

## The Value of Stamp Collections

A few words of caution.

The value of any stamp collection depends heavily on the condition and the format of the collection. There are a lot of "very old" stamps that have "very little" value.

You could do a self-evaluation using one of the following methods:

1) "Fast and Dirty"- applies to worldwide stamp collections - count the number of stamps in the collection. Multiply that number by \$.20 (twenty cents) that is the "base catalog price" for stamps in the Scott Catalog. Then multiply the result by .3 (30%), which is the typical discount a dealer would apply to make an offer.

2) "Face Value"- mainly applies to U.S. Stamps and involves counting all the mint (never used) stamps by value and adding up the result. This is the postage value of the collection. This method can be used on foreign stamps but would require the ability to convert to U.S. currency. A dealer will usually discount face value by 50% (or more depending on condition. For a recent collection donated to the club, my inventory at face was over \$100 and the catalog was over \$500. We gave the donor a letter thanking her for a \$200 donation to youth philately.

3) Cataloging the collection - Means what it says. Getting a current Scott Catalog (available from most libraries) and identifying each item by Scott number and listing the catalog value.

Because the donation mentioned above was "small" this was the approach that I took for it. It took me about three hours to identify and develop a spreadsheet to establish the face value and catalog value of the stamps.

A professional dealer could do it a lot faster because he/she would only look up the "special stamps". Again, given the Scott Catalog value, a sale would probably not get more than 30% of the Catalog value.

Other considerations:

Any sign of dampness is a big negative. (30% goes to 20 %)

Any mildew or musty odor is an even bigger negative. (30% goes to 10%, or 0)

Loose stamps are worth less

Stamps in "envelopes" of any kind are worth less

Stamps properly mounted in albums are worth more.

Mint stamps that are hinged will be valued at a number between mint and used.

## Disposal Time

There is a relationship between the speed of disposal and the return realized on the sale of a stamp collection.

<b>Time</b>	<b>Method</b>	<b>Return</b>
<b><u>Shortest</u></b>	Donation	<b><u>Lowest</u></b> <b>(tax deduction)</b>
	Out right sale to a jobber/ dealer	
	Out right sale to a Stamp dealer	
	Individual items or lots sold to a stamp dealer	
	Individual items or lots offered at a public auction	
	Individual items or lots offered at a stamp club auction	
	Sales of individual items or lots offered on E-Bay	
<b>Longest</b>		<b>Highest</b>