

How to Store Coins

Folders. Cardboard folders are the most inexpensive and common form of organizing and storing a collection. They can be purchased at many hobby shops and bookstores.

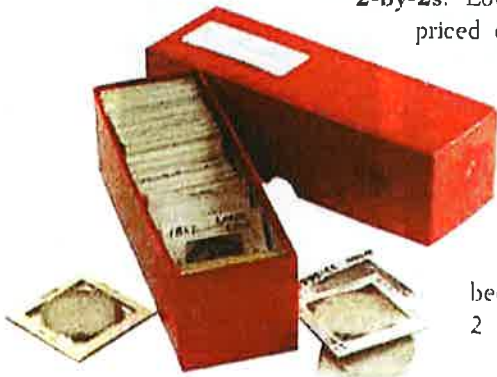


They provide a spot for each date and mintmark in a particular series, thus acting as a road map for the collector. They are also compact and convenient: they take up little space on a bookshelf and can be pulled down and opened for easy viewing.

The spots for the coins consist of holes in the cardboard sized specially for the particular series covered by the folder. They are meant to be a tight fit so the coins, once inserted, won't fall out. Place the coin in the hole at an angle, so one side of the coin is in the hole. On the side of the coin sticking up, press down and toward the angled side until the coin snaps into place.

The process isn't always graceful; thus, some of the basic rules for handling coins have to be suspended when working with folders. But folders are still suitable for storing coins plucked from circulation and getting started in coin collecting.

2-by-2s. Low to moderately priced coins offered for sale at shops and shows are usually stored in cardboard holders commonly called "2-by-2s" because they are 2 inches square.



They consist of two pieces with a clear Mylar window in the center. The coin is placed between the two pieces, which are then stapled together.

These 2-by-2 holders are also inexpensive. They are suitable for long-term storage and offer a number of advantages over the basic folder:

- The window in the holder allows both sides of the coin to be viewed.
- The entire coin is enclosed.
- The coin can be handled by the edges when being inserted into the holder.

As for disadvantages:

- Storing an entire collection of a particular series takes up more space.
- The coins can be viewed only one at a time.
- Caution should be used when inserting or removing coins from the holders to make sure the staples' sharp edges don't damage the coins.
- There is no road map to the series. A separate checklist is needed.

The 2-by-2 holders can be stored in long, narrow boxes specially sized to hold them. They can also be inserted into pockets in a plastic page, which can then be inserted into a three-ring binder.

Originally the plastic pages contained polyvinylchloride, which produced a soft, flexible pocket. But the substance breaks down over time, resulting in a green slime that could contact the coins. Manufacturers then started substituting Mylar for the PVC. The Mylar does not break down, but the page containing it is more brittle and not as flexible.

Flips. Similar in size to the cardboard 2-by-2s, plastic "flips," to use the common vernacular, are another common storage method for coins for sale. They consist of a plastic pocket, into which the coin is inserted, with a flap that folds down over the pocket. Coin dealers will often staple the flap shut.

