

The Things We Collect

Pre-intermediate (A2-B1)



Part 1. Look at the words below. Do you have any of these things? Tell your partner.

Old photos	Books	Postcards
Coins or stamps	Ticket stubs	Toys from childhood
Letters	Magnets	Music or records



Part 2. Choose one option in each pair. Give a reason or example.

Keeping things in boxes	or	displaying them where you can see them?
Collecting something on purpose	or	ending up with things by accident?
Old, sentimental objects	or	new things you really like?
Throwing things away easily	or	finding it hard to let things go?
Collecting physical objects	or	collecting digital things — photos, playlists, files?

Part 3. Read the statements. Which ones feel true for you? Explain why.

- I have things I will probably never use again, but I don't want to throw them away.
- I sometimes keep things because they remind me of a person.
- I find it easy to throw things away.
- I have a box, drawer, or shelf full of small, unimportant-looking things that matter to me.
- I take photos of things instead of keeping the real object.
- Someone in my family keeps everything — and it sometimes annoys me.

Part 4. Discuss the following questions.

- What is the oldest thing you still own? Where did it come from?
- Is there something you collected as a child that you don't have anymore? Do you miss it?
- Do you have anything that belonged to someone in your family before you?
- If your home was on fire and you could only save three objects, what would you choose?

Part 5. Look at the reasons below. Choose the three reasons that are most true for the things you keep. Then compare with your partner.

It reminds me of someone	It reminds me of a place	It was expensive
I might need it one day	It makes me feel happy	It was a gift
I made it myself	It reminds me of a time in my life	I just like looking at it

Part 6. Look at the expressions below. Match each one to its meaning. Then choose two expressions and use them to talk about something you own.

To hold onto something	Sentimental value	To clear something out	A keepsake
To pass something down	To throw something away	A collection	To be a hoarder

- _____ to keep something instead of giving it away or throwing it away
- _____ to give something to a younger person in your family, often after many years
- _____ to get rid of something because you don't want or need it anymore
- _____ to remove things you don't need, often from a room, cupboard, or drawer
- _____ a small object you keep to remember a person, place, or event
- _____ when something is important to you because of a memory or feeling, not because of its price
- _____ to keep far too many things, often more than you really need
- _____ a group of similar objects that someone has gathered over time

Part 7. Read the situations. Which answer sounds most like you? Or say what you would actually do.

You are tidying your room and find a box of old things — photos, letters, small objects from years ago.

1. I sit down and look through everything. It takes much longer than I planned.
2. I quickly check what's there and put the box back exactly where it was.
3. I decide it's time to throw some things away — but it's harder than I expected.
4. I find something I had completely forgotten about and feel very happy.

A friend gives you a small gift that isn't really your style — but it clearly means something to them.

1. I keep it somewhere visible because they gave it to me.
2. I keep it in a drawer, just in case they ever ask about it.
3. I use it anyway, even though it isn't really 'me'.
4. I feel bad, but I know I won't keep it for very long.

You are moving to a new home and you can only take a few boxes. You find something you haven't looked at in years.

1. I decide if I haven't used it in years, I probably don't need it now.
2. I can't throw it away, even though I know it's not practical.
3. I take a photo of it and then let it go.
4. I find a way to take it, even if it doesn't really fit.

Part 8. Do you agree, disagree, or partly agree with the statements below? Explain your answer.

- The things people keep say something about who they are.
- It is healthy to throw things away regularly.
- Digital photos are just as meaningful as physical objects.
- Most people keep too many things they don't need.
- Some objects become more valuable to us as time passes, even if they are not worth much money.

Part 9. Imagine you could bring one object from home to show the class. Describe it to your partner.

- **Think about:**

- What it is and what it looks like
- Where it came from
- How long you have had it
- Why you keep it

REFLECTION

Complete the sentences in your own words.

- The object I would never throw away is...
- I keep things mostly because...
- Something I should probably get rid of is...
- One thing I want to keep forever is...

