

Essential Supplies for the Stamp Collector

Collecting stamps is a widely loved hobby all over the world. Stamps are pieces of history which has value that is sought after by the whole world. Collecting stamps is also a hobby that most people can engage into because of the minimal expenses that it requires.

From the time of the birth of the stamp, people have been engaged in stamp collecting. The first stamp was introduced in 1840. After twenty years of stamp circulation, more than 70 countries have adopted the postage stamp system. There is an estimated 200 million collectors of postage stamps all over the world. There are around 125,000 stamp collecting supplies dealers and a handful of organizations and clubs which are centered on stamp collecting.

The value of a stamp depends on the maintenance of its integrity and quality. The proper handling and care for stamps is necessary if one is to engage seriously in stamp collecting. There are several stamp collecting supplies that are available out there in the markets which can be availed to ensure proper handling of stamps. Here are some of them:

Stamp mounts and stamp hinges

Stamps are stored in albums or books. These books contain spaces where the stamps are placed using stamp mounts and stamp hinges. The stamp mount is used if one is paranoid in damaging the original gum of the stamp. Mounts have sleeves where the stamps are inserted and this eliminates the need to attaché the stamp into a gum-coated hinge. The stamp mounts are more expensive than stamp hinges and are usually used to hold the more expensive stamps in the collection.

Stamp hinges are the small rectangular pieces of paper or glassine which are coated with gum. They are primarily used to attach the stamps into the pages of the stamp books or albums. They function like a door which is held by hinges. The good thing about stamp hinges is that they are very inexpensive and one will not spend more than a few dollars to buy a thousand of these stamp holders.

Stamp albums

Stamp albums are very important in collecting postage stamps because they are used to secure the stamp collection. They allow the collector to be able to organize his stamp collection and display them in a very neat manner.

Knowledge about the kind of stamp album which will be suitable for holding the

stamp collection is a good thing to have. A good stamp album would have thick pages and can hold a lot of stress and withstand faulty handling. It must have ample space for the stamps so as not to get them too crowded. The binding of the album must be sturdy and strong enough to hold the pages more effectively and secure the stamps properly. The pages must be acid-free to avoid damaging the stamps.

Stamp tongs

Stamp tongs are comparable to ordinary tweezers. However, stamp tongs are usually made from plastic or stainless steel. They are primarily used to handle the stamps to prevent any damage from occurring. The use of tongs is a must for expensive stamps because a simple touch can decrease the value of a stamp.

Magnifying glass

A collector will examine his collection one time or another. In examining the stamps, one must use a magnifying glass so as to have a clear view of their conditions. Examining stamps is necessary to spot stamp tears, damages or errors and most especially, they are important for appreciating the beauty of the stamps.

Perforation Gauge

Perforation gauges are used to identify a stamp from a set of identical stamps. Perforations are a stamp's way of identifying itself. Every stamp has different perforations. The number of curves can be measured using a perforation gauge. They measure curves every two centimeters.

Watermark Detector

The use of a watermark detector will allow a stamp collector to see the patterns which are embossed on the stamps. The patterns indicate the time when the stamp was issued. Although not all stamps are embossed with watermarks, it sure is useful to have one at hand.

There are many other stamp collecting supplies that are essential in the art of collecting stamps. If one is involved in stamp collecting, for any reason at all, he must have the proper tools to be able to make the experience fun and exciting.