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## Altering Covers

Although, in general, it's not good to alter covers, there's a long history of such in the hobby...

### Unacceptable:

-Trimming covers: In the olden days, some collectors would cut off the lower corners of covers in order to more easily fit them into album pages.

-Replacing strikers: Also an older practice, collectors would cut the striker off one cover and tape it onto a more desirable cover whose striker had become damaged or broken off entirely.

-Re-coloring strikers: Using a marker to cover up a used striker. Another no-no.

-Any permanent marking: Whether it's a date stamp, notations in pen, etc., other collectors don't want to see extraneous markings on their covers (and your covers will almost certainly become someone else's covers eventually.

-Changing the color of covers: Legend has it that some early collectors would purposely let

covers fade in sunlight in order to produce hitherto 'unknown' variations!

-Gluing: Gluing ruins the inside of the cover, and even if the cover is removed from the page, or whatever it was on, any inside text is partially or totally obscured.

### H-m-m-m-m-m-:

-Encasing covers in plastic: Occasionally, you'll come across covers carefully wrapped in cellophane. The reasoning was that this not only protected the cover but also made it much easier to slip it into threaded and slotted pages. While this isn't a permanent alteration, most other collectors don't want it. Laminating, however, is permanent, and not looked upon with appreciation.

### OK:

-Notations in pencil: Sometimes, notations are necessary (catalog numbers, for example). These should be done on the inside, *lightly*, in pencil. This is acceptable because such markings can be erased.

-Safeguarding a striker with tape: For strikers that have corroded and are in the 'soon-to-crumble' category, it's not only acceptable but necessary to safeguard the integrity of the cover by applying scotch tape to the striker area on the *inside* of the cover. The tape will eventually age and fall off (after a period of years), but will do so without damage to the cover and can then be replaced.