

scott specialized catalogue of united states stamps

Scott Specialized Catalogue of United States Stamps is an essential resource for philatelists, offering a comprehensive and detailed reference for U.S. postage stamps and postal history. Since its initial publication in 1868, the Scott catalog has evolved into a definitive guide, indispensable for collectors, dealers, and anyone interested in the hobby of stamp collecting. This article delves into the history, structure, and significance of the Scott Specialized Catalogue, along with tips on how to use it effectively.

History of the Scott Specialized Catalogue

The Scott catalog began with the vision of a young entrepreneur named George B. Scott, who saw the need for a standardized reference for stamp collectors. The first edition was published in 1868 and quickly gained popularity among collectors, making it the go-to resource for U.S. stamps.

Over the years, the catalog has undergone numerous revisions and updates, reflecting the ever-changing landscape of postal history and philately. The introduction of new stamps, the retirement of old issues, and the emergence of new collecting trends have all contributed to the catalog's continuous evolution. Today, the Scott Specialized Catalogue is published annually, ensuring that it remains up-to-date with the latest developments in the world of stamp collecting.

Structure of the Scott Specialized Catalogue

The Scott Specialized Catalogue is organized into several sections, each focusing on specific categories of stamps and postal items. Understanding the structure of the catalog is crucial for effective use. Below are the primary sections:

1. U.S. Postage Stamps

This section is the heart of the catalog, featuring detailed listings of U.S. postage stamps from their inception to the present day. Each stamp is assigned a unique Scott number, which is used universally among collectors. Key details provided for each stamp include:

- Description: A brief overview of the stamp's design and features.
- Issuance date: The date when the stamp was officially released.

- Face value: The denomination of the stamp.
- Variations: Information about different printings or versions of the stamp.
- Market value: An estimated value based on current market conditions, usually listed in different grades.

2. U.S. Revenue Stamps

This section covers the specialized category of revenue stamps used for taxation and other government fees. Revenue stamps can be complex, and the Scott catalog provides detailed descriptions, including:

- Types of revenue stamps: Such as documentary, proprietary, and excise stamps.
- Rarity and market value: Insights into the rarity of specific issues and their corresponding values.

3. Postal History

The postal history section dives into the fascinating world of how stamps were used for actual mail delivery. This includes:

- Cover examples: Illustrations of envelopes or packages featuring stamps in use.
- Postmarks and cancellations: Information on various city marks, dates, and types of cancellations, which can greatly influence a stamp's value.

4. Errors and Varieties

Errors and varieties provide a thrilling aspect of collecting. This section catalogs printing errors, such as inverted stamps, misperforations, and color variations, which can significantly increase a stamp's value. Collectors are often particularly interested in:

- Famous errors: Notable mistakes in printing that have become legendary among collectors.
- Market trends: Current values and demand for error stamps.

5. Specialized Listings

In addition to standard listings, the Scott catalog also provides specialized listings for stamps that fall into unique categories, such as:

- Plate blocks: Stamps still attached to the plate from which they were

printed.

- First-day covers: Envelopes postmarked on the day a stamp is issued.
- Souvenir sheets: Special limited-edition sheets featuring multiple stamps.

Using the Scott Specialized Catalogue

For both novice and experienced collectors, the Scott Specialized Catalogue can be an invaluable tool. Here are some tips for making the most of this resource:

1. Familiarize Yourself with Scott Numbers

Understanding Scott numbers is crucial for effective communication with other collectors and dealers. Each U.S. postage stamp has a unique number, making it easier to identify and value specific stamps. When buying or selling stamps, always refer to the Scott number to avoid confusion.

2. Check Market Values Regularly

The values listed in the Scott catalog change based on market conditions. It's advisable to check the catalog regularly to stay updated on the market trends, especially if you are considering buying or selling stamps.

3. Use the Index

The catalog contains a comprehensive index that allows collectors to quickly find specific stamps or categories. The index is invaluable for locating stamps by their Scott number or description.

4. Take Advantage of Digital Resources

In addition to the printed catalog, the Scott catalog is also available in digital formats. Online access provides additional features such as search functions, making it easier to navigate through thousands of listings.

5. Join Philatelic Communities

Engaging with other collectors through clubs, forums, and social media can enhance your understanding of the Scott catalog. Other collectors can provide

insights into specific stamps, recent market trends, and tips for using the catalog effectively.

Significance of the Scott Specialized Catalogue

The Scott Specialized Catalogue of United States Stamps holds immense significance in the world of philately and serves as a cornerstone for collectors. Here are a few reasons why it is so important:

1. Standardization

The Scott catalog has established a standardized system for identifying and valuing stamps, which has become the norm in the philatelic community. This standardization helps create a universal language among collectors and dealers, facilitating smoother transactions.

2. Educational Resource

For newcomers to the hobby, the Scott catalog serves as an educational resource. It provides historical context, detailed descriptions, and insights into the significance of various stamps, enriching the collecting experience.

3. Preservation of Postal History

By documenting U.S. stamps and their backgrounds, the Scott catalog plays a crucial role in preserving postal history. It helps collectors appreciate the cultural and historical significance of the stamps they collect.

4. Market Influence

The Scott catalog influences the stamp market by providing a benchmark for values. Collectors, dealers, and investors often rely on the catalog for guidance when buying and selling stamps, making it a critical tool for maintaining market stability.

Conclusion

The Scott Specialized Catalogue of United States Stamps is more than just a reference book; it is a vital resource that connects collectors with the rich

history of U.S. postal services. As the catalog continues to evolve and adapt to the changing landscape of philately, it remains a cornerstone for collectors at all levels. Whether you are a seasoned collector or just starting, the Scott catalog is an indispensable tool that can enhance your understanding and appreciation of the world of stamps.

Frequently Asked Questions

What is the Scott Specialized Catalogue of United States Stamps?

The Scott Specialized Catalogue of United States Stamps is a comprehensive reference book that catalogs and values U.S. postage stamps, providing detailed descriptions, historical context, and market prices.

How often is the Scott Specialized Catalogue updated?

The Scott Specialized Catalogue is updated annually to reflect changes in the stamp market, new discoveries, and the addition of newly issued stamps.

Who publishes the Scott Specialized Catalogue?

The Scott Specialized Catalogue is published by Scott Publishing Company, which is part of the Amos Media Company.

Is the Scott Specialized Catalogue suitable for beginners?

Yes, while it is detailed and comprehensive, the Scott Specialized Catalogue is also user-friendly and can be a valuable resource for both beginners and experienced collectors.

What types of stamps are included in the Scott Specialized Catalogue?

The catalogue includes various types of U.S. stamps, such as definitive, commemorative, airmail, and revenue stamps, as well as postal cards and other related items.

Why is the Scott number important in stamp collecting?

The Scott number is a unique identifier assigned to each stamp in the catalogue, making it easier for collectors to reference, buy, sell, and trade

specific stamps.

Can I find information about stamp errors and varieties in the Scott Specialized Catalogue?

Yes, the Scott Specialized Catalogue provides detailed information on stamp errors, varieties, and variations, which are crucial for advanced collectors.

Where can I purchase the Scott Specialized Catalogue?

The Scott Specialized Catalogue can be purchased from various bookstores, online retailers, and directly from the Scott Publishing Company's website.

Does the Scott Specialized Catalogue include pricing information?

Yes, the catalogue includes pricing information based on market trends, which helps collectors assess the value of their stamps.

How can I use the Scott Specialized Catalogue for my stamp collection?

You can use the Scott Specialized Catalogue to identify, value, and organize your stamp collection, as well as to track your collection's growth over time.

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