

LET'S GO LETTERBOXING

What is letterboxing?

Letterboxing combines the elements of hiking, treasure hunting and creative expression into an activity that the whole family can enjoy. Participants seek out hidden letterboxes by following clues that are posted on the Internet, and then record their discovery in their personal journal with the help of a rubber stamp that's part of the letterbox. In addition, letterboxers have their own personal stamps which they use to stamp into the letterbox's log book.

Brief History...

Letterboxing began in southwestern England in the mid-1800s when a Victorian gentleman hid his calling card in a bottle. Today, the nearby area is the Dartmoor National Park, and there are several thousand letterboxes hidden there! (As a result, Dartmoor is akin to the Holy Grail for American letterboxers.)

The hobby came to the U.S. in 1998, following the publication of an article in Smithsonian magazine about Dartmoor. Soon, a loose confederation of letterboxers began to plant boxes in the U.S., using the Internet to exchange information and clues. Letterboxing North America is host to a web site and discussion list where new clues are posted nearly daily!

Getting Started

At the minimum, you'll need a journal, a rubber stamp, a stamp pad, and a pen or pencil. You'll use your personal journal to record all the letterboxes you've found -- at last count, there were more than 10,000 boxes in the U.S. You may also need a compass for some clues.

Get a clue! Those 10,000 letterboxes were created and hidden by other letterboxers, and you can find the clues for boxes in your area on the Letterboxing North America Web site.

Create and hide your own letterboxes. Once you've been hooked, you'll start to think of parks near you that would be perfect for a letterbox. Then you can create a stamp and come up with the perfect clues to your letterbox's hiding place.

Rules and Traditions

- **Environmentally friendly activity**, with no destruction of nature involved in the hiding or discovery of letterboxes. Boxes are hidden in publicly-accessible areas, yet out of sight of casual visitors. Letterboxers should endeavor to leave any area cleaner when they leave than it was when they arrived.
- **Hazards of letterboxing** - notably poison ivy (and its cousins, poison oak and poison sumac) and crawling creatures like snakes or spiders who tend to like the same crevices and cavities where letterboxes are often hidden. As a result, you should use caution when reaching into holes and make sure you can identify poison ivy when you see it!
- **Caution when finding a letterbox** - be discreet in opening it so that passers-by can't observe. When you're finished stamping in, make sure to restore the letterbox to its original condition and location.



For more details and the source material please go the following website - www.letterboxing.info