



Illinois 4-H | Spark Ideas. Ignite Possibilities.

A collection is basically “a group of things” ... and it can be almost anything. Collecting things like coins or dolls or sports memorabilia are all pretty popular. But did you know that people also collect things like erasers, soap bars, fishing lures, restaurant menus and even banana labels? What’s important is that your collection is well planned, organized and has a record of details.



Exploring 4-H Collectibles

Spark Activity: Collection Connection

Challenge yourself to list 100 different things that you could collect. See how many you can come up with by yourself and then ask family and friends to help you add to the list. Search online too - you’ll be surprised at what people collect. Don’t worry about how realistic it is at this point – the idea is to generate as many different ideas as you can. Once you have 100 on your list, then narrow your list of possibilities down to your 10 favorite ideas. Talk with your parent or mentor, and choose one item that you can build a small collection around right now. Choose 5 items for your “collection” and then apply these next steps.

Develop an inventory of each item in your collection which includes:

1. The date you acquired each item
2. Where it came from
3. The cost or value
4. The condition (mint, good, fair, package never opened, etc.)
5. Any important notes about the history of the item or reason it was selected for your collection. Determine a method for displaying your collection that will also keep it clean and safe.



The possibilities for collections are endless. Choose something you really enjoy to get started. Learn the basics of collecting. Then see how your hobby grows.

4-H Project Levels and Goals

Beginner

- Learn what a collection is
- Learn steps to identify, display and record items in your collection
- Visit a local museum or historical home to learn about different types of collections
- Start at least one collection that you may continue to build in future years
- Begin an inventory of each item in your collection – date and location acquired, cost/value and condition

Intermediate

- Learn about unique types of collections around the world
- Visit a large museum
- Attend an antique show or collectors’ convention
- Develop and use a budget for your growing collection
- Interview a collector who shares an interest similar to yours
- Identify various ways for displaying your collection/s
- Learn about rare and limited edition items

Advanced

- Learn about extensive collections around the world and techniques collectors use to build inventory
- Interview serious collectors to learn their collecting techniques
- Develop a budget for acquiring rare or limited edition items
- Learn the history of your items
- Evaluate collectible conditions
- Learn originals vs. reproductions
- With an adult, join online discussion groups

Put Your Project Into Action

Show Your Skills

- Take your collection to a senior center and share with them what you've learned
- Share your collection with your 4-H club or classroom
- Exhibit at your local 4-H show
- Exhibit at local collector's events and conventions

Service and Leadership

- Volunteer with a local museum (small towns often have a historical museum) – learn how they acquire, record and display their collections
- Visit antique stores, flea markets and garage sales in search of collectibles for a local museum or community collection
- Invite a docent from a museum to talk to your 4-H club about collections
- Teach club members how to get started in building a collection

Entrepreneurship

- Sell your collectibles online
- Sell your items at collectible conventions or collectible stores
- Learn to buy items at auctions or estate sales and sell them as collectibles

Technology Connection

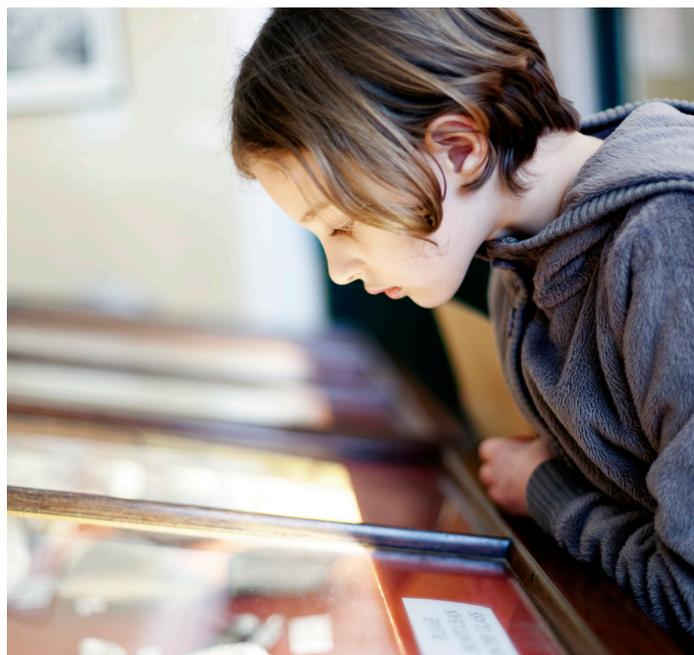
- Connect with collectors around the world
- Explore and visit online, virtual museums

Connecting with a Mentor

- Local museums and zoos will often have volunteer docents knowledgeable about their collections
- Antique stores
- Collectible stores (comic books, coins, etc.)

Events

- Exhibit your collection at your local 4-H Show
- Collectible Shows and Conventions



Careers for People Interested in Collections

Museum Curator	Trading Card Research Specialist
Archivist	Event Planner for Collectible Conventions
Museum Technician	
Collections Specialist	
Antique Store Owner	

Start a Conversation

If you could collect anything in the world, what would it be? Why?

Thinking about a collection you have now – what is something you would like to add to your collection? How could that happen?

What are the most interesting collections that you've learned about in your research?

Want to learn more?

go.illinois.edu/4Hcollectibles

Explore more at Illinois 4-H!

4-H.extension.illinois.edu



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