



# Stamp Collecting

## Merit Badge Workbook



This workbook can help you but you still need to read the merit badge pamphlet.  
This Workbook can help you organize your thoughts as you prepare to meet with your merit badge counselor

**Merit Badge Counselors may not require the use of this or any similar workbooks.**

You still must satisfy your counselor that you can demonstrate each skill and have learned the information. You should use the work space provided for each requirement to keep track of which requirements have been completed, and to make notes for discussing the item with your counselor, not for providing full and complete answers.

If a requirement says that you must take an action using words such as "discuss", "show", "tell", "explain", "demonstrate", "identify", etc, that is what you must do.

No one may add or subtract from the official requirements found on Scouting.org.

The requirements were last issued or revised in 2019 • This workbook was updated in November 2023.

Scout's Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Unit \_\_\_\_\_ Date Started \_\_\_\_\_

Counselor's Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone No.: \_\_\_\_\_ Email: \_\_\_\_\_

Please submit errors, omissions, comments or suggestions about this **workbook** to: [Workbooks@USScouts.Org](mailto:Workbooks@USScouts.Org)  
Comments or suggestions for changes to the **requirements** for the **merit badge** should be sent to: [Merit.Badge@Scouting.Org](mailto:Merit.Badge@Scouting.Org)

1. Do the following:

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


- b. Briefly describe some aspects of the history, growth, and development of the United States postal system.


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Tell how it is different from postal systems in other countries.


2. Define topical stamp collecting.


Name and describe types of stamp collections.


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

- a. Perforated and imperforate stamps
- b. Mint and used stamps
- c. Sheet-booklet and coil stamps
- d. Numbers on plate block, booklet, coil, or marginal markings
- e. Overprint and surcharge
- f. Metered mail
- g. Definitive, commemorative, semipostal, and airmail stamps
- h. Cancellation and postmark
- i. First day cover
- j. Postal stationery (aerogramme, stamped envelope, and postal card)

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.


- 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.

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

- a. Stamp tongs
- b. Water and Tray
- c. Magnifiers
- d. Hinges and stamp mounts
- e. Perforation gauge
- f. Glassine envelopes and cover sleeves
- g. Watermark fluid

6. Do the following:

- a. Show a stamp album and how to mount stamps with or without hinges.
  - Show at least ONE page that displays several stamps.
- b. Discuss at least THREE ways you can help to preserve stamps, covers, and albums in first-class condition.

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7. Do at least TWO of the following:

- a. Design a stamp, cancellation, or cachet.

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

Location Visited:

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Date:

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


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


- e. Describe the steps taken to produce a stamp. Include the methods of printing, types of paper, perforation styles, and 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.

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

- a. A collection of 250 or more different stamps from at least 15 countries.
- b. A collection of a stamp from each of 50 different countries, mounted on maps to show the location of each.
- c. A collection of 100 or more different stamps from either one country or a group of closely related countries.
- d. A collection of 75 or more different stamps on a single topic. (Some interesting topics are Scouting, birds, insects, the Olympics, sports, flowers, animals, ships, holidays, trains, famous people, space, and medicine). Stamps may be from different countries.
- e. A collection of postal items discovered in your mail by monitoring over a period of thirty days. Include at least five different types listed in requirement 3.

When working on merit badges, Scouts and Scouters should be aware of some vital information in the current edition of the *Guide to Advancement* (BSA publication 33088). Important excerpts from that publication can be downloaded from <http://usscouts.org/advance/docs/GTA-Excerpts-meritbadges.pdf>.

You can download a complete copy of the *Guide to Advancement* from <http://www.scouting.org/filestore/pdf/33088.pdf>.