

ABOUT WRITING ATA HANDBOOKS



The ATA Handbooks are written by dedicated members of the American Topical Association. The information in them is up to date through the time of publication, and in most cases is very good background for topicalists beginning a new topic, or for those who desire more information. Subsequent books on the same subject must pick up from where any previous handbook on the same subject left off, unless the supply of earlier books is depleted. New information that supplements the original book(s) should be added to any future book.

To make the handbooks more than simply a checklist with a few illustrations, guidelines have been created. The purpose of a handbook should be two-fold. First, it should serve as a research tool for topical collectors. Second, it should include additional information that would attract noncollectors and lead them to discover this fascinating hobby of topical collecting.

Before beginning a book for the ATA, please become acquainted with these guidelines for manuscript and image preparation.

Text for ATA Handbooks

1. Please consult the ATA office if considering a new handbook. Creation of no more than three titles per year is anticipated due to time constraints and limited resources.
3. Type standard text in all the same type size (12 point) except for section headers and titles.
4. If using a dash, be sure to include a single space on either side of it. The computer then recognizes it as a dash and not a hyphen.
5. Before submitting the draft, run and review a spell check. Names of countries and people should be consistent in spelling throughout the book.
6. Include an index, and use both first and last names wherever they exist.
7. Rather than type a word in all capitals use **Bold**, *bold and italics*, **bold and underline** or change to a different font.

8. Be consistent in the style used for numbering items in a list. Use Roman numerals for section headings. Where standard Arabic numerals are used, consistent punctuation is essential. Ensure that numbers have not been skipped or duplicated.
9. Regarding computer file names, please use 18 characters or less including the extension, such as .jpg, and use only lowercase. Regarding punctuation in file names, use only _ underscores, - hyphens or . periods. (Other punctuation does not always cross platforms and renders the file unusable.)

Scans for ATA Handbooks

1. Scan stamps alone, not in clear protectors. Protectors cause areas of glare and a haze over the stamp image.
2. Scan at 300dpi (or higher) resolution)
3. Be certain that parts of the image are not cut off and ensure that stamps are not touching other stamps in scans.
4. Preferably, save images in .jpg format as Maximum Quality Large files when prompted. If unsure, save as .tiff. Do not save in other formats such as .gif, .png, .pbm or .pct as these formats will not produce the quality necessary.
5. If possible, scan images in CMYK mode rather than RGB.
6. Preview the image in your scanning program. At preview, use the marquee tool in your scanning program to select around the image. Then scan. This will scan your image only and eliminate the white background.
7. In the file name of the image, identify the Scott catalog numbers to be used as captions.
8. Images included in word processing programs or spreadsheet programs such as Excel will be unusable due to loss of quality. Submit the images separately from the text.

If you have any questions regarding manuscript preparation or submission, contact the ATA Central Office, **618-985-5100**, ***americantopical@msn.com*** Feel free to submit sample text or images at any time.