



Collecting Machins

Is yours a collection...
or simply an accumulation?

The Best First Step

This 26 page pdf
Robin Harris

book will answer
virtually any
question that
you might have
before starting
to change from
an accumulation
into a collection



After you've sorted them...



... you may start to realize that you have sorted everything into piles; maybe 100's of piles...

**MISCELLANEOUS SIZES,
PRETTY COLOURS,
VARIOUS VALUES**

and you're still ...

OVERWHELMED!!

WHERE DO I START???

As you already know,
there are literally
1000's of varieties of
Machins, and that is
what intimidates most
new collectors!!



Consider stepping into the 'shallow end' with
Baby Steps or a **Mini-collection**
instead of diving in 'head-first' without a plan

'IF'...

... it's possible to look at Machins logically...
they can be divided into 5 timeline groups

- Pre-decimal 1967 - 1971
- Decimal (non-elliptical) 1971 - 1995
- Elliptical (pre-'EME') 1995 - 1997
- EME printing 1997 - >>>
- Regional 1971 - 2000

Pre-decimal

1967 - 1971



Only 4 years in use

Out of circulation for over 40 years

13 values in 15 colours

A very limited variety of phosphor bands

Affordable & available from dealers

Decimal (non-elliptical)

1971 - 1995



- 57 values from ½p to 75p in various colours
- Some perforation and value types
- Several phosphor band types
- Introduction of lithography and new printers
- All are affordable & available from dealers

Elliptical (pre-‘EME’) 1995 - 1997

With a little practice, the difference between a stamp printed in photogravure vs one in EME* gravure can easily be determined. Those printed in lithography are even more easily detected.



* electro-mechanically engraved: a computer controlled method of creating gravure cylinders

Elliptical (pre-‘EME’) 1995 - 1997

In 1995, the printer, Enschedé, introduced the ELLIPTICAL perforation on low-value Machin definitives, which they then printed using the EME* gravure process.

For the next 2 years, the other printer/suppliers, while producing stamps with the required ELLIPTICAL perf, continued to utilize lithography and the original ‘acid-etched’ photogravure processes until each was able to convert to the new EME process.

Many values from 1p through 63p including both 2nd and 1st class NVIs are commonly found with elliptical perforations while still having been printed using the original print processes.

* electro-mechanically engraved: a computer controlled method of creating gravure cylinders

EME - since 1997 >>

Since 1997, virtually all MACHIN issues have been printed using the EME gravure process, although recently the French security printer, Cartor, has produced new Prestige booklets using lithography.



This era of Machin collecting, while being relatively current, and therefore more common, is probably the most frustrating era on which to concentrate.

Each year, new postal tariffs result in new values and often, new colours for old values. With the recently introduced security and quality-control features, the same value stamp could possibly have more than a dozen legitimate types; not to mention the possibilities of various varieties.

EME - since 1997 >>

For those who create their own album pages, there is nothing more frustrating than having Royal Mail reintroduce a new type or colour of an old, no longer used value as a result of a new postal tariff.



In this era of MACHIN production and collecting, there appears to be no end, at least while Her Majesty remains on the Throne.

One assumes that with the advent of self-adhesive stamps, there will be no more 'REAL' water-activated stamp production, that is, until the next Prestige book or miniature sheet is produced.

CURRENTLY, anyone attempting to start collecting the most basic level of this era since 1997, will be looking for in excess of 266 stamps before considering the number and/or colour of phosphor bands, not to mention the position of each.

Regional Machins 1971 - 2000



This is the final of 5 'Baby Step' or mini-collection suggestions designed to help ease the curious, collector into the intimidating World of Machins.

While the Isle of Man has only 4 values, each of Northern Ireland, Scotland and Wales can boast approximately 60 different basic level stamps when considering the difference between photogravure, lithography and the newer gravure processes.

As with the previous levels or groupings, virtually all of these stamps can, or could have been found in general circulation and each can be had for pennies through a reputable dealer or on eBay.

BIGGER STEPS

With each of the 5 suggested timeframe groupings, the new collection can be enhanced through the determination of the source of each stamp. Is it from a simple sheet, a booklet or is it from a coil strip; either vertical or horizontal??

Some time frames offer variations on perf size and the pre-EME timeframe even offers two values with variations on image size.

Between 1967 and 1973, many Machins were printed on two common types of paper fluorescing with notable difference and easily detected under UV light.

As difficult or easy as it may seem, the new MACHIN collector should always take it **ONE STEP AT A TIME** to avoid frustration.

Specialty Collections

These tend to be smaller groupings, generally with a finite number of pieces and usually, but not always, from a defined period of time.

- Odd size MACHINS
- Discounted back prints
 - 8 types
- Millennium Issue 2000
 - 3 distinct printers
- Date and/or City cancels
- Dual head Anniversary
 - 6 basic values but with many varieties of print style, source and imperforate edges
- Diamond Jubilee 2012
- Perfins
- NVIs
- Coils - horizontal or vertical
 - usually in multiples of 3 or 5
- Se-tenant pairs - 2 values joined
 - commonly from machine vended booklets, either vertical or horizontal. Also from prestige booklets and some coil strips

USED MACHINS

Baby steps or Mini-collections

Pre-decimal 1967 - 1971
Value/colour
Phosphor bands

Decimal (non-elliptical) 1971 - 1995
Value/colour
Printing method (photo vs litho)
Phosphor bands / phosphorized paper

Elliptical (pre EME) 1993 - 1995
Value/colour
Printing method (photo vs litho)
Value/colour
Phosphor bands / phosphorized paper

EME printing 1995 -
Security printing (if any)
Value/colour
Printing method (litho vs gravure)
Phosphor bands / phosphorized paper

Regional Machins 1971 - 2000
Value/colour
Printing method (photo vs litho)
Country Symbol varieties
Phosphor bands / phosphorized paper

Bigger steps

- Determine the source: booklet, coil, sheet
- Paper fluorescence - OCP vs FCP
- Perf variations

- Determine the source: booklet, coil, sheet
- Paper fluorescence - OCP vs FCP
- Perf size

- Determine the source: booklet, coil, sheet
- Perf size / image size (19p/38p)

- Determine the source: booklet, coil, sheet
- Perf size / image size (19p/38p)
- Source code and year of print code

- Determine the source: booklet, coil, sheet
- Paper fluorescence - OCP vs FCP
- Perf size

Specialty collections

These tend to be much smaller and are more easily completed than simply trying to collect all Machins

- Discounted back prints (8 only)
- Dual head anniversary (6 basic values, but with many varieties of print style, source and imperf edges)
- Odd sized Machins (large, horizontal)
- Coils only (horizontal / vertical)
 - usually in multiples of 3, 5 or more
- Diamond Jubilee 2012
- Millenium issue 2000
- Se-tenant pairs (2 values joined), usually from vending machine booklets. They also can come from prestige booklets but these are fairly scarce in common circulation. Can be found both vertical and horizontal
- Cancellations showing date and/or city
- Perfins