

The Arts and History



Collecting

Mention collecting as a hobby and only images of coins and stamps may come to mind. But people collect all kinds of objects: baseball cards, comic books, stuffed animals, crystals—the list is endless. If you're intrigued by the idea of starting a collection of your own or building on an existing collection, carry on.

Each interest project contains activities which are organized into four different categories: Skill Builders, Technology, Service Projects, and Career Exploration. By doing these activities, you will gain insights about yourself—your strengths and weaknesses, your likes and dislikes. You will have a range of new experiences, and you will develop valuable skills and expertise in specific areas. *To earn an interest project award, you must complete at least seven activities as follows: two Skill Builders activities; one Technology activity; one service project activity; one Career Exploration activity; Two activities from any category that you choose.*

Skill Builders

1. Start a collection. Use your current interests as a starting point or, if you already have a collection going, add to it. Find at least five items that are of interest. If you love a particular sport, for example, you might collect the caps, posters, or pennants of your favorite teams.
2. Find a way to use or display your collection. Colored beads or shells, for example, could be laid out artistically or made into beautiful jewelry. Postcards can be arranged to make a colorful collage. You could photograph your collection. Describe your collection to a group of younger girls, or display your project at your school or at a troop or group meeting.
3. Read catalogs, magazines, and books on collecting to expand your knowledge. Visit stores, garage sales, street fairs, and collectors' conventions in your area.
4. Search through closets at home or your attic for interesting objects. Decide on a theme and put together a display showcasing your wares.
5. What do you do if your collection has grown too large? Why not donate all or part of it to a museum, library, school, or community center? Photograph and list all the items. Write a brief description of each item.

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6. Begin a collection of Girl Scout memorabilia: for example, pins, badges, guides, uniforms, and photographs. Did you know that the U.S. Postal Service has issued three Girl Scout commemorative stamps? See if you can find them. You may also want to write to GSUSA, and obtain information about the National Historic Preservation Center.

Technology

1. Some collections must be stored under special conditions. In order to preserve early Girl Scout documents, for example, the archivist at the Girl Scouts' National Historic Preservation Center must keep them in specially designed, temperature-controlled room. Does your collection need special treatment? Develop a storage system to properly preserve your collection.
2. Some collections start by accident. You find a fascinating stone on a camping trip and later learn that it is a rare mineral. On your next outing you keep an eye out for other finds. Although many archaeologists have made major discoveries in much the same way, they now have new technology to assist them. Find out how computers, satellites, magnetic imaging, and sound waves are helping the modern "Indiana Joans."
3. Find out some ways objects are dated: for example, carbon-dating for fossil remains. Experts must sift through different types of clues—it's like trying to solve a mystery. What is needed to date your collectibles?
4. Find out the method used to detect forgeries, fakes, or imitations of valuable items.

Service Projects

1. Organize a flea market for your troop or group. This could be a money-earning project. You can sell items collected and donated by you and your fellow troop members.
2. Some of things accumulated over the years may benefit someone else. Clothes that no longer fit could go to a homeless shelter, old magazines to a library, and outgrown games and toys to children in a hospital. Take an inventory of your possessions and arrange to give some of them away.
3. Offer to help your local council catalog and preserve Girl Scout artifacts.
4. Volunteer your services at a local museum, historical society, or other center that has a collection. Find out how the collections are built and maintained.
5. Start a collectors' club for younger girls. Show them your collection and take them to exhibits in museums or elsewhere, if possible. Help them as a group to begin a collection.

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Career Exploration

1. With your friends, brainstorm a list of professions in which people collect things or care for collectibles. Select one profession to learn more about, or a professional to shadow.
2. Work with an antiques store owner or flea market dealer for several hours. Ask her what makes something an antique and how the value of antique furniture, jewelry, artwork, and other items is appraised. Find out about her educational background and area of expertise.
3. Curators arrange art exhibits for museums. Arrange to meet with or interview a curator to find out how she goes about acquiring artwork.
4. Libraries must continually add to their collections of books. Interview a librarian to find out how she decides on which books to add to a collection. How does she keep track of all the books in the collection? How are valuable books and manuscripts preserved?

And Beyond

Add to your collection of skills by learning more about these related interest projects:

Women Through Time
It's About Time
Digging Through the Past
Folk Arts
Museum Discovery
Home Improvement
Just Jewelry
Fashion Design

This badge can be found in the book *Interest Projects for girls 11 - 17*, page 118. This text has been reproduced with permission from Girl Scouts of the USA—this document may not be copied or reproduced in any way.