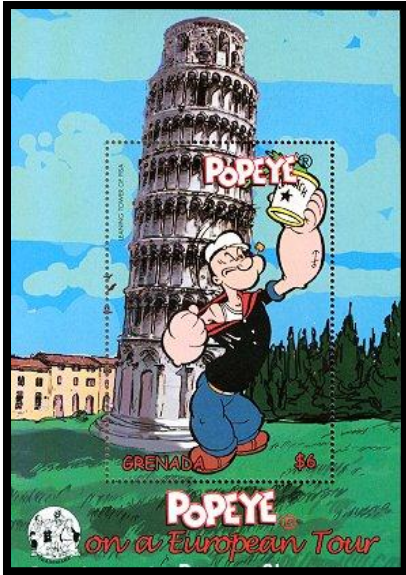
**Composers**



**Explorers**



# Places



Foreign  
countries



Underwater



Churches



Monuments



Mountains



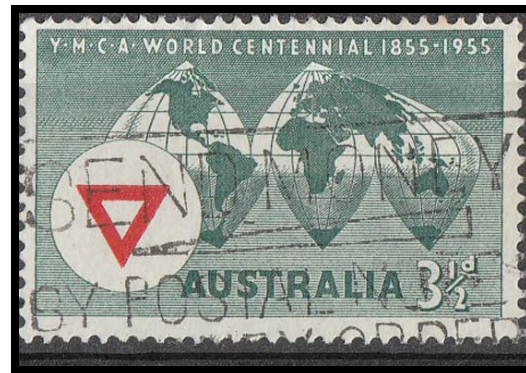
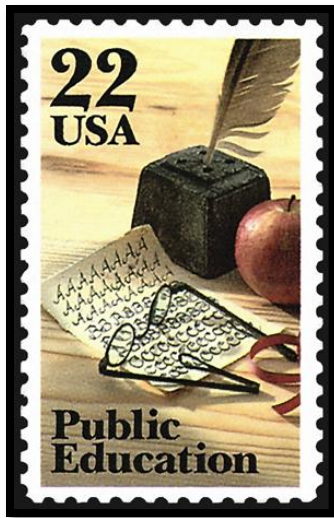
Forests



Beaches

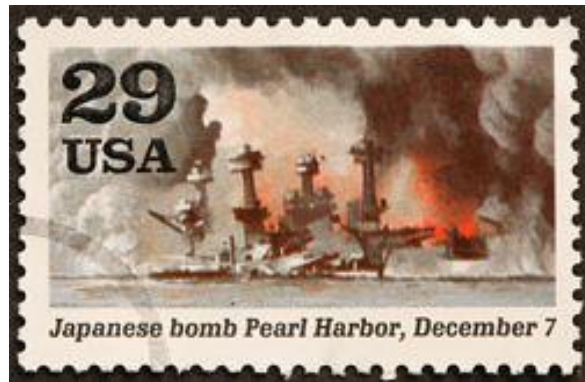


# Institutions



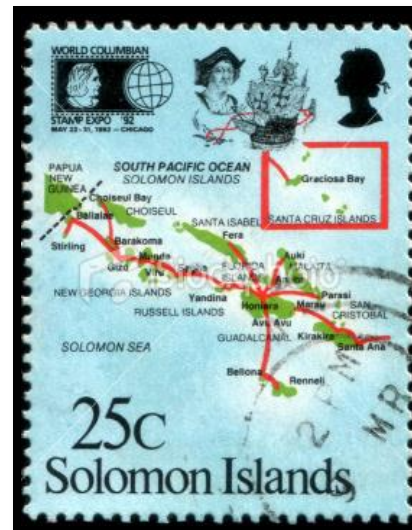


# History





# Geography

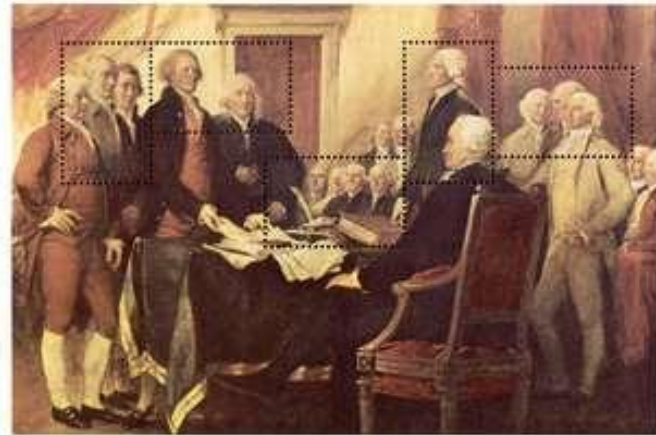




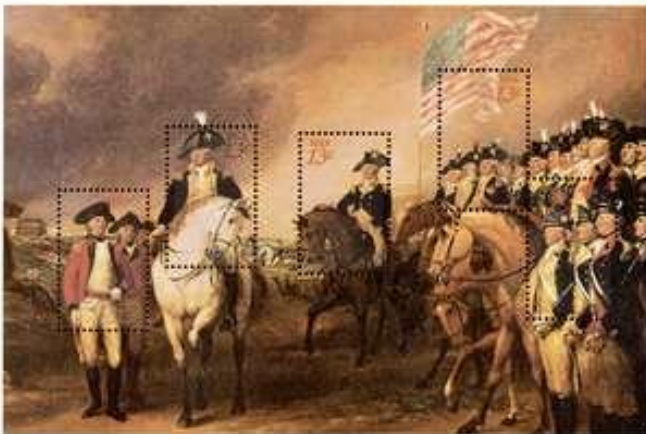
# 1b. History of the U.S.P.S.



Washington Reviewing His Ragged Army at Valley Forge  
From a Painting by William B. Singer



The Declaration of Independence, 4 July 1776 at Philadelphia  
From a Painting by John Trumbull



The Surrender of Lord Cornwallis at Yorktown  
From a Painting by John Trumbull

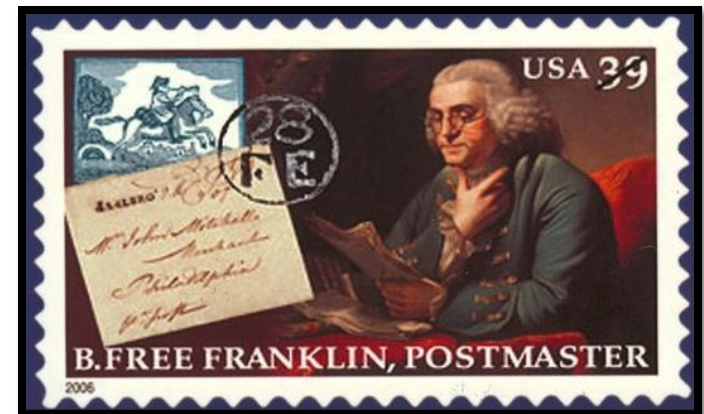


Washington Crossing the Delaware  
From a Painting by Howard Chandler Christy





- Pre-1639 -- Bags of letters brought by sea captains were left on tables in various taverns and coffee houses.
- 1639 -- First postal service established at Fairbanks Tavern on the Boston waterfront.
- 1673 -- Monthly delivery between New York and Boston began- took 2 weeks
- 1737 -- British appoint Benjamin Franklin 1<sup>st</sup> postmaster of Philadelphia.
- 1775 -- Franklin was appointed 1st postmaster general of the United States. Our current postal system descended directly from his system.



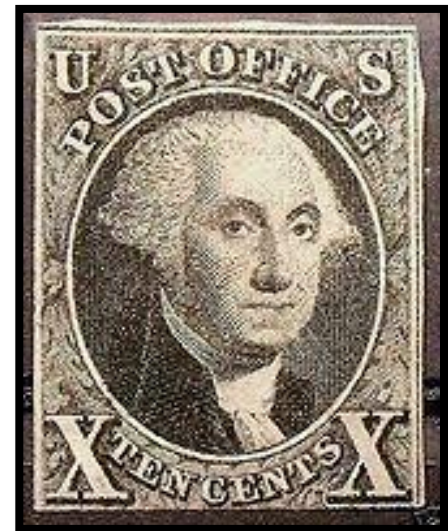
- 1792 – Congress set postal rates based on how far a letter travelled.
- 1794 – The first letter carriers didn't earn a salary from the postal department. Instead, they collected 2¢ from the recipient for each piece of mail they delivered.
- 1840 – Great Britain issues the very first stamp.
- 1847 – The United States issues its first stamps.



The first stamp.  
Known as the  
“Penny Black”



Scott #1  
Benjamin Franklin



Scott #2  
George Washington



- 1893 – First commemorative stamps were issued.  
The 16 stamps honored the 400<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Columbus's voyage to America.

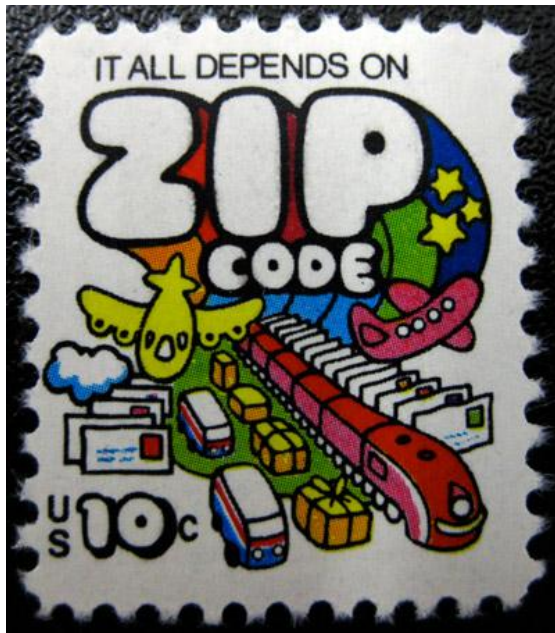
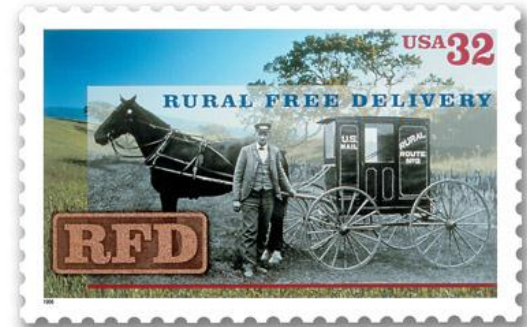


- 1896 – Rural Free Delivery (RFD) began.  
Mail was brought directly to the homes of farmers and other people living in the country. Before this, it had to be picked up in town.

- 1963 – ZIP Codes were first used.  
ZIP stands for:

**Zone Improvement Plan**

These numbers help move mail more efficiently.





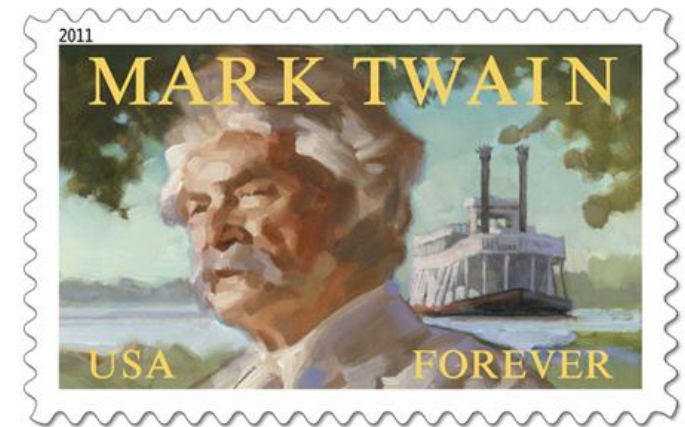
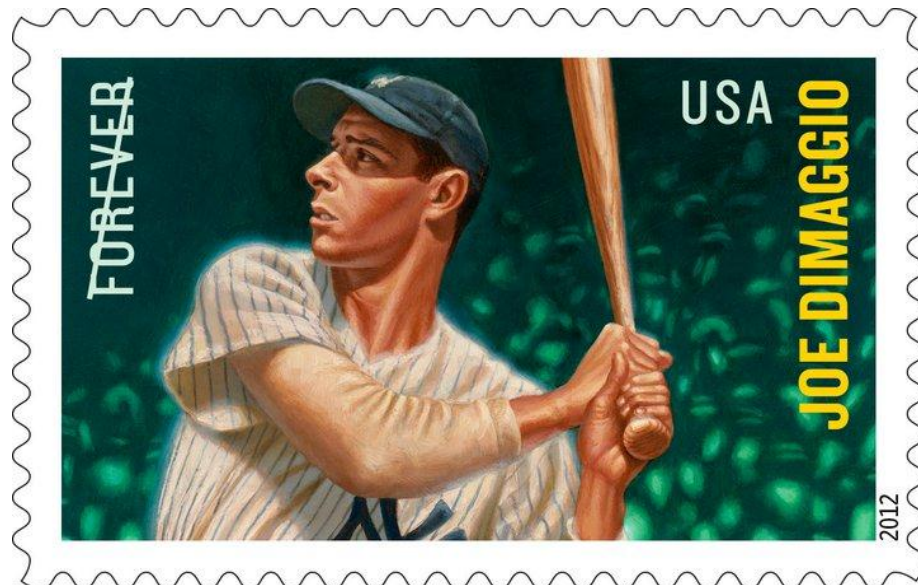
# Mr. Zip



A Mr. Zip Block

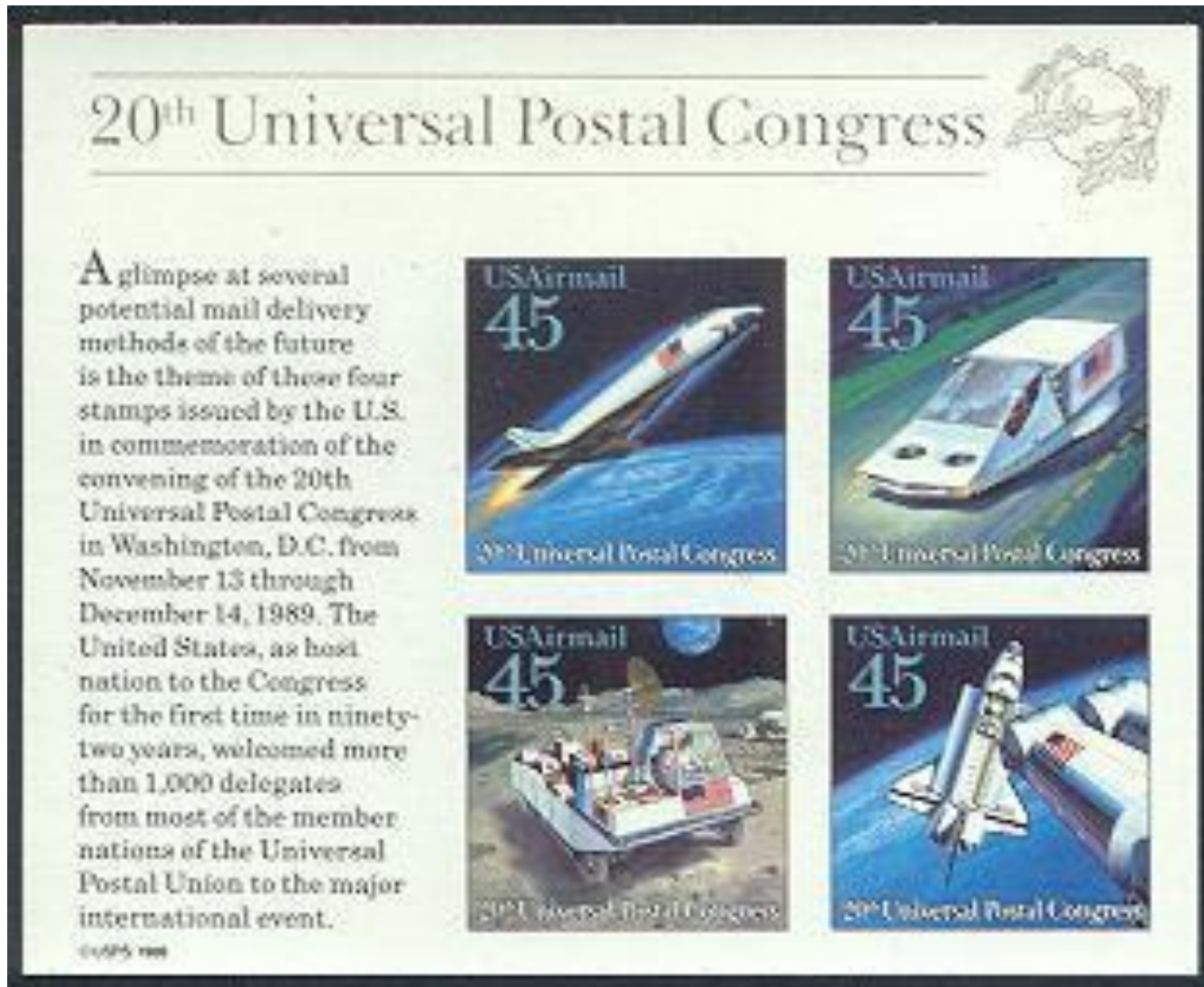
In use from 1964 until 1986

- 1974 -- Self-adhesive stamps tested
- 1992 – Self adhesive stamps introduced nationwide
- 2007 – “Forever” stamps issued
- 2011 – Most new stamps issued will be “Forever” stamps





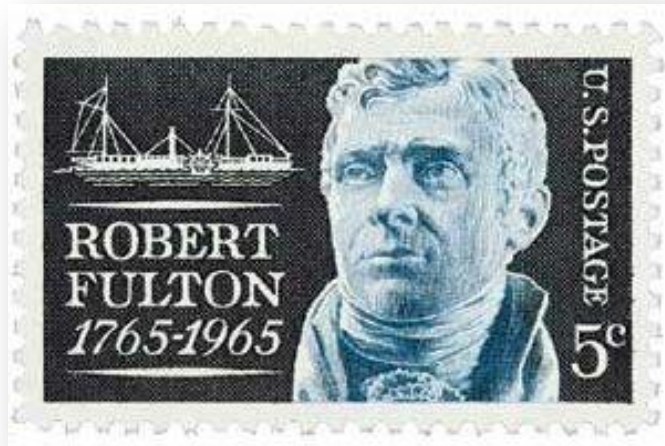
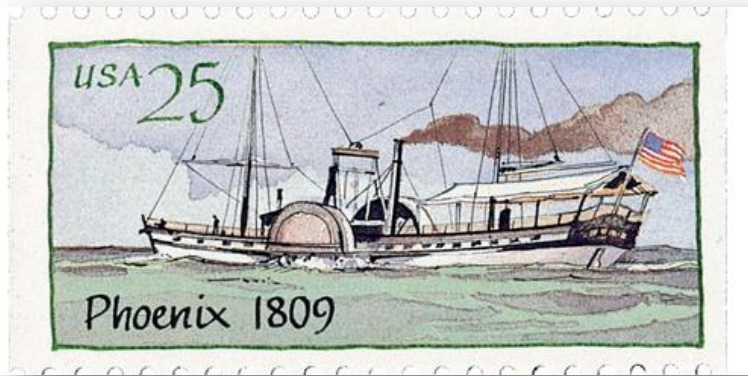
# 1b. Transporting the Mail





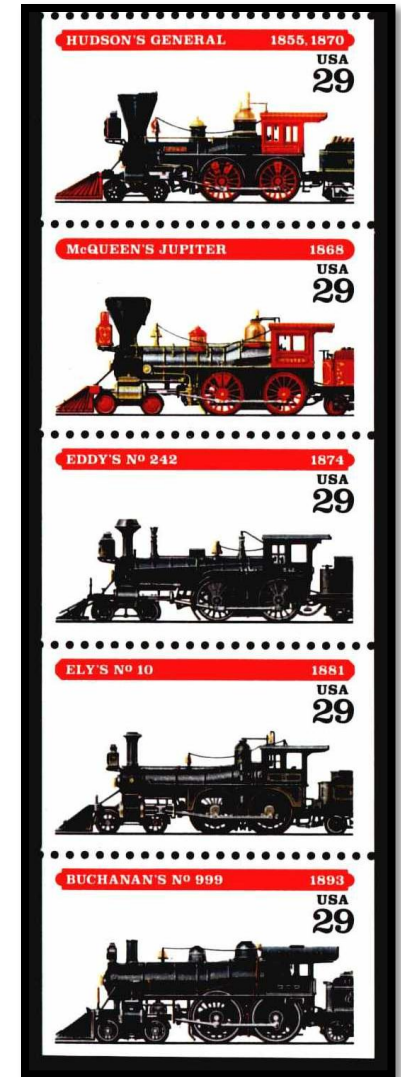
1799 – Stagecoaches used to deliver the mail.





Early 1800s – Steamboats began moving the mail along rivers and canals.





1838 – Trains started carrying the mail.

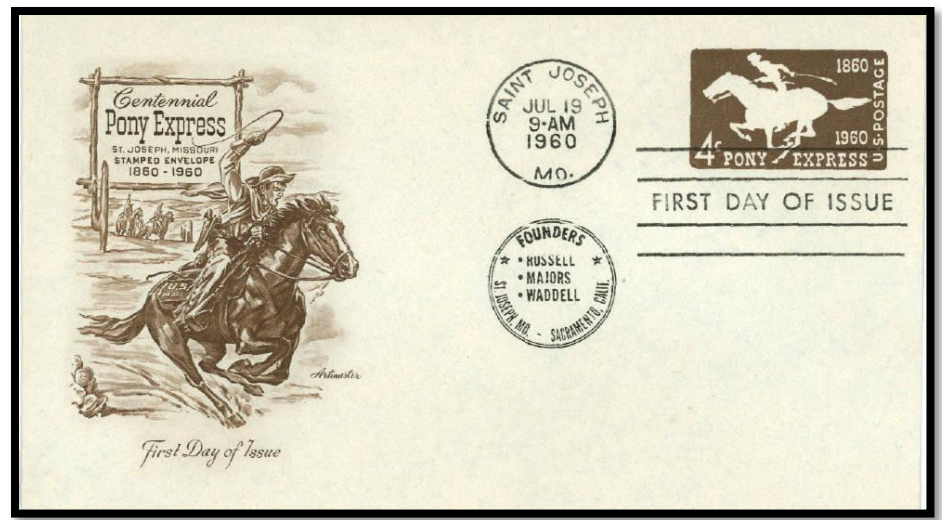


See the camels?



1855 – Congress appropriated \$30,000 to buy camels for the Army, which were used to carry mail over the southwestern deserts.





1860 – The Pony Express began delivering mail from Missouri to California.

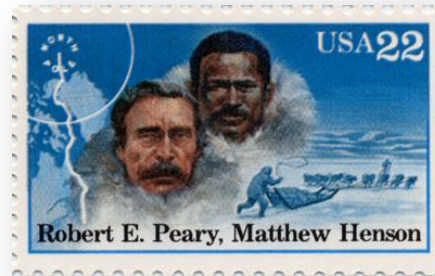




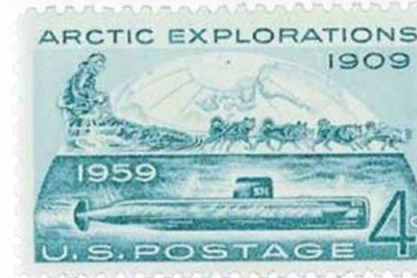
1911 – First experimental airmail delivery.  
Regular air postal service began in 1918.



**By  
balloon**



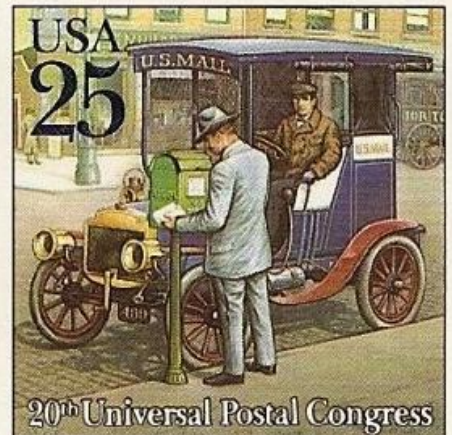
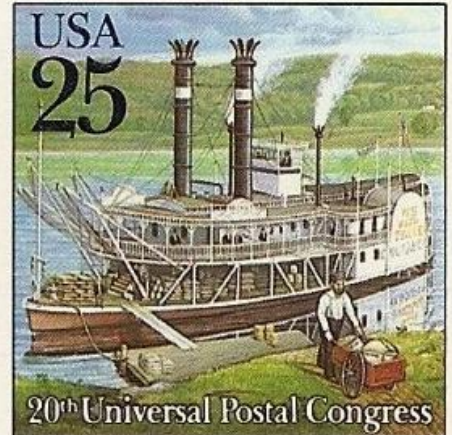
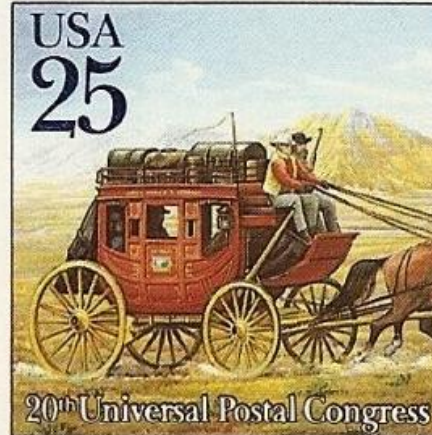
**By  
dogsled**



**By zeppelin**

Over the years, mail has been delivered in some unusual ways.

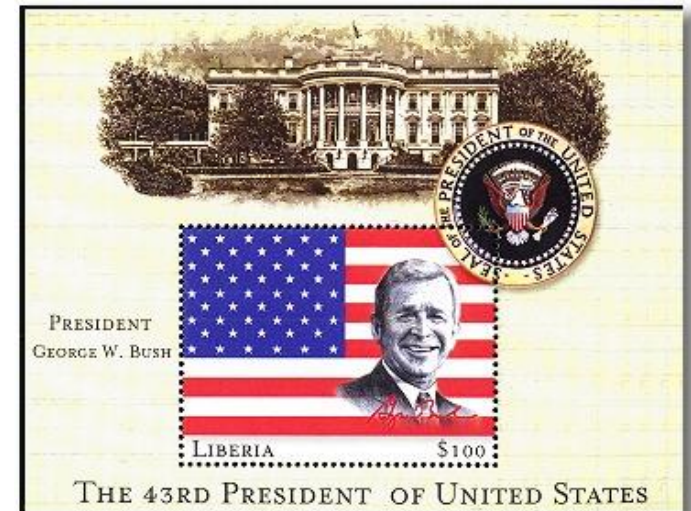




Each method of transportation increased the potential for moving the mail faster.

# 1b. Differences with Overseas Posts

- It used to be that only some foreign countries printed stamps with living people on them. The United States' policy was that no one could be on a stamp unless he had been dead for at least 5 years (presidents were the exception- first birth anniversary after death). As of 2011, the USPS has decided to put living people on stamps.
- Some foreign post offices are used as banks, for collecting taxes, or giving vaccinations.
- Some countries don't deliver mail. It must be picked up at the post office.





Questions?



## 2. Types of Collecting





# Collecting World Stamps

- Collecting stamps from around the world can be a lot of fun, but rather challenging.
- There will be a lot of stamps that aren't pictured in world albums.
- There will be stamps that you will never be able to get
  - too rare
  - too expensive



A page of Great Britain stamps



A world album from Mystic Stamp Company

# Collecting by Country

- You can learn many things about a country by looking at its stamps
  - Language
  - History
  - Culture
- You might think about collecting only certain years- for example, nothing after 1980
- Many stamp albums are available for different countries.





# Topical Stamp Collecting

- Collect stamps by a specific topic:
  - cats, trains, space, soccer, tractors, Olympics
- Find a topic about something you're interested in:
  - chess, music, or the American Civil War
- Arrange stamps in a way that pleases you
  - should make sense to *you*
  - stock pages make it easy to arrange and re-arrange stamps





# **Examples of Topical Collections**



# Insects



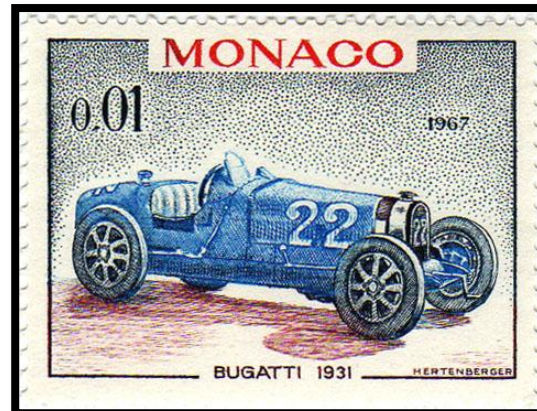


# Vegetables





# Race Cars





# Eagles





# Ships



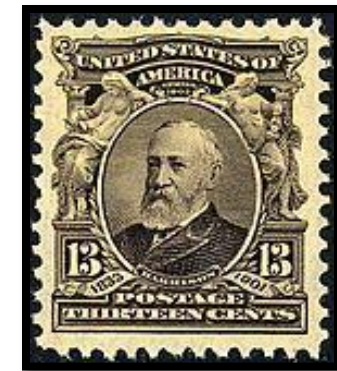
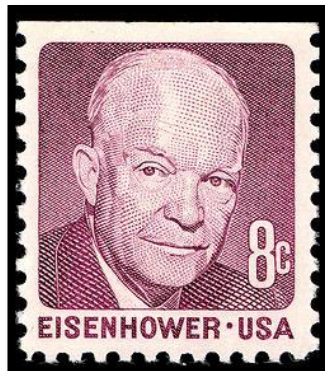
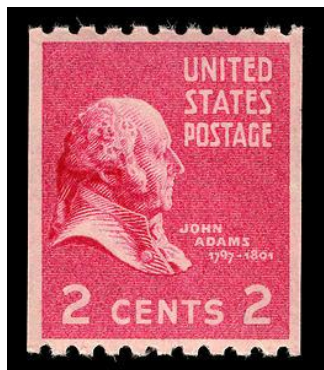
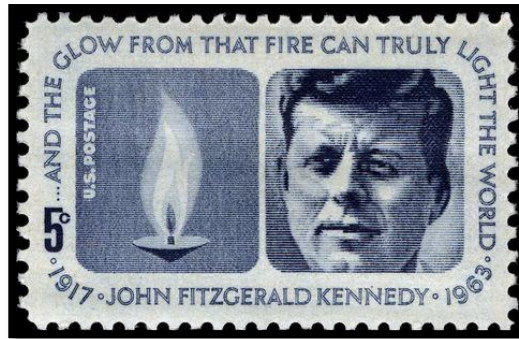
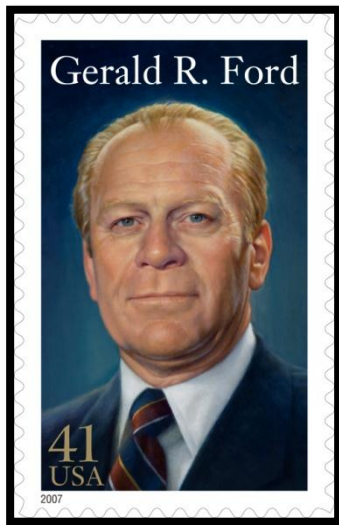


# U.S. Flags





# Presidents





# Scouts

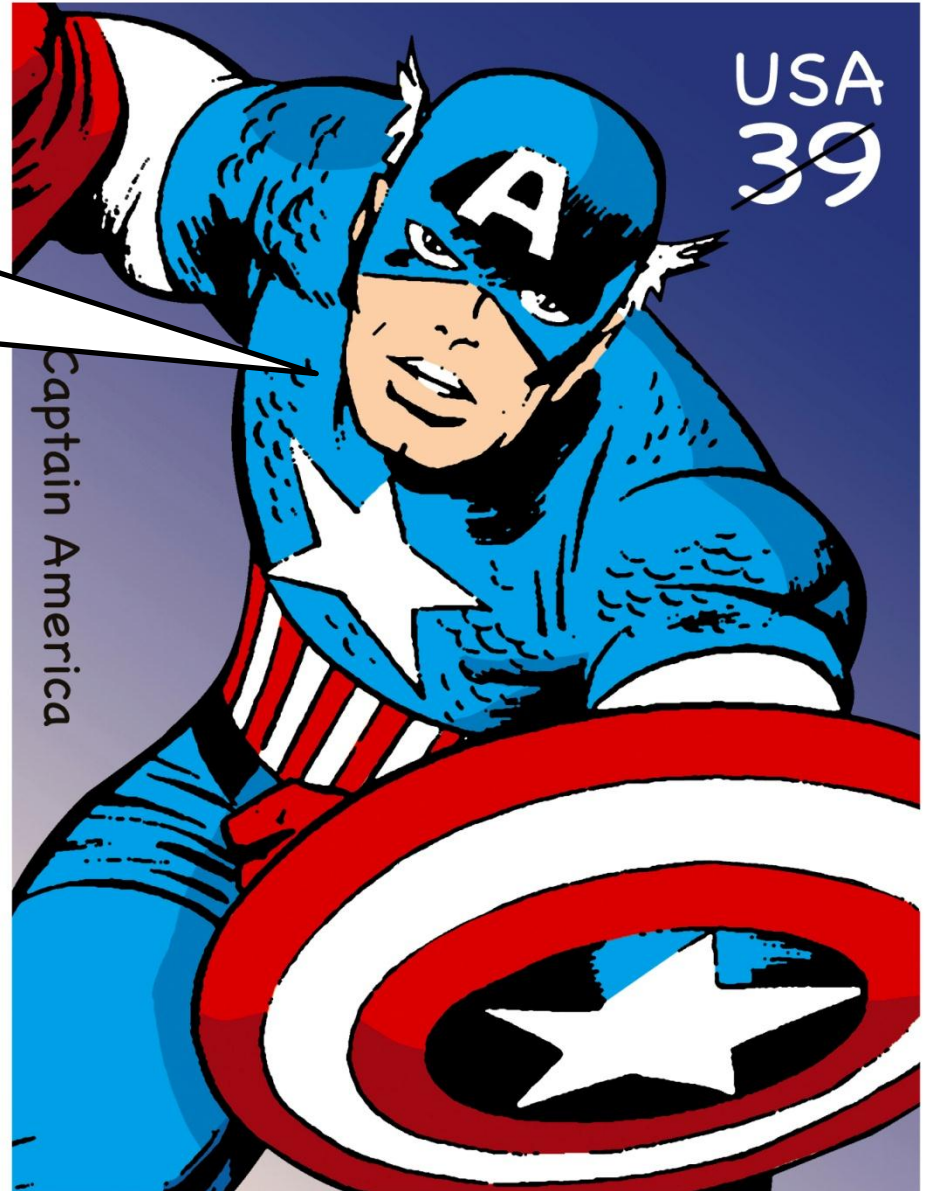




# Triangles



Any  
questions?



2007



# 3. Stamp Collecting Terminology



# 3a. Perforated Stamps



Stamps with lines of small holes or cuts between rows of stamps that make them easy to separate.



# 3a. Imperforate Stamps



Stamps without perforations or separating holes. They are usually separated by scissors.



# Perforated or Imperforated?





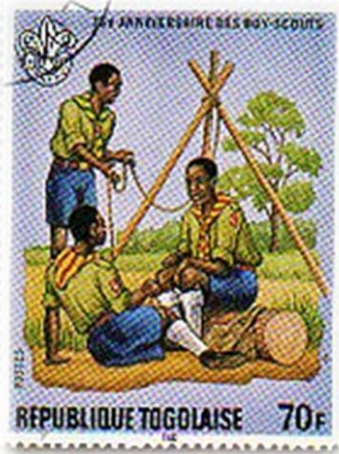
## 3b. Mint Stamps



Stamps that have never been postally used.



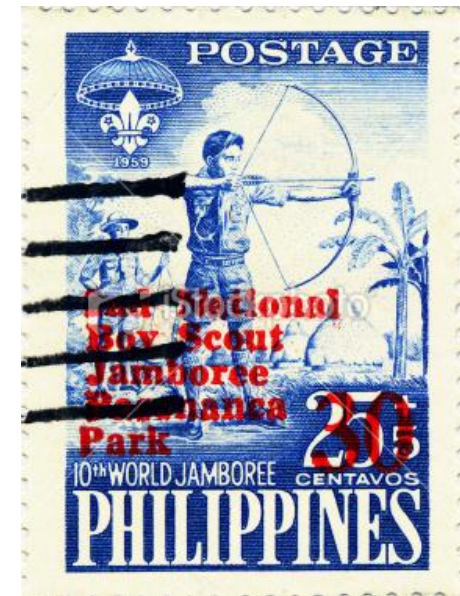
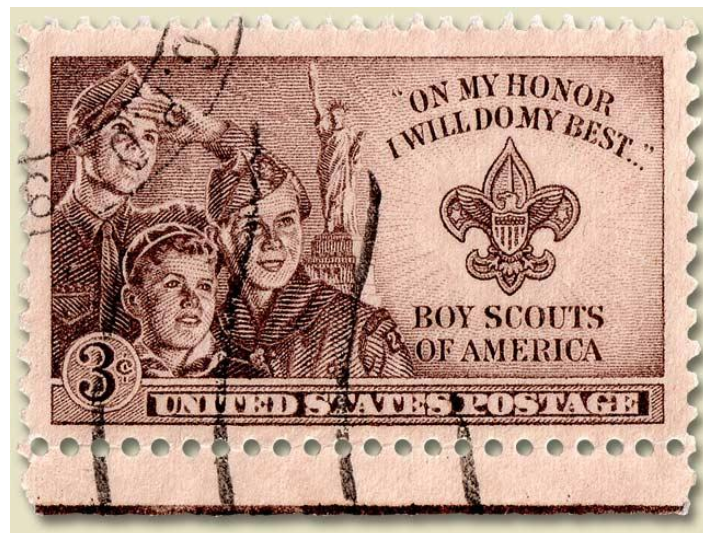
# 3b. Used Stamps



Stamps that have been cancelled so that they can't be used again.



# Mint or Used???





# 3c. Sheet Stamps



As printed, this is a complete unit consisting of four or more panes of stamps, each of which is cut apart when the stamps are sent to the post office.



# 3c. Booklet Stamps



- Made up of one or more small panes of stamps in a cardboard cover.
- Booklet stamps usually have 1, 2, 3, or 4 straight edges.



Perforations missing  
from 1 side



Perforations missing from  
1 side



Perforations missing from 2 sides



Perforations missing from 3 sides



Perforations missing  
from 4 sides

May not have perforations on  
1, 2, 3, or all 4 sides.



# 3c. Coil Stamps

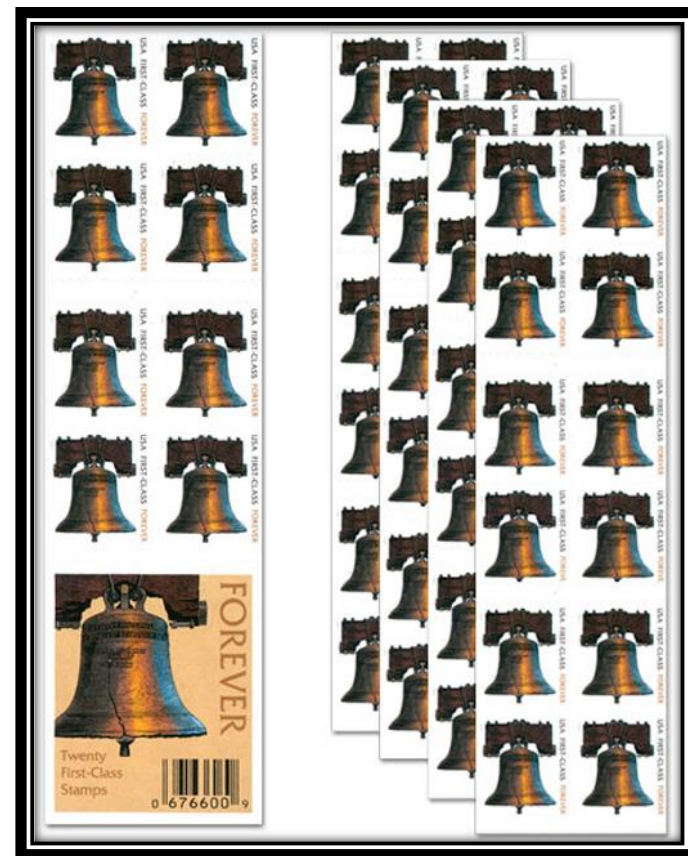


Stamps issued in rolls (one stamp wide) for use in dispensers or vending machines.

Coils can be horizontal or vertical.

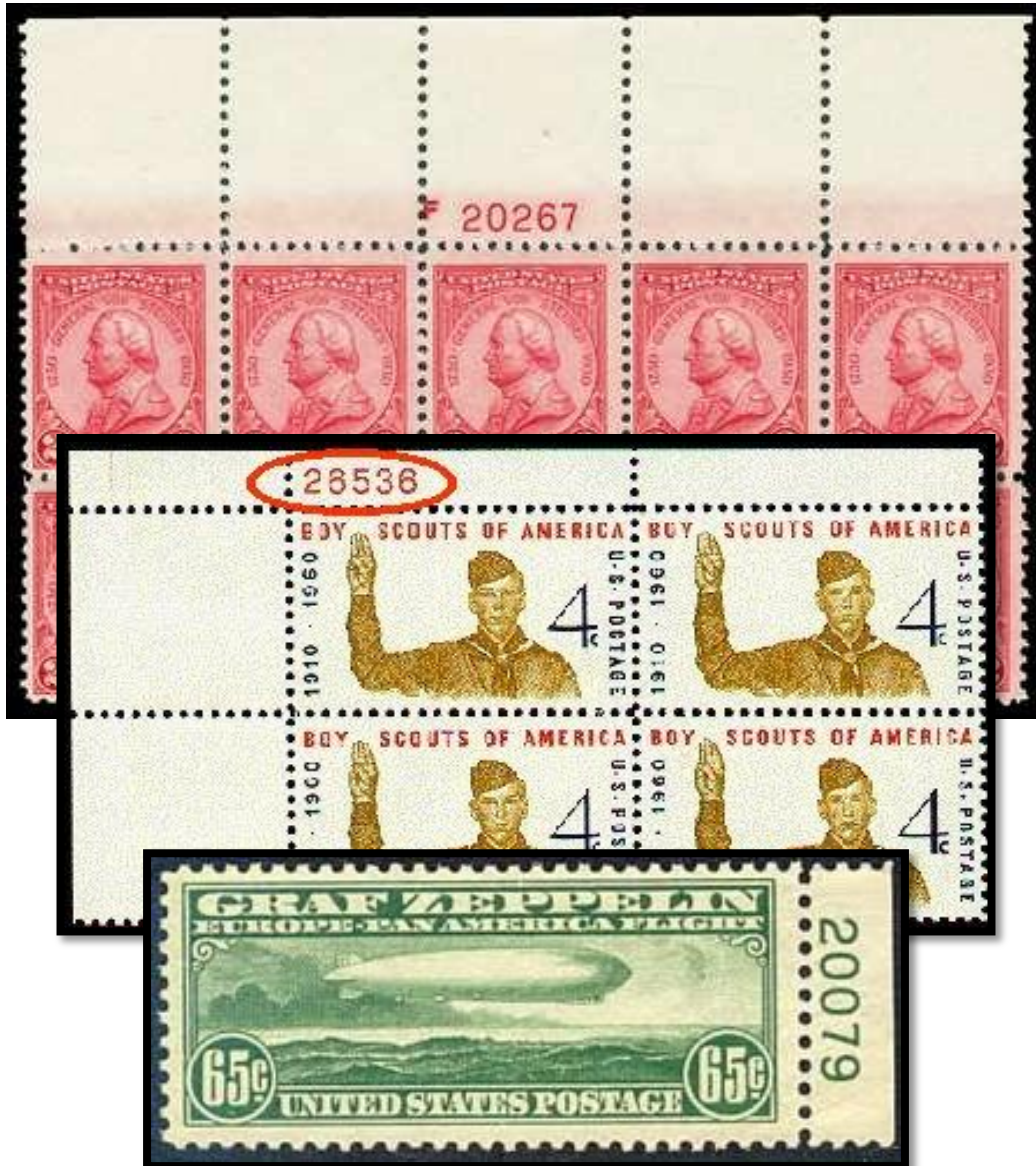
They have **perforations** on two **opposite** sides and **no perforations** on the other two **opposite** sides.

# Coil or Booklet Stamps???





# 3d. Plate Blocks



- A block of 4, 8, 10, 12, or 20 stamps with a plate number in the corner
- Plate number is used to track stamps and printing plates used
- A single stamp with a plate number is called **Plate Number Single**
- Booklets have plate numbers in the selvage

# 3d. More Plate Blocks





## 3d. Plate Number Coil



- A **plate number coil** (PNC) is a stamp with the number of the printing plate or plates printed on it.



- Plate number coils are collected in coils of 3 or 5.



# 3d. Marginal Markings



The selvage (paper around panes of stamps) that contains words, numbers, or pictures.

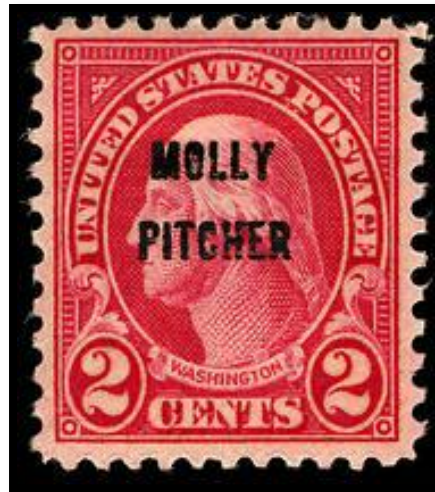
# Other Marginal Markings



- Selvage, or marginal markings include color, designs, and pictures
- Colored dots tell the printer if stamp colors are accurate, or if more color should be added to the printing machine.



# 3e. Overprints



Additional printing on a stamp that was not part of the original design.

The purpose of the stamp is changed, but not its value.

- War tax
- A country becomes independent
- Royalty
- Olympics
- Commemorate an event or person

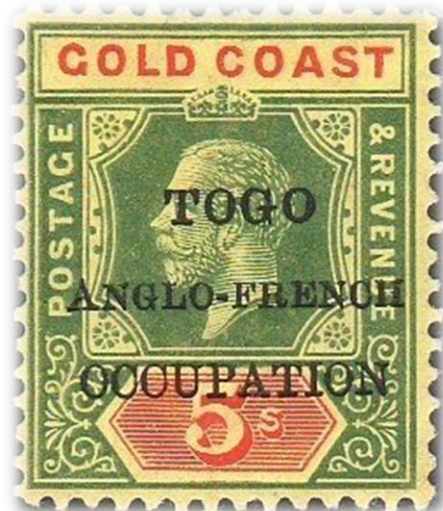
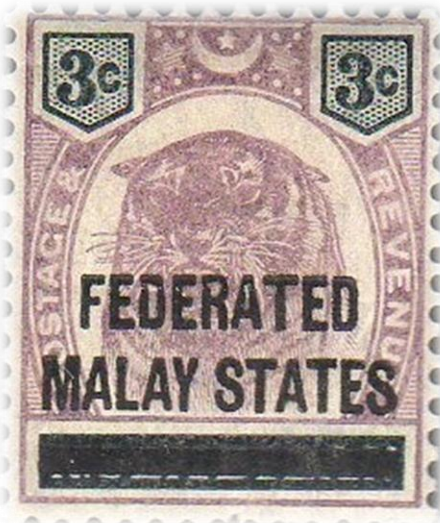
## 3e. Surcharges



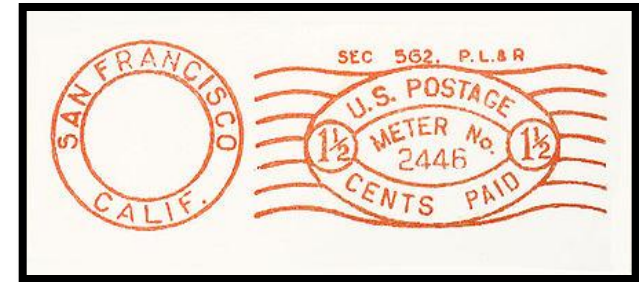
A stamp whose value has been changed by overprinting.



# Overprint or Surcharge???



# 3f. Metered Mail



Envelopes that are machine-stamped with the proper postage amount using specialized printed images instead of individual sticky stamps.



# 3g. Definitive Stamps



Regular issues of postage stamps, usually sold over long periods of time.

- No special purpose for the stamp except to pay postage
- Smaller stamps
- Often printed in very high quantity - billions

# 3g. Commemorative Stamps



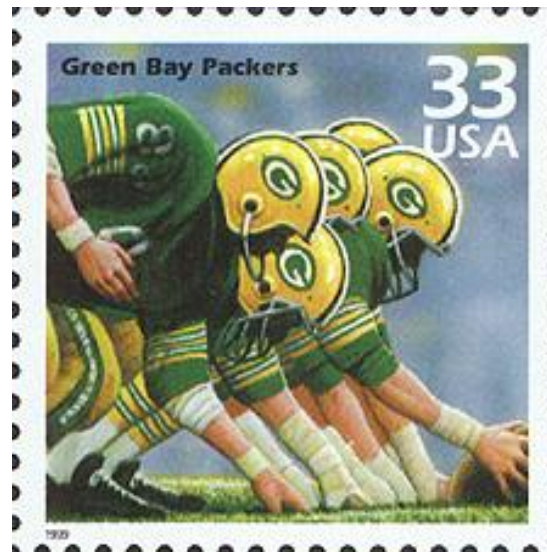
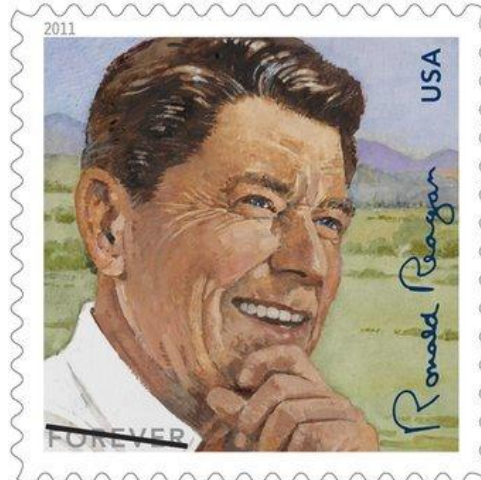
Stamps that honor anniversaries, important people, or special events.

- Sometimes issued in sets of stamps
- Larger than definitives
- Printed in smaller quantities

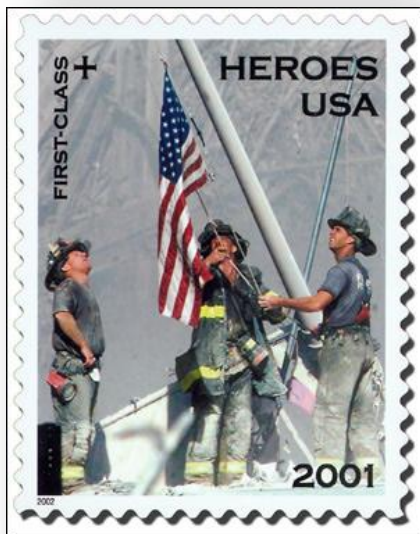




# Definitive or Commemorative???



# 3g. Semi-postal Stamps



A stamp that is issued to raise money for some purpose (such as a charity). It is sold over and above the cost of postage.

For example, if the first class mail rate is 45¢, then the semi-postal stamp would sell for 55¢ with the extra 10¢ going to research or charity.



# 3g. Airmail Stamps

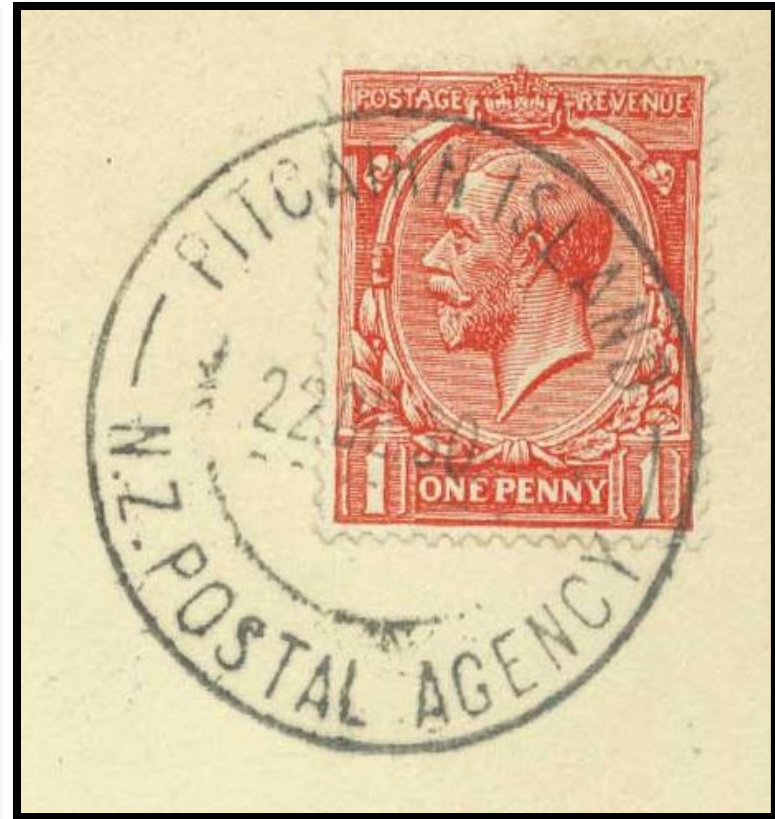
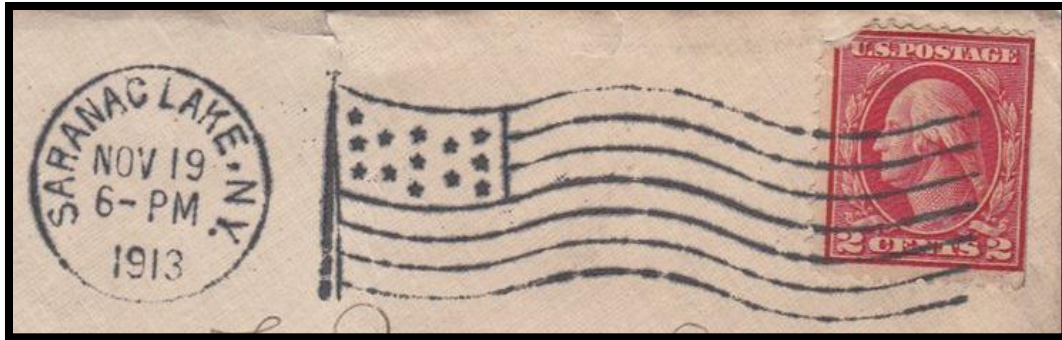


- Pays postage for letter to get to another country; can pay domestic airmail
- Can be definitive or commemorative
- Must say “Air Mail” or “Aero” or similar
- No longer needed for standard U.S. delivery





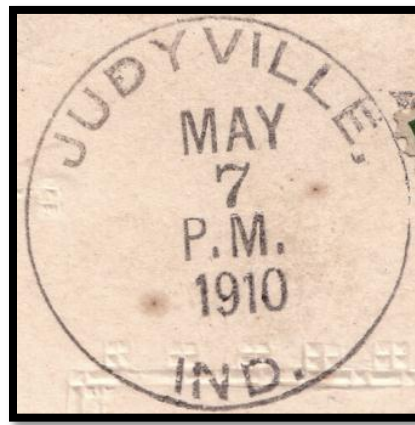
## 3h. Cancellations



A mark placed on a stamp by a postal authority to show that it has been used.

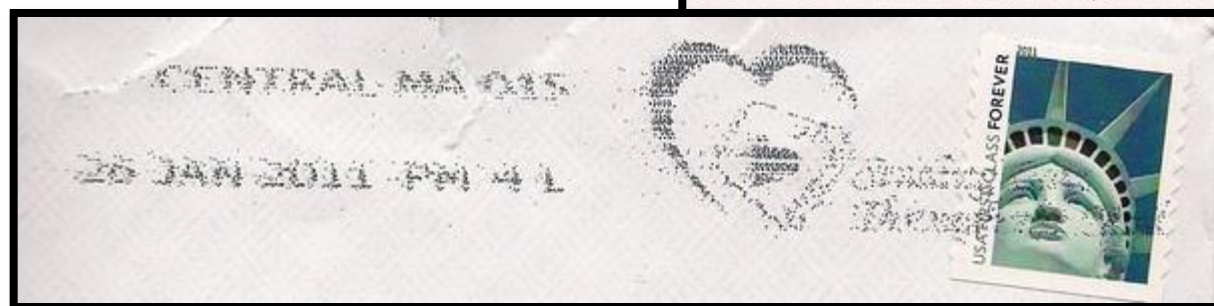
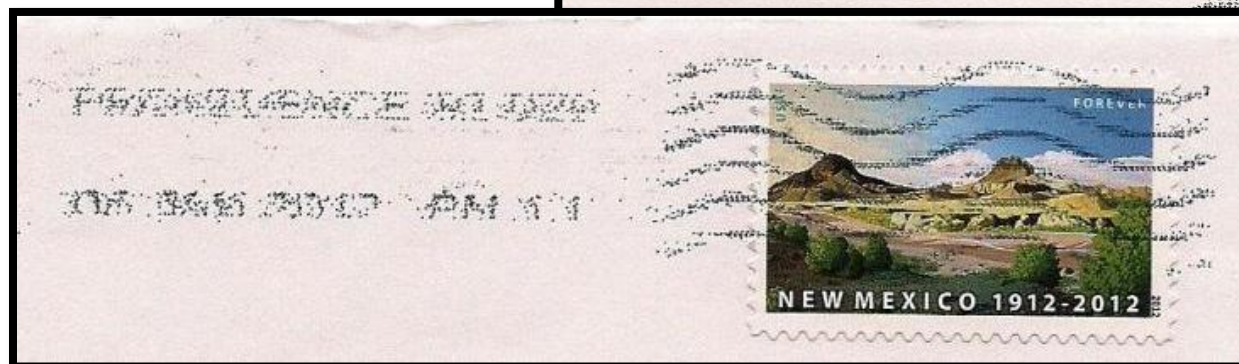


# 3h. Postmarks



A mark put on an envelope showing the date and location of the post office where it was mailed.

# Newer Style Postmarks



- Postmark is sprayed-on by a machine



# 3i. First Day Covers

- Shows all the elements of a regular postmark, in addition to when stamp is first issued
- Date of issue is the first day the stamp goes on sale to the public
- Usually says “First Day of Issue”
- May or may not have a cachet (a picture printed on the envelope)





Boy Scouts USA

FIRST DAY OF ISSUE

### Boy Scouts

More than 70 million Americans have been touched with the many fond memories of Scouting.



## ROYAL NAVY UNIFORMS

Mrs J Robinson  
200 Manorbier Road  
Ilkeston  
Derbyshire  
DE7 4AB





# 3j. Postal Stationery - Aerogramme



A letter sheet made of a single piece of lightweight paper with gummed flaps, normally used for international airmail. The outside resembles an envelope on which the stamp is printed.

# 3j. Postal Stationary – Stamped Envelope



An envelope, on which the post office has printed, or embossed, a stamp.



# 3j. Postal Stationary – Postal Card



A government-produced card, with stamp imprinted in the upper right-hand.

# Where To Find Stamps

## FOR FREE:

- From the mail that comes to your home- ask friends and relatives to save theirs, too
- Find a local business that will save them for you
- Ask relatives if they have old letters at home in the attic or basement (check cover value before cutting)
- From pen pals
- Join a local stamp club
- Become a member of the Young Stamp Collectors of America Club sponsored by the APS

## FOR PURCHASE:

- Check with dealers at stamp shows
- Visit a stamp store
- Order online or through the mail from a stamp company, with your parents' permission



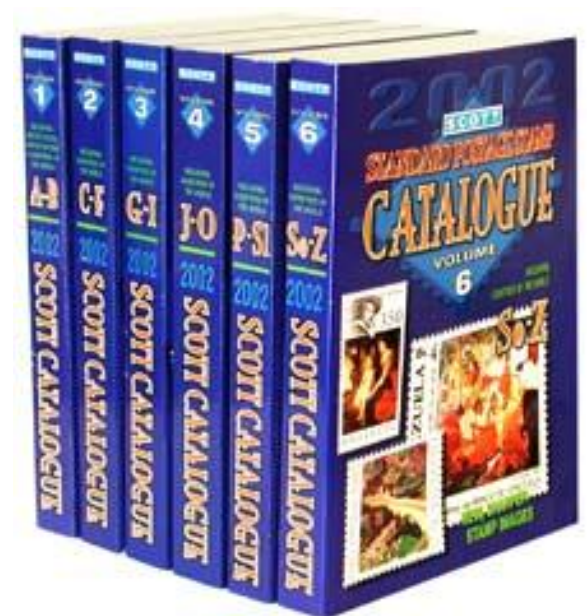




Ready  
for a  
break?

# 4a. Stamp Catalogs

- Used to identify and value stamps
- Each stamp is assigned a number
- Stamps are usually sold for amounts very different than those shown in the catalog
- Catalogs are organized by country





# How to Read a Stamp Catalog

**Stamp name** → James Dean (1931-55)

**Date of Issue** → 1996, June 24

**Stamp number** → 3082 A2381 32c

**Mint value** → .60

**Used value** → .20

**LEGENDS OF HOLLYWOOD**

James Dean (1931-55)

Designed by Michael Deas.

Printed by Stamp Venturers.

**PHOTOGRAVURE**

Sheets of 120 in six panes of 20.

**Tagged**


**Perf. 11.1**

	Mint Value	Used Value
3082 A2381 32c multicolored	.60	.20
P# block of 4, 7#+S	2.75	—
Pane of 20	14.00	—
Sheet of 120 (six panes)	75.00	—
Cross gutter block of 8	25.00	—
Block of 8 with vertical gutter	17.50	—
Horiz. pair with vert. gutter	4.00	—
Vert. pair with horiz. gutter	2.50	—
<b>a.</b> Imperf., pair	350.00	—
Pane of 20, imperf.	4,750.	—
<b>b.</b> As "a," red (USA 32c) omitted	—	—
<b>c.</b> As "a," tan ("JAMES DEAN") omitted	—	—
<b>c.</b> As "a," red and tan omitted	—	—

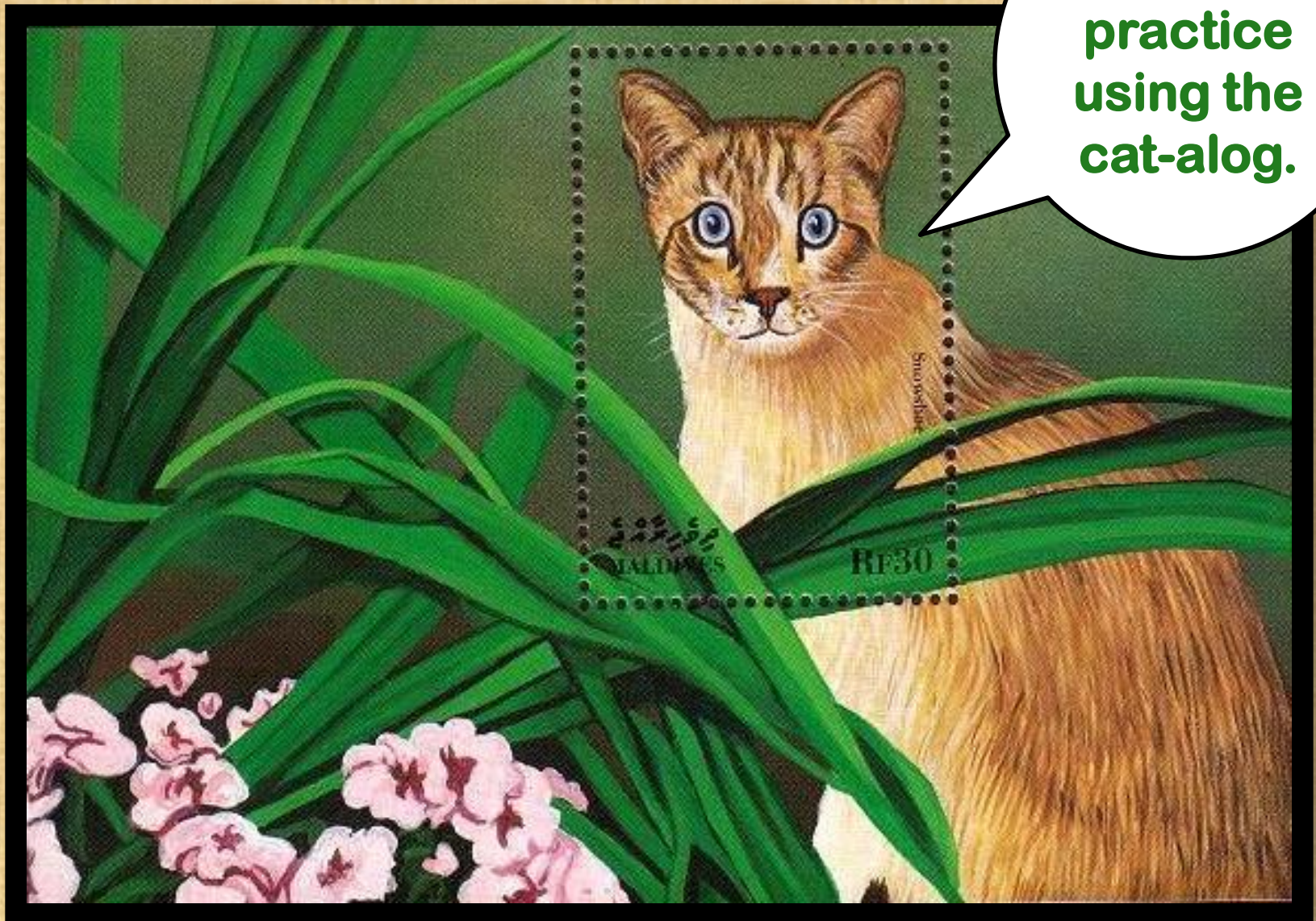
Perforations in corner of each stamp are star-shaped. No. 3082 was also available on the first day of issue in at least 127 Warner Bros. Studio stores.

Cross-gutter block consists of 3 stamps vertically from 2 upper panes and 1 stamp each from 2 lower panes.

For booklet see No. BK250.



**Time to  
practice  
using the  
cat-a-log.**





# 4b. Stamp Condition

- A stamp's value is based on its condition.

- is the stamp mint or used?
- is the image centered?
- what is the size and intensity of the cancellation?
- are there any rips or tears?
- are there hinge marks?
- any color fading?
- any discoloration?



- Is the image centered?



**Yes**



**No**

The four margins around the image should be equal.



- **What is the size and intensity of the cancellation?**

- Lightly canceled- the main design of the stamp is readily visible through the cancel mark
- Heavily canceled- the cancel mark obscures or covers most of the stamp's design

**Light**



**Heavy**



- Are there any rips or tears?





•Are there any hinge marks?



**No**



**Yes**

- Is there any color fading?



Yes



No



- **Is there any discoloration?**



Tape was used  
on this tape.



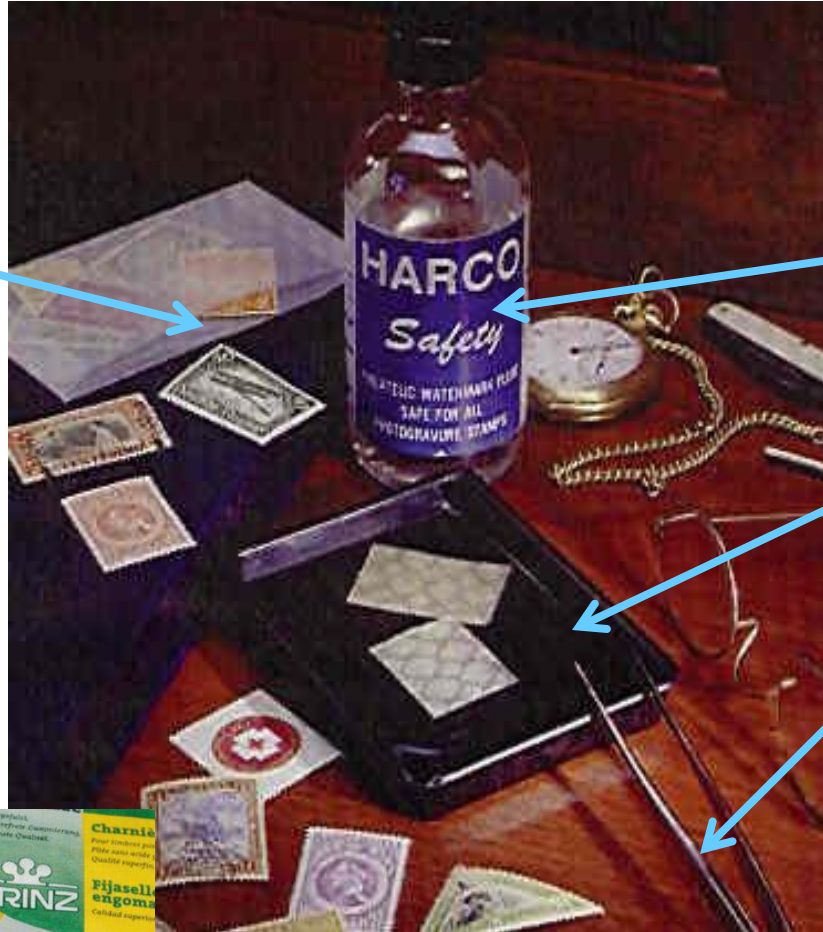
The red envelope  
bled onto this  
stamp when it was  
soaked.

# 5. Stamp Hobby Tools

f. Glassine envelope



c. Magnifier



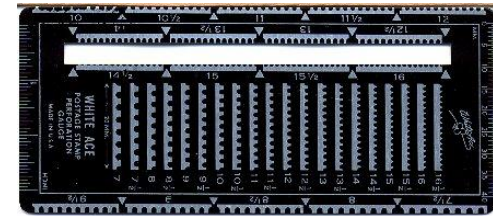
g. Watermark fluid

b. Water and tray

a. Stamp tongs



d. Hinges



e. Perforation gauge



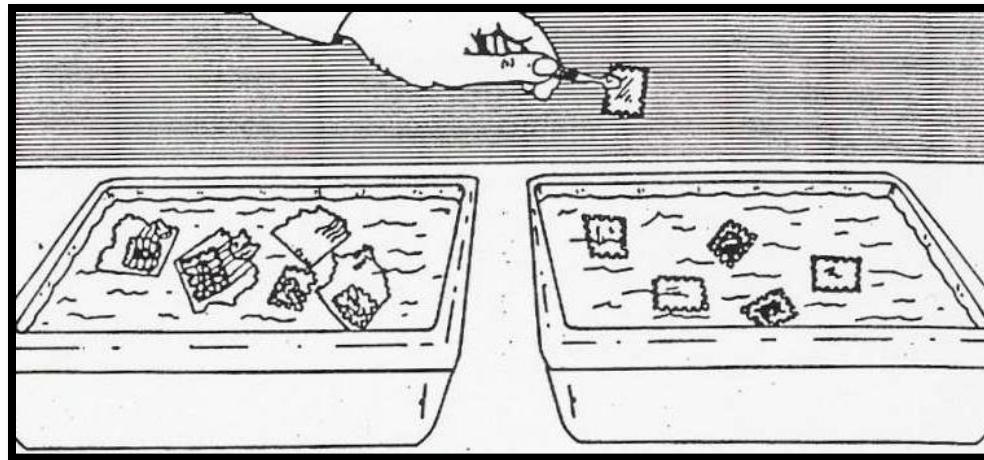
## 5a. Stamp Tongs

- Made of metal
- They keep the stamp from getting damaged from dirt and oil from your skin
- Come in a variety of sizes and shapes

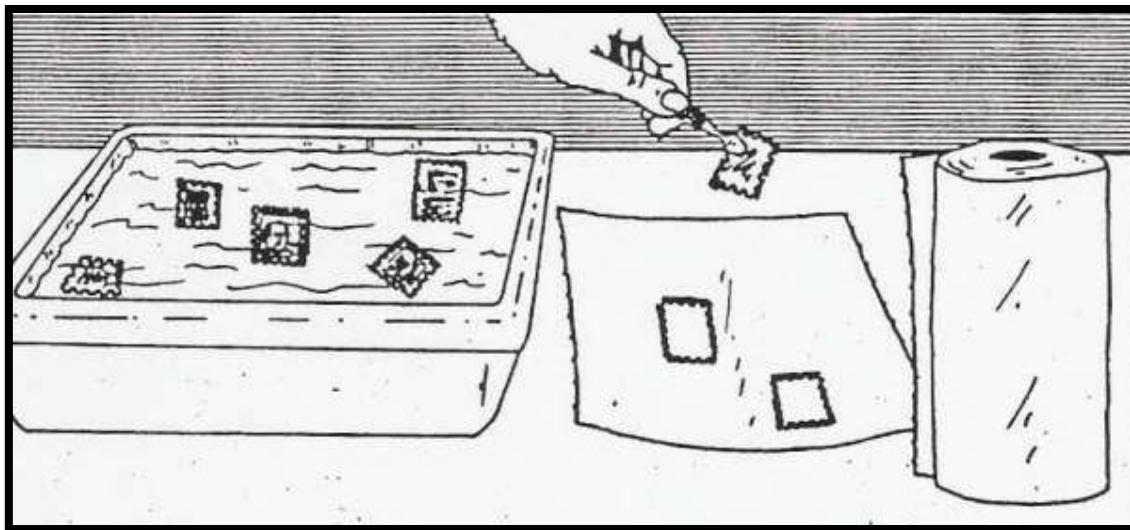


## 5b. Water and Tray

- Used for removing stamps from envelopes
- Separate paper colors before soaking-- stamps on colored paper may bleed
- Use lukewarm water
- Do just a few stamps at a time
- Replace water when it becomes dirty
- Allow stamps to float free of backing. Do not pull them off!

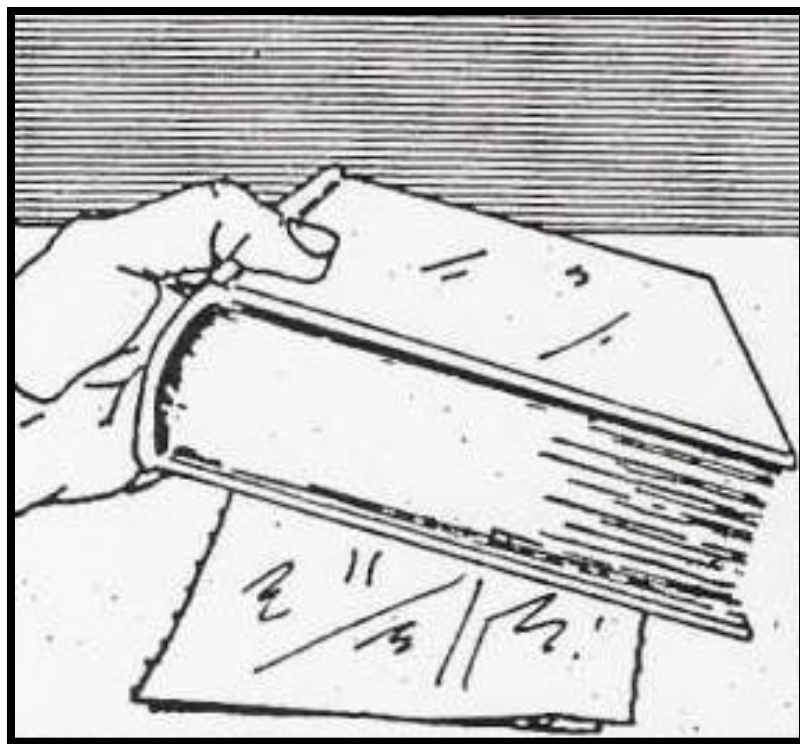






After soaking, the stamps should be dried face-down on something absorbent, like paper towels or a bathroom towel.

When they are completely dry, place them under a heavy object, like a book, to flatten them. This may take a few days.



**Time for a  
soak.**





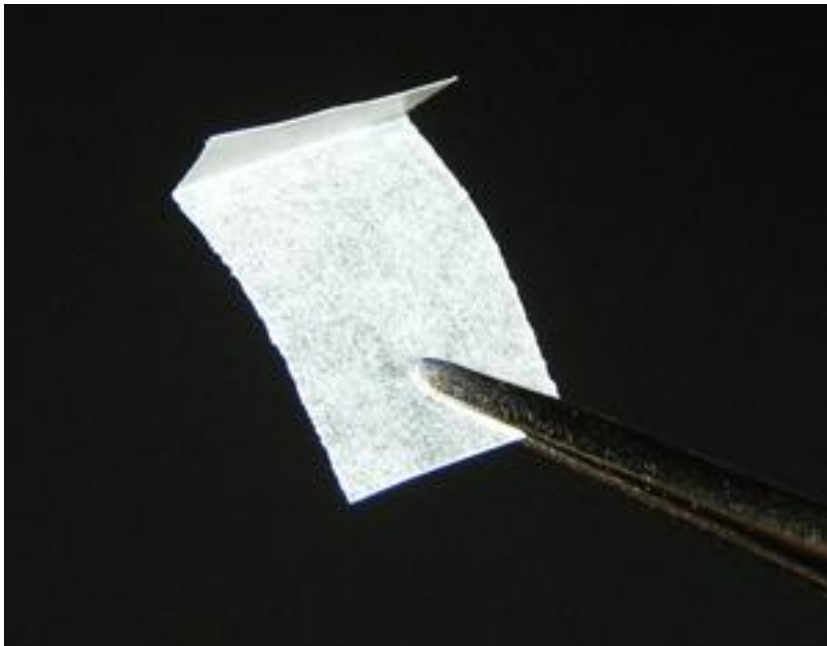
# 5c. Magnifiers

Used to enlarge details on stamps.



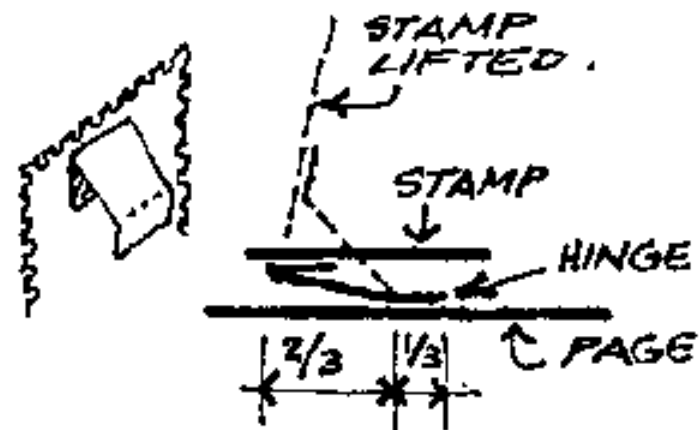
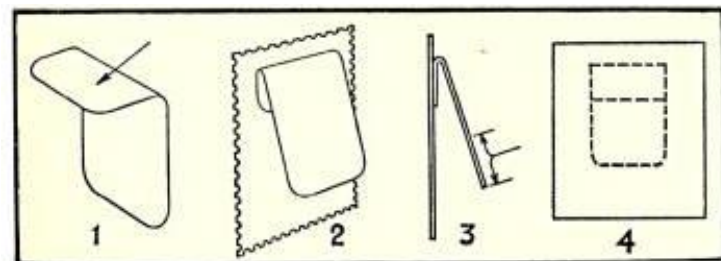
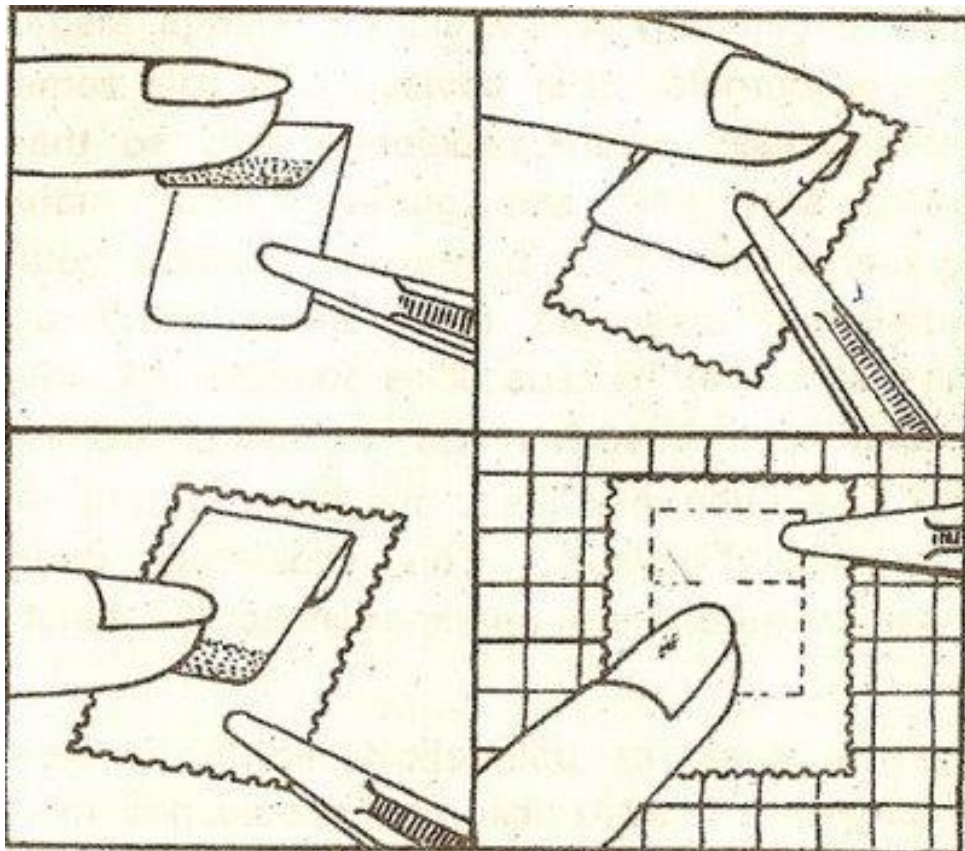
# 5d. Hinges

- Small, thin, folded pieces of translucent paper with special gum on one side.
- Good for used stamps.

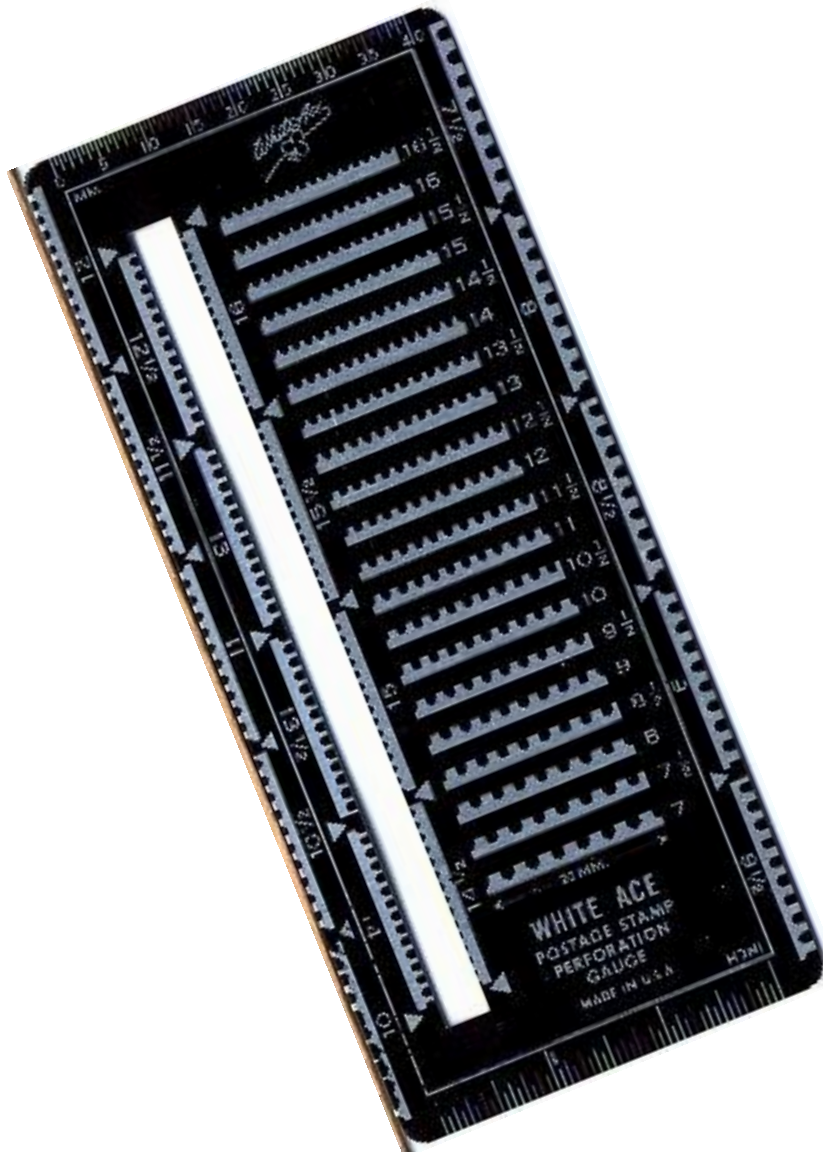




# 5d. How To Hinge a Stamp



## 5e. How To Use a Perforation Gauge



Move the stamp up and down until the perforations on the stamp exactly line up with the pattern on the gauge.

The perforation size can make a big difference between a stamp being an inexpensive version to a very valuable one.



# 5f. Envelopes & Sleeves

## **GLASSINE ENVELOPES:**

- Very thin and translucent
- Protect stamps from air and moisture
- Available in many different sizes



## **PLASTIC SLEEVES:**

- Made of thin plastic
- Used for envelopes (covers)



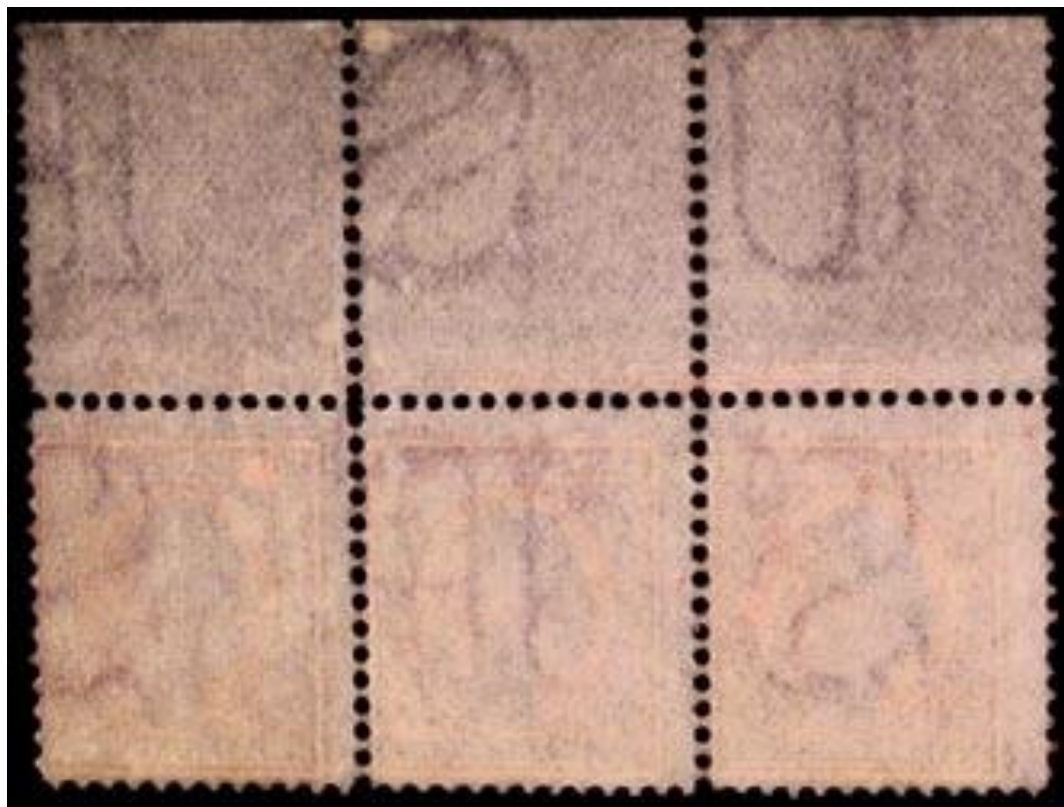
# 5g. Watermark Fluid

- Watermarks are designs made into the paper during the manufacturing process while the paper is still wet.
- Where the image is impressed, the paper is thinner and the image can be seen by holding the paper up to a light (or setting it against a dark background).
- When the watermark can't be seen by the naked eye, a special fluid is used.



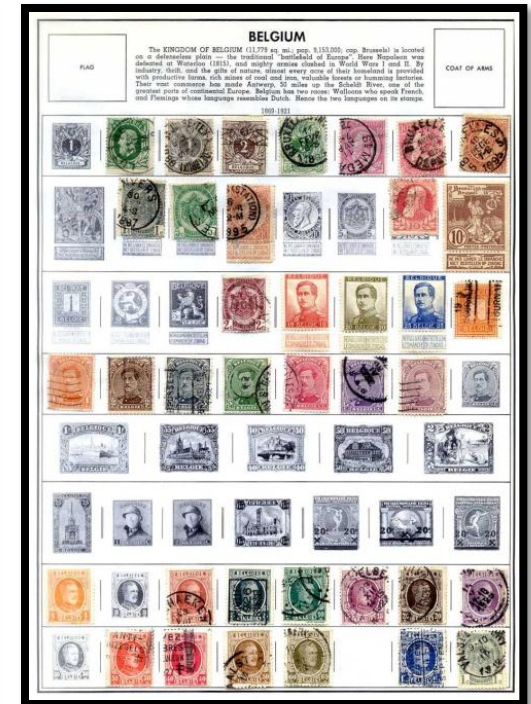
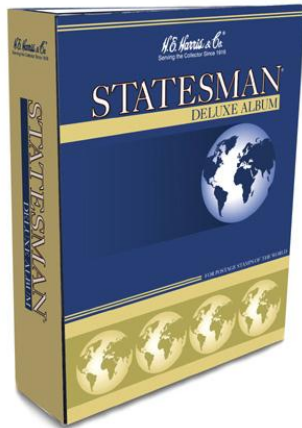
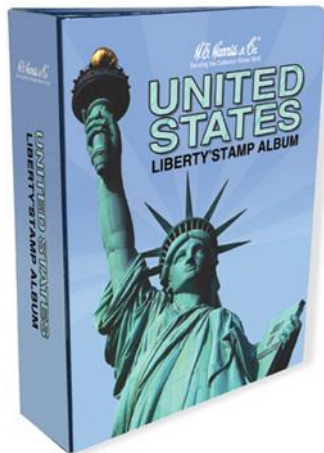
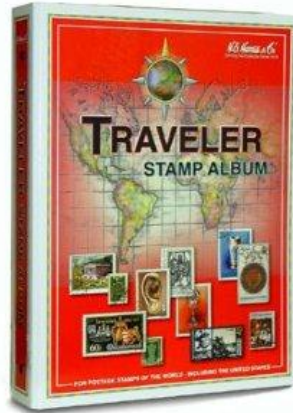
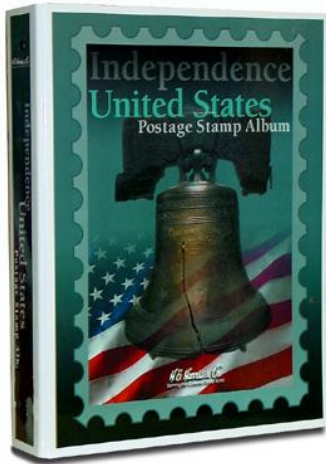


## 5g. Watermarks



# 6a. Stamp Album Options

Albums can be found in many different styles and price ranges.





# 6b. Ways to Preserve Mint Stamps



Manilla stock page



Vario stock page



Stock book



Mounts



FDC sleeves



Hang in there.

We're almost  
done!





## 7. Do at least **TWO** of the following:

- Design a stamp, cancellation, or cachet.
- Visit a post office, stamp club, or stamp show with an experienced collector.  
Explain what you saw and learned.
- Write a review of an interesting article from a stamp newspaper, magazine, book or Web site (with your parent's permission).
- Research and report on a famous stamp-related personality or the history behind a particular stamp.
- Describe the steps taken to produce a stamp. Include the methods of printing, types of paper, perforation styles, and how they are gummed.
- 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.



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



- A collection of **250 or more different stamps** from **at least 15 countries**.
- A collection of **a stamp from each of 50 different countries, mounted on maps** to show the location of each.
- A collection of **100 or more different stamps** from either **one country** or a **group of closely related countries**.
- A collection of **75 or more different stamps on a single topic**. Stamps may be from different countries.
- 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 .



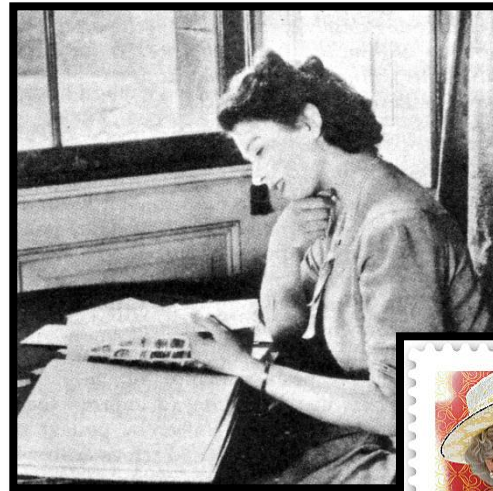
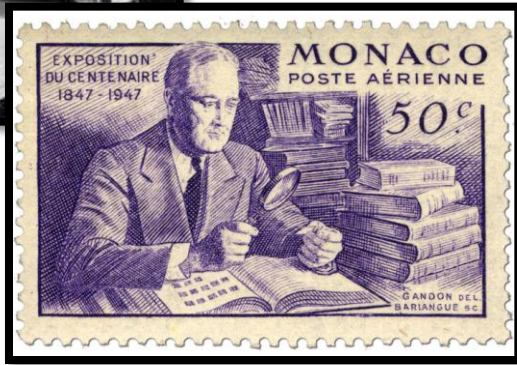
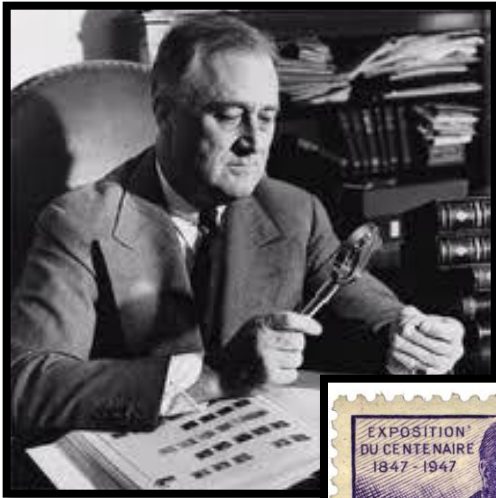
# *Congratulations!*

You are now  
a *philatelist*-  
one who  
studies and collects  
postage stamps.



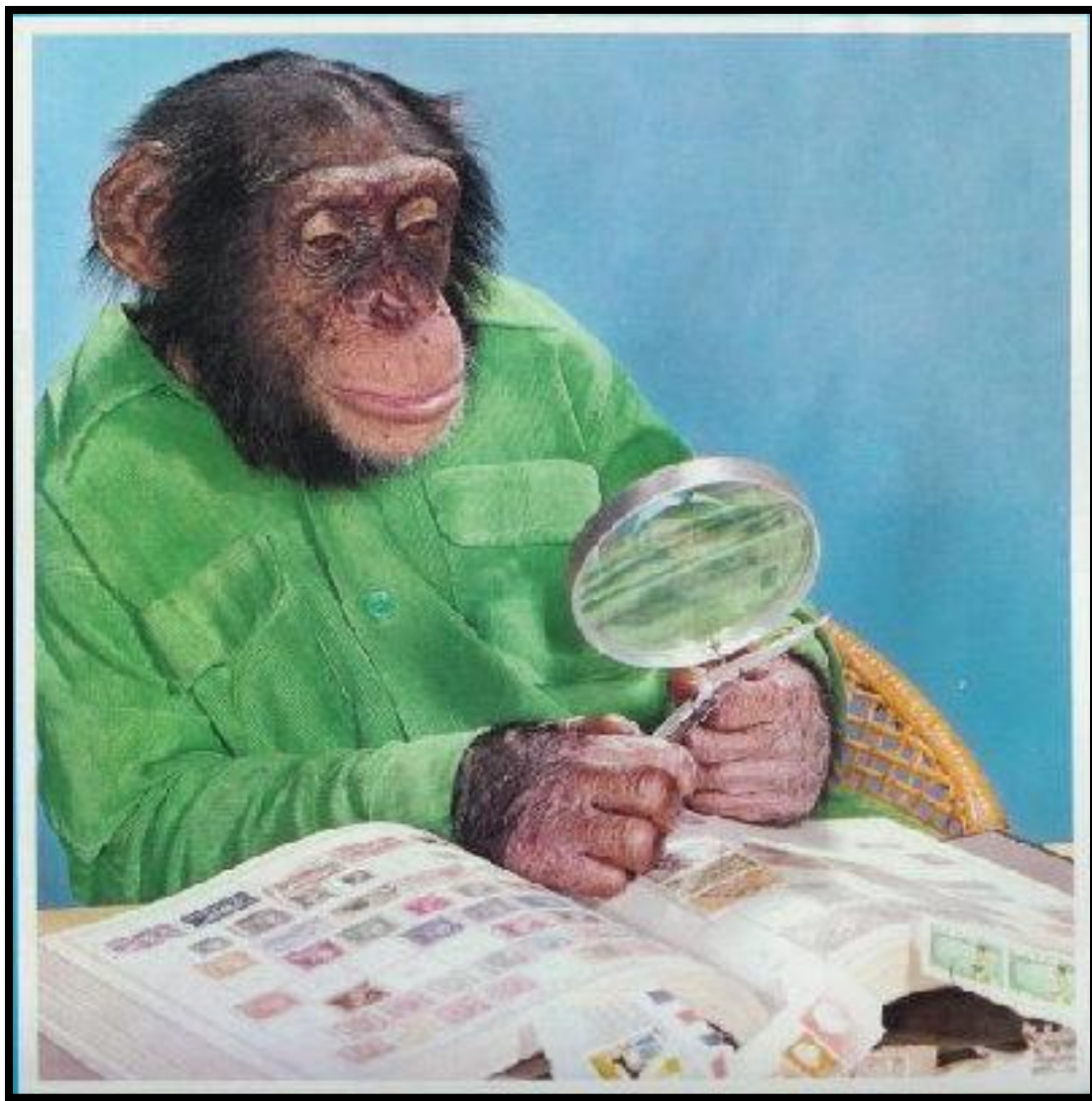
# Some Famous Philatelists:

- Queen Elizabeth II
- President Franklin Roosevelt
- John Lennon (singer)





And one *not* so famous philatelist!





# Resources

- American Philatelic Society: [www.stamps.org](http://www.stamps.org)
- American Topical Association: [www.americantopicaassn.org](http://www.americantopicaassn.org)
- Boy Scout Stamp Collecting Merit Badge: [www.sossi.org/badges/bsamb.htm](http://www.sossi.org/badges/bsamb.htm)
- BNAPS Youth: [www.bnaps.org/stamps4kids/](http://www.bnaps.org/stamps4kids/)
- History of the Post Office: [www.usps.com/cpim/ftp/pubs/pub100.pdf](http://www.usps.com/cpim/ftp/pubs/pub100.pdf)
- The National Postal Museum: [www.postalmuseum.si.edu/](http://www.postalmuseum.si.edu/)
- Learn More About Stamps: [www.learnaboutstamps.org/](http://www.learnaboutstamps.org/)
- Wisconsin Federation of Stamp Clubs: [www.wfscstamps.org/](http://www.wfscstamps.org/)





*With special  
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