

TOOLS



Stamp tongs are made of metal and keep the stamp from getting damaged from dirt and oil from your skin. They are used for picking up and handling stamps. Tweezers are not tongs! Their sharp points can tear stamps.

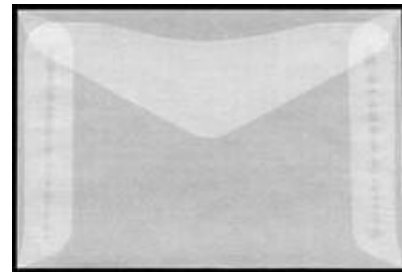


Stamp hinges are small, thin, folded pieces of translucent paper with special gum on one side. Stamp hinges are used to mount stamps onto paper or album pages. It's best to use them on used stamps, not mint ones.

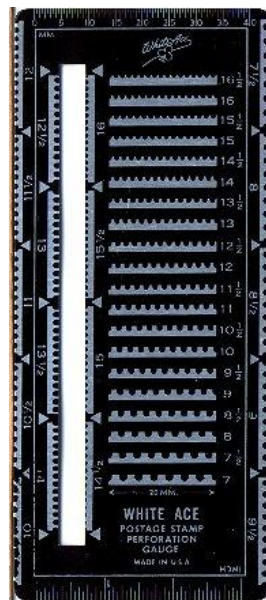
A **magnifying glass** is used to enlarge details on stamps.



Glassine envelopes are very thin and translucent and are available in many different sizes. They are used to store stamps and protect them from air and moisture.



A stamp's perforation size can make a big difference between it being an inexpensive version to a very valuable one. A **perforation gauge** is used to measure the number of perforation holes (or teeth) within 2 centimeters. Move the stamp up and down until the perforations on the stamp line up exactly with the pattern on the gauge.



Watermarks are designs made into the paper during the manufacturing process while the paper is still wet. Where the image is impressed, the paper is thinner. The image can be seen by holding the paper up to a light or setting it against a dark background, like a **watermark tray**. When the watermark can't be seen by the naked eye, a special **watermark fluid** is used.

