

How To...Room Hop

One of the very unique, and great, traditions of this hobby is 'room hopping'. Exactly how and when it started is somewhat murky, but I'd guess it more or less evolved out of collectors informally visiting each other's rooms during earlier RMS conventions.

For newer collectors not familiar with the tradition, room hopping is when collectors visit back and forth in their hotel rooms at conventions. Each collector will have covers set out in his or her room specifically for the taking, almost always on the dressers and tables. But, depending on just how much the collector has to put out, the material may even be spread out over one of the beds, in adjacent boxes, trays, and bags, or whatever. By methodically hitting all such rooms, a collector can wrack up quite a tally of good, free covers! Of course, the whole system is designed to be reciprocal. Those same collectors will visit your room, where you will have covers of your own available.

Part of the tradition, though, is that first time convention-goers may room hop while not being expected to have covers out, themselves--they're newbies, after all. After that, in subsequent conventions, reciprocity is the rule. Some collectors will have more out than others, of course; some material will be stripped, some not; some may have more boxes than covers, and so forth...but the idea is that everyone participating is sharing.

It's certainly not mandatory, by the way, that a collector at the convention participate in room hopping. How does one know, then, who's room is available and who's is not? Easy...the room door will be open...and open invitation to come on in, chat, and help yourself.

It's important to note, here, that room hopping etiquette dictates that you only take one of each cover you're interested in. If you need more (for example, if there's a nice Cameo-Foilite out, and you collect in both categories), just ask if it's alright to take two.