

obtaining new material. Most dealers see a wide range of material and will assist you in obtaining the stamps you need for your collection. Many collectors obtain material from auctions and postal bid sales, many of which have lots from a few dollars. For information about the dealers near you please contact the Australasian Philatelic Traders' Association (APTA).



Australia Post

If you are interested in modern Australian stamps you can purchase stamps, first day covers and other products directly from Australia Post. Most Australia Post shops carry a range of new issues. You can also order directly by mail from the Australian Philatelic Bureau, PO Box 4000 Ferntree Gully Vic 3156.

Obtaining stamps from the Mail

An inexpensive source of stamps for your collection is the stamps that come in your mail. While much of the mail today uses meters or postage paid imprints, there are still many opportunities for obtaining stamps from your mail, from office mail or from that of your relatives and friends.

AUSTRALASIAN PHILATELIC TRADERS' ASSOCIATION

GPO Box 5378, Melbourne Vic 3001

STATE PHILATELIC CONTACTS

ACT Philatelic Council GPO Box 980 Canberra, ACT 2601.

New South Wales Stamp Council, GPO Box 9800, Sydney, NSW 2001.

Queensland Philatelic Council, 18 Coolcrest St Wynnum, QLD 4178.

South Australian Philatelic Council, GPO Box 9800, Adelaide, SA 5001.

Western Australian Philatelic Council, GPO Box 9800, Perth, WA 6001.

Tasmanian Stamp Council, GPO Box 9800, Hobart, TAS 7001.

Victorian Philatelic Council, GPO Box 9800, Melbourne, Vic 2001.



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Other brochures in this series are available from the Australian Philatelic Federation:

I have just inherited a stamp collection. Where do I go from here?

I have just rediscovered my old stamp collection –

Where do I go from here?

Why Join a Stamp Club?

Beyond Australia

YOUR HOBBY AND STAMP COLLECTING

Why you should take up collecting stamps



Stamp collecting is one of the world's most popular hobbies, satisfying our collector instincts as well as providing an insight into the history, geography and culture of the countries whose stamps we collect. For those who choose to collect by a theme or a topic, stamp collecting provides an easy route to the study of that topic. In addition, through stamps, you can learn about the postal services, a country's postal history and transport systems and the significance of postmarks.

Besides being educational, stamp collecting is enjoyable!

It is a hobby suitable for all ages from youngsters of six or seven to adults in their nineties. It is a hobby that offers tremendous scope from casual collecting of stamps from the mail to detailed studies of printing methods and postal and social history.

Isn't Stamp Collecting Expensive?

Stamp collecting certainly can be expensive, with the most expensive stamps and covers selling for many thousands of dollars. Such stamps are clearly the preserve of the rich but the beauty of stamp collecting is that it can be enjoyed by people of all walks of life, regardless of the size of their pocketbook.

You may not be able to afford the first issues of Mauritius or a penny black used on cover on the first day of issue, but there are many stamps available for modest sums or indeed for free.

Money spent on many hobbies is gone for good. With stamp collecting, at least part of what you spend on your stamps is likely to be recovered when the time comes for you to dispose of your collection.

How Do I Go About Starting?

Traditionally people have begun stamp collecting by buying 'the largest packet of world-wide stamps' that they can afford, a medium-priced album and some stamp hinges.

In many respects this advice remains valid today as it provides the new stamp collector with the opportunity to learn the basics of the hobby before they decide on their collecting interests.

New collectors should also read avidly, obtaining access to a world catalogue (such as those published by Stanley Gibbons or Scotts). Many public libraries have copies of these catalogues.

There are also a number of introductory books on stamp collecting which are available from stamp dealers.

Storing Your Stamp Collection

Stamp dealers, and the members of your local stamp club, can advise you on how to store and mount your collection.

Stamp dealers offer a wide range of albums and other accessories to assist you with your hobby.

A pair of stamp tongs are essential for handling stamps to prevent them from damage from dirt and moisture on your hands. A traditional loose-leaf album and hinges can be used to mount and store your stamps or you may prefer a good quality stockbook.

It is important that you use good quality albums or stockbooks as the poor quality acid paper in some albums can result in damage to your stamps. Your local stamp dealer can advise you on the various options including special albums for storing covers.

Deciding on what to collect

Once you have collected for a while you will have some feel for the range of stamps available and you will begin to develop preferences for collecting stamps of particular countries or periods or of a particular theme or topic.

The magnitude of stamps available means that very few people attempt to collect stamps from the whole

world. Most collectors limit themselves to collecting the stamps of a particular country, period or topic.

Obtaining Stamps

Stamp collectors obtain stamps by purchasing new issues from Australia Post, by purchasing stamps from a dealer or auction house, by obtaining stamps from the mail, by obtaining stamps from family and friends and by exchanging stamps with other collectors.

How Can Stamp Clubs Help?

Stamp clubs (or philatelic societies) exist in most areas. Their membership includes people from a wide range of backgrounds who are interested in stamp collecting. They provide their members with the opportunity to meet with like-minded people and to share information about their hobby.

They often offer displays, visiting speakers, newsletters or magazines and purchasing schemes for books and accessories.

Importantly they provide you with an opportunity to obtain stamps at reasonable prices through their exchange books. Many clubs also organize stamp fairs and exhibitions. Stamp club members can help you with advice on storing and housing your collection and give you ideas on new collecting areas.

For details of stamp clubs near you please contact the philatelic council in your state. Contact details are given at the end of this brochure.

Dealers

Stamp dealers and auction houses are an important source of stamps. Developing a close relationship with a stamp dealer is one of the best ways of