

*A "How-To" Guide to*  
**FIRST DAY COVER  
EXHIBITING**



*A Joint Project by the  
**American First Day Cover Society**  
and the  
**American Association  
of Philatelic Exhibitors**  
invite you to exhibit your First Day Covers*





## Types of FDC Exhibits

### Single Stamp Issue

Provide a comprehensive overview about a single issue from stamp design and production aspects through cachet design, production, varieties and concluding with usage.

### Series of Stamp Issues

Provide a comprehensive overview about a series of stamps using the elements listed above but extended through a series of stamps. Examples would include the Presidential Series, Transportation, Famous Americans or Joint Issues.

### Cachetmaker Study

Show a comprehensive study about the work of a particular cachetmaker including a brief biography about the cachetmaker.

### FDCs as Postal History

An exhibit of Auxiliary Markings, EDU's (Earliest Documented Uses), Foreign Destinations or FDCs in the mail stream. Choose any type, but tell a story with a beginning, middle and ending.



## Size of the Exhibit

### Single Frame Exhibit

Tell a complete story within the confines of 16 pages. This can be a good starting point; however, selecting a topic that is interesting and complete can be tricky.



### Multi-Frame Exhibit

Tell a complete story with a beginning, middle and ending using multiple frames. Typically, a multi-frame exhibit would use six to ten frames. While there is no set requirement, exhibits with less than five frames will need some explanation. There are certainly some stamp issues that will fit into this category due to scarcity, etc.



## How-to Tips

- Research your subject. Sources include the American Philatelic Research Library (APRL) and other philatelic libraries, *First Days* magazine and its digital archive, FDC cachetmaker catalogs and handbooks.
- Numerous examples of techniques on writing an exhibit are available at American Association of Philatelic Exhibitors (AAPE) website.
- Learn how to write a concise story with a beginning, middle and ending.
- Select your material. Archival & acid-free exhibit paper to mount your exhibit and Mylar page protectors to protect it are recommended.
- Learn proper techniques for mounting, including using clear corner mounts.
- Consider good highlighting techniques for key items in your exhibit and proper methods to avoid looking too repetitious, including the dreaded: "railroad tracks" of 2 covers per page.
- Write a title page to outline exhibit purpose and scope. Basically, this is the cover to your 'book.'
- Write an exhibit plan page to provide a table of contents for the Jury and other viewers.
- Write a synopsis for the Jury to outline your story, highlight your most significant items, and note research conclusions.





## Why Exhibit?

- **Organize**
  - Organize your collection to a higher level
- **Discover**
  - Discover more facts about your collection
- **Share**
  - Share your interest and knowledge
- **Camaraderie**
  - Enjoy camaraderie and support with other exhibitors
- **Expertise**
  - Develop expertise and become known for your topic
- **Competition**
  - Test your abilities in competition
- **Awards**
  - Win medals and awards



## First Day Cover Exhibiting

For more information:

### Websites:

[www.afdcs.org](http://www.afdcs.org)

Show schedules  
First Days online  
'How-to' publications

[www.aape.org](http://www.aape.org)

'How-to' exhibit tips  
Check out exhibits online  
Exhibit feedback services

[www.stamps.org](http://www.stamps.org)

Show schedules  
Check out exhibits online  
American Philatelic Research Library



### References:

- AFDCS Handbooks
- Planty Encyclopedia Vol 1-18
- Mellone's FDCs of the 40's, 50's, 60's
- First Cachets Revealed 1923 - 2005
- *First Days* (Complete archive on disc format)
- AAPE's: *The Philatelic Exhibitor*
- Exhibiting Seminars