

Grading your collectibles

Requirement 5.d

- Many collectible items are subject to wear and damage from handling, aging, exposure to dampness, heat or cold or fading
 - Collectibles made of less durable materials, such as paper and cardboard are particularly susceptible
- The value of these collectibles is affected by the amount of wear and damage
- Collectors have developed grading systems to measure and compare wear and damage

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- A typical grading scale, applied to comics and other books is:
 - Mint; The item is as-new, practically unused
 - Fine; The item has very minor wear with no creasing or tears
 - Good; Book is complete but has some creases, small tears or small missing corners
 - Fair; Book is soiled with creases, larger tears and missing pieces, paper edges are dried and brittle
 - Poor; Book is soiled and stained with creases, larger tears and missing pieces, paper is dried and brittle, covers may be loose but present

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- A grading scale, applied to sports and game cards is:
 - Mint; The item is as-new, practically unused
 - Near mint; The item has one minor flaw
 - Excellent; Corners fuzzy but not rounded, minor loss of gloss finish
 - Very good; Corners rounded, edges have some notching, loss of gloss finish but not scuffed
 - Good, Fair, Poor; Card is worn, corners rounded, scuffed surface, discoloration, creases

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- Criteria used in grading cards are:
 - Sharp corners; Sharp 90 degree corner with nor more than slight wear
 - Fuzzy corners; Corner has a little fraying or nicks
 - Slightly rounded corners; Corner is slightly rounded and may show some splitting of the card stock
 - Rounded corners; Corners rounded, edges show some delamination of the card stock
 - Badly rounded corners; Corners very rounded, edges show severe delamination of the card stock

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- Similar scales of damage may be applied to other collectibles:
 - Scratches
 - Chipped paint or surface
 - Faded colors
 - Rust or corrosion
 - Dents, bend, tears
 - Missing pieces
- The more flaws a piece has the less valuable it will be
- However, even a flawed original finish is better than a restored finish for most collectibles