

# Sell Hobby Items By Mail

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## Sell Hobby Items By Mail

You can, if you are ambitious, start a Mail Order Business selling collectables to hobbieists by mail. To begin, you must first find a hobby that appeals to YOU. Next, you must spend several weeks researching that hobby. You must learn what collectors want and how much they are willing to pay for it. You should also know what other dealers are willing to pay for the merchandise which they sell. And you must be willing to pay the same amounts.

Perhaps you already know exactly what you want to sell. If you have been collecting old Valentines, then start a Mail Order business buying and selling old Valentines. Or Stamps. Or Comic Books. The first rule of Mail Order selling is to sell what you yourself would buy.

To give you an idea of what collectors buy and sell by mail, here is a partial list of today's collectables:

Phonograph Records	Cigar Labels	License Plates
Beer Labels	Circus Posters	Music Boxes
Salt/Pepper Shakers	Greeting Cards	Old Pencils
Atlases	Military Medals	Sheet Music
Doll Clothes	Menus	Cigar Boxes
Train Photos	Old Calendars	Maps
Street Car Tokens	Buttons	Postcards
Fruit Car Tokens	Fruit Jar Labels	Old Magazines
Gun Catalogs	Paper Currency	Cartoon Books
Theatre Programs	Political Buttons	Baseball Cards
Children's Books	Stock Certificates	Old Toys
Gems, Minerals	Belt Buckles	Airplane Photos
FBI Posters	Newspapers	Coins
Arrowheads	Old Jewelry	Boat Photographs
Advertising Cards	Dog Pictures	Movie Magazines
Autographs	Dolls	Hunting Licenses
Valentines	Cookbooks	Beatle Items
Stamps	Indian Relics	Railroad Books
Fishing Licenses	Comic Books	Thimbles
Automobile Manuals	Diaries	Railroad Passes
Antique Barbed Wire		

I would like to suggest that you send for sample copies of two magazines. They are read avidly by hobby dealers and hobby collectors alike.

THE COLLECTORS NEWS, Box 156, Grundy Center, IA 50638

THE ANTIQUE TRADER WEEKLY, Box 1050, Dubuque, IA 52001

Each of these publications contain around 70 or 80 pages of ads from dealers and collectors. Almost every hobby publication, large or small, is listed somewhere within its pages.

Once you have selected your field, start a file. Keep copies of

all the ads selling your kind of merchandise. Also keep ads showing the dealer's buying prices. If price lists are offered in ads, send for them and STUDY them. MAKE YOURSELF AN EXPERT IN YOUR FIELD.

Try to locate any publications that deal with your field. Often, you can locate small mimeographed publications and newsletters which will give you all kinds of useful information.

Your next step is to look for merchandise in your own community. Here are some suggestions:

Start by attending flea markets and antique shows. Don't be afraid to make inquiries of dealers. They often have what they consider "junk" stashed away, assuming that it isn't of much value to anyone. I once discovered a fabulous stamp collection that way!

Browse around through Thrift Shops.

Study the garage sale ads in your local newspaper. Visit any that sound promising. (Sometimes, it pays to telephone first. Also, by telling people what kind of merchandise you are looking for, they may be able to direct you to others who have exactly what you need!)

Place "Wanted to Buy" ads in your local Swapper's News, or your local newspaper. Be sure to list your phone number.

It is amazing what you can find in your local community if you work at it. However, if you can't find enough merchandise locally, run ads in the Collector's Magazines listed above. Their rates are very, very low. And you will soon discover that they are widely read!

Once you have accumulated a decent stock of merchandise, you are ready to begin selling it. If there are publications specializing in your field, by all means advertise there. You have a ready-made audience! Also run ads in the big hobby magazines.

Type up a list of what you have and have an Instant Printer make a hundred or so copies for you. Hobbyists don't mind typewritten, mimeographed, or xerox copies . . . it's half the fun of collecting. Then run your ad. Your ad can merely offer your list to interested collectors free (or for a stamp, to weed out coupon clippers). Or you can offer to make a sale straight from the ad. If you do the latter, stick in your price list with the merchandise. It will be read . . . eagerly!

Here are a few sample ads run by hobby dealers for your consideration:

"Railroad Timetables, 1940's  
Four different - \$4.00 postpaid..

"Old Children's Books and Texts. Stamp for List."

"85,000 Comic Books, Movie Magazines, Funnies, etc.  
1900-1957. Catalog \$1.00 (Refundable)."

"Original Movie Poster, Pressbooks,  
Stills, 1919-1975. Catalog - 50 cents"

"Sleigh Bells! Stamp for list."

"Sheet Music. SASE for list."

Just in case you are not familiar with the phrase, "SASE" means "Self-addressed, stamped envelope". As you progress, you will learn continually. Most hobby dealers will tell you that they learn more from the collectors who buy from them than they could ever learn from any other source.

Below are some other hobby publications that may interest you. It would be a good idea to include postage when requesting copies from the publisher.

Antiques and Collecting Hobbies, 1006 S. Michigan Ave.,  
Chicago, IL 60605

Linn's Stamp News, Box 29, Sidney, OH 45365

Doll Castle News, Box 247, Washington, NJ 07882