

Large Coin Shows

At larger coin shows, the cost for the table is usually much greater than at a smaller show; some run from \$500 to \$1,000. In addition, most dealers have to travel across the country to attend and therefore, bring more expensive coins to travel lighter and increase their margin of profit to cover their expenses. Some dealers might not wish to show coins without parents there because they believe the kids cannot afford the coins. In addition, any sale to an individual younger than 18 can be easily voided. With more expensive coins, the dealer might not want to complete the transaction without parents present.

The majority of large show organizers have special events planned for kids such as coin grabs, Boy Scout merit badges, and educational forums. For some of these, the parent is required to stay with their child while others are not. Below are photos of the line for the kid's coin grab at the Baltimore Coin show and one of the kids grabbing coins.



On the bourse floor of a large coin show, it is better if parents keep their kids with them while looking through coins. Most dealers will be more open to kids if the parents are present. At a recent large show, the author gave his 14-year-old son \$40 to purchase coins. The author explained the rules of engagement, how to be polite, not to interrupt a dealer doing business, and so on. Afterwards, the author's son told him that many dealers refused to show any coins in their cases, some were rude, while some were helpful. The author also spoke with several other YNs who have had negative experiences with coin dealers at larger shows. The YNs said that they have learned to avoid dealers who were not kid friendly and instead brought their business to those who were.

There are many good coin dealers out there who are happy to work with kids and are a positive influence. For example, many of the dealer members of the PNG understood the importance of helping kids and that they were the future of the hobby. They wanted to help kids enjoy coins any way they could. The author spoke to one dealer who said that he readily showed kids coins at larger shows. He said that many times the kid would come back with their parents and purchase the coin and sometimes other coins as well.

Kids might not be able to view coins by themselves at a large show, but they should be able to when with their parents. If the objective is to find coins for your own collection, seek tables that have coins that you are looking for and coins that your child can view. If forced to sit and wait while you look at coins, the child will become bored quickly. Some dealers bring boxes of cheaper coins that can be looked through without asking permission for each coin. Always make sure it is fine with the dealer first for the child to look through the coins, then set the child up to view them. You can enjoy coins yourself, but include your child in coins you like and ask their opinion.

You can ask the show organizers which dealers are family/kid friendly and what events for kids are planned. Some large show organizers identify those dealers who are kid friendly. It is a good idea to go to these dealers first if you have kids with you because it will start the show off with a positive experience.

Remember, there are coin dealers who are just in the hobby for the business of selling coins and making money. They do not understand the importance of kids, who are the next generation of collectors. If you come across dealers like this, simply bring your business to someone else.

Do not keep children at the show after they lose interest. There will be more shows for you to enjoy with them. When planning to go to a large show, the author's family would plan other events to break up the day. At the FUN show in Florida, the family spent several days at Disney while the author was at the show.

Small Coin Shows

At smaller shows, the cost for a table is much cheaper than the larger show, which is less overhead expense for the dealers. In addition, most of the dealers are local to the area and drive to the shows. This allows them to bring more affordable coins. Some dealers bring binders or boxes containing modern and other types of coins that kids can afford. Most dealers do not mind kids looking through these, and the dealers do not have to remove coins from the cases. The kids can explore the coin show on their own as long, of course, that they respect some of the basic rules such as not interrupting a dealer who is working with others, requesting permission to look through coins, and making sure they say thank you at the end. Below are several YNs at a table at the Ocean County Coin Club show in New Jersey.



As the kids examine and study more coins, they will learn more about the coins. This will help them learn to grade, identify problems, and see where their collecting interests take them. Being able to look through coins without their parents can give kids a sense of accomplishment and independence. It also allows their parents to look for coins themselves. The author recently attended the Ocean County Coin Club annual coin show. There were many kids there. The younger kids stayed with their parents, whereas the older YNs (13 years and up) roamed the show looking through coins.

Many smaller shows and clubs have several different types of kids'

programs. Some have a YN representative, who makes sure your child's experience is enjoyable. Do not be afraid to contact the show organizers to see whether they are kid friendly and what programs are available for kids. Some have a coin exhibit competition with a kid's division. Other programs include YN Auctions with free paper money that is used to bid, free coins, YN newsletter, and tons of other activities. Many clubs that emphasize the importance of kids focus on giving the kids opportunities, such as getting a scholarship to the ANA Summer Seminar.

Smaller shows and clubs can be a more educational and fun environment for kids to learn about and enjoy coins. In the photo below on the left are the YNs and several leaders of the Ocean County Coin Club at the annual show. The photo below on the right shows an exhibit created by one of the YNs for the show.



The author spoke to one dealer at the Ocean County Coin Club show who liked to help kids any way he could. He said that when growing up, he was blessed by dealers who helped him learn about and enjoy coins. He wanted to do the same for the next generation. He enjoyed showing coins to kids of all ages, for younger kids, he would give them some free coins. For older kids, he would help teach them about a series on important subjects such as how to grade.

The smaller clubs and shows are the backbone of the hobby. It is a family environment that everyone can enjoy.

Getting Kids Ready for Coin Shows

Families who force their kids to go to a coin show will less likely have a good experience. The children will not have the interest and will want to leave. One perspective is to bring your children along to watch you collect coins with the hope that they might gain interest. This may not be successful because the children are not interested and do not understand what and why you are collecting.

There are some simple ways to start your children collecting coins. One of the most basic methods is to start with coins found in pocket change. The primary tools they will need are a magnifying glass and a book or album to store and organize their coins. A coin album provides visual goals and stimulates a desire to search and find more coins to fill in the holes. In addition, using coins found in circulation makes it an affordable hobby for a child. The state quarters offer a diverse and incredible resource.

Creating this interest before a show will be like bringing kids into a candy store after they learned how chocolate tastes so good. They will crave more and have a high interest. In addition, by starting with coins in circulation, coins such as 1950s Lincoln cents and Jefferson nickels, which might not be found in circulation, are relatively inexpensive and will be a great addition to their collection.

Smaller shows and clubs offer a greater opportunity for kids to learn about coins and become part of an association in which the primary goal is to expand and pass on coin collecting to the next generation. Many have educational and fun programs designed to help kids.

Your kids should bring an album to the show to help them determine coins they need. In addition, some coin shows have coins donated by dealers in which kids can search through. Another cool idea is to start a type set with them of one coin from each series. This is one of those “pride and joy” sets that can be the inspiration of their collection. Having a coin which is 200 years old and was struck when our country was beginning is something that sparks the imagination.

Kid's Perspective for Coin Shows

From a kid's perspective at a coin show, there are several things you can do to have a more enjoyable show. First, seek out dealers who are kid friendly. At some larger shows, check for a list of specific dealers who are listed as having a kid-friendly table. These dealers will be glad to show coins, answer questions, and help you in your collecting endeavors.



Look for senior YNs who have tables. They will likely have more affordable coins. They will also be able to relate better to your collecting interests because they have recently started collecting coins.

Look for dealers who are not busy with a customer. Dealers are there to sell coins and make money. They are less likely to have the time to show you coins and possibly answer questions if they are busy. If you see coins you like and the dealer is busy, make a note to yourself and come back when they are less busy. As an adult, the author follows the same rules. Be patient. If a dealer is busy, wait your turn to ask questions or ask to see coins.

There may be some dealers at shows who do not want to help kids. Their only goal in being a coin dealer is for profit. They may not understand the absolute necessity to help the next generation enjoy coin collecting. If your children encounters a dealer who does not want to show them coins, just tell them to move on; it is the dealer's loss.

Have a goal. Scan the cases first to find the coins you wish to see. This is much better than to request to see all coins in a case. Requesting specific coins to examine shows the dealer you are not just browsing, but examining coins for a purpose. Spending too much time looking at many coins might start to make the dealer believe they are wasting their time with you. Understanding the dealer's perspective to selling coins is important.

One helpful method is to create a list of coins in which you are interested before the show. Walk around all tables scanning through the cases for coins that you need. If you see a coin that stands out, request prices and write down notes. After going through the show once, go back to tables that had coins you needed and request to see them. This method helps you to find the best coins at a show for the best price. Creating a list also helps prevent the mistake of purchasing duplicates that you do not need or grades you already have.

If you are seeking specific coins that are not at a table, do not be afraid to ask if the dealer has those dates and series. The dealer might have other coins under the table that did not fit in the display. The dealer might also have a web site or coins back at his store in which you might be interested.

Do not be afraid to negotiate the price. The author sometimes asks what is the best price for a coin or make the dealer a specific offer. Sometimes dealers might have a buffer in the price and will be willing to come down in price.

Coins in folders or boxes outside the cases might be easier and require less time from the dealer. This might give you a better opportunity to examine coins. Of course, ask permission to examine the coins first.

With common modern dates for which there is little to no premium, understanding grading is not as important as for most coins are in relatively good condition. As you move toward older coins, you should understand grading, identifying cleaned coins, or coins that might be worth less value. The more coins you examine, the better you will be able to purchase that