

Getting Started in Exhibiting, 2017

Why Exhibit? It is fun. It gives a sense of pride accomplishment and satisfaction. It lets one be creative. It builds communication skills and helps build you collection. It lets one give something back to our hobby/ It provides opportunities for socialization. *However*, it does take time and effort. If you can't take constructive comments, don't compete, just observe the work of others.

You collect to please yourself.

You display, trying to please your audience.

You exhibit, hoping to please the judges.

There are **a few rules** in exhibiting at the local level. 1. The exhibitor must own all of the material in the exhibit. 2. Any reproductions and other material not original (including forgeries) must be labeled as such unless reproduced significantly larger or smaller than the original. 3. Restorations, beyond cleaning, must be clearly labeled as such. 4. Each exhibit must have a title page.

In an exhibit: 1. The title page must state what your task is. 2. The body needs to unfold logically and be easy to follow. 3. The write-ups should convey some depth of knowledge. 4. You should show the best material possible in the best condition available. 5. It should be pleasant to look at.

Story line: Your exhibit needs a start, middle and a logical ending. Your start is the title page, with title, introduction and plan/outline. The bulk of your exhibit is the middle part. Your final page should be a definite ending (without actually saying "The End"). {Remember fairy tales? "Once upon a time..." for a start, then the middle, with no digressions or flashbacks, proceeding step by step to the ending "...and they lived happily ever after."}

Suggested tools*: To me, foremost should be your philatelic (and thematic) references, to show that you have done some personal study. The other items include: 1. your philatelic material; 2. mounting materials (hinges, mounts, corners, glue stick, etc.; 3. several 7 (or 8) pocket stock sheets; 4. paper, pencils, scissors and a soft eraser; 5. a metric ruler (clear plastic?); 6. your (un-punched) exhibit pages and page protectors; 7. card stock (65 lb. or so) for stiffeners; 8. a clean, flat, well-lit work surface; 9. storage binder, D-ring

suggested; 10. plenty of time. (*If you use card stock for pages, ignore no. 6.*) * *These suggestions presume you will be using your computer and printer.*

Suggested steps: 1. Pick your subject. 2. Draft a possible title, introduction and outline or plan, put it in a page protector and keep it close, for reference. 3. Place your philatelic material on the stock pages in approximate order of your plan. 4. Draft write-ups for each item/prospective page; cut them out and place on the stock pages. 5. Rearrange until pages seem balanced, with material in logical order. 6. Get write-ups proofread (by someone else if possible), then re-do write-ups, but not on final pages. Measure them, then place location dots on final pages for write-ups and material. 7. Type and print out write-ups in locations on exhibit pages. 8. Mount philatelic material, erasing all dots. 9. Lightly pencil page number on back and store in protector, with stiffener, in binder. 10. At the end, pick a short, suitable title and construct the title page, being sure that your plan includes only items in the exhibit. Store it in its protector in the binder. **ALWAYS GET MORE PAPER THAN YOU THINK YOU WILL NEED!** (With *Microsoft Publisher*, or another page-making program, you can do your layouts and rearranging on the screen. Still, print a draft of your page and have it proofread. Then make any corrections before printing your final page.)

A layout grid: Even when using *Microsoft Publisher* I find it useful in planning layouts. To make one, from the left margin place dots at 29, 79, 137 and 196 mm; then down at 20, 98, 176 and 254 mm. Draw a heavy frame using the outside pairs of dots, then, draw lighter horizontal and vertical lines, to get nine rectangles. Avoid placing any material below the bottom line! You might place your materials and drafts write-ups on this page, in step 5, above. If so, make a sketch of each page, with measurements from the side and top, to help with step 6, above. Try to place your main items on the upper third line, if possible at/near one of the focal points. Also try to have something in each of the nine rectangles.

Squint test: Hold a completed page at arm's length, then squint while looking at it. Your material should be what draws your eyes, not the text. (*If it is the text, consider redoing the page...*)

Suggested things to avoid: punched pages; bordered pages; exhibit title on every page; coloured pages; black mounts, especially for covers; coloured fonts for body text; ALL CAPITALS.; **Title fonts;** *Everything in italics.;*

Condensed fonts.; **All in Bold.**; *Script fonts*; line spacing other than default (not 1½ spaces or double spaced); centered paragraphs of more than 3 lines; black photo corners; ballpoint pens; markers; highlighters.

All will detract from your philatelic items

Serifed fonts are generally easier to read than sans-serif ones. Try a few lines of the fonts available on your computer. See if you can find your alternative to the overworked Times New Roman. Body text should be in the 10~12 point range, with a smaller size for captions. Body text should be readable (on paper) at arm's length.

Mounting: If mounting sets, try to keep the same spacing between stamps on every page, both horizontally and vertically. Mount them in straight, horizontal rows. In sets with different sized stamps opt for visual appeal rather than value order, with larger sizes being mounted last in the series. Keep arrangements simple. (*Viewing a series of "cookie cutter" pages is boring.*) Keep things "up" on your pages, to avoid a bottom-heavy look. Use two or three mounting corners for covers. Avoid interference with the stamp(s) at upper right. Covers may be lapped, if needed, as long as all important information is visible.

Write-ups: Leave your spell checker ON! Use a combination of upper and lower case (as here). Text must relate to material shown on that page. Try to limit the number of long paragraphs (over 5 or 6 lines, full width, becomes very difficult to read): Consider shorter paragraphs, or maybe the use of columns. Use **bold** (or underlining) sparingly, for emphasis. Remember the 4-C's of composition: Clear, Complete, Concise and Correct. Ask yourself these questions about every part of the write-up. If you use card stock for pages be sure that your printer can handle it. Remember K.I.S.S. Keep It Simple, St... (rhymes with 'cupid').

Justification: This sheet uses full justification. (Maybe use right and left justification for write-ups beside items.)

Template: Keep a written record of your page margins, font(s) and size(s) where you can find it for future re-writing. It will save a lot of headaches.

Useful On-Line References:

www.rpsc.org Second column, scroll down the second column to "Let's talk Exhibiting" then click for 14 printable articles. (No. 9 is the one about getting started.) The others are well worth reading.

<https://stamps.org> American Philatelic Society site. On the header bar click "Stamp Collecting", then click "Exhibiting". The right column has "Welcome to the World of Stamp Exhibiting" dated 1994-97, but with much useful information. Also on the "Exhibiting" page there is a link to the new (2016) Judging/Exhibiting manual--a good on-line reference, or print selected pages from it.

www.americantopicalasn.org Click "Exhibiting" for selected pages from award winning exhibits. (NONE were first time exhibits.)

www.aape.org (American Association of Philatelic Exhibitors) Under "Exhibiting" there is a link to "How to Create a Philatelic Exhibit". You can either view it in a 16 page frame, a page at a time, or in a .pdf. file. It's a bit involved, but has some useful points. There are many exhibits on line, with links to more sites. *Please remember that these are probably at least three or more re-workings away from first efforts.*

A warning: Some links from these sites might be out of commission!

<https://www.wikipedia.org> Very useful for models of outlines for just about anything.

This is in Word, using 10 point Palatino Linotype, justified, with 'tight' (1.0sp) spacing between lines.

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