

DIGITAL STAMPS

Philately in the digital age



Vol.1: Crypto-stamps



Welcome

Philately is entering a new dimension.

A stamp. A code. A unique digital certificate, recorded on a blockchain, impossible to forge. The crypto-stamp is not just another revolution, it is a new way to collect, own and pass on.

This guide is designed to get straight to the point: understanding how the link between the physical object and its digital twin works, activating your collection, and knowing exactly what you hold.

No unnecessary jargon. No prerequisites. Just the essentials, to get started on the right foot.

Happy exploring.

Luc MANGIN

President of the **F**rench **A**ssociation of **D**igital **S**tamps

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Stamps, from yesterday to today

Before discovering crypto-stamps, let us go back to the origins. The postage stamp has revolutionized global communications since 1840.



1840

The Penny Black

The very first stamp in the world, issued in Great Britain.



1849

Ceres — France

France issues its first stamp: Ceres, 20 centimes black.



1900s

Global boom

Philately becomes a major hobby on every continent.



2018

1st Crypto stamp

Gibraltar issues the world's first crypto-stamp!



2023

1st Nftimbre

France launches its first series....



2026

Over 600 crypto-stamps.

More than 1,200 NFTs issued by 36 postal operators.

Numerous collectors around the world.

What is a crypto-stamp?

Simple definition of a crypto-stamp

A crypto-stamp is a physical or digital stamp to which a proof of ownership has been attached, recorded on the internet, impossible to copy or forge.

In practice

a collectible object,
a digital identity,
clearer traceability,
a more modern experience.

The stamp is the object.

The digital adds the proof and the experience.



The 4 ways to exist

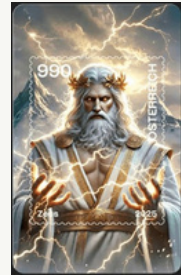
The 4 main categories

1. Stamp + NFT (90% are classic crypto-stamps)

A real paper stamp delivered with a digital twin (NFT)

How does it work?

You scratch a hidden area → you enter the code → your NFT appears in your space.



Le Petit Prince © SOGEX

2. NFT + Stamp (digital first)

The NFT is created first; a physical stamp is then sent to the holder.

How does it work?

You buy the NFT online → The Post Office or issuer sends you the paper stamp.

3. Stamp + Digital (the stamp and NFT are inseparable)

How does it work?

You activate your stamp → you receive a non-transferable NFT linked to your stamp.



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4. NFT only (100% digital)

A stamp that only exists on the internet — no paper, no physical object.

How does it work?

You buy directly online, you receive it in your wallet.

Blockchain in simple terms

Think of a ledger, not a computer.

A blockchain can be understood as a **shared public ledger**, where transactions are recorded permanently, in order, and viewable by everyone. It belongs to no one and it is practically impossible to erase or modify a past entry, because it is copied and maintained simultaneously on thousands of computers.

Information is grouped into "blocks" (describing what, who owns what, when a transfer occurred). Each block is linked to the previous one by a unique mathematical fingerprint: if one block is modified, the chain of subsequent fingerprints no longer matches, making any fraud immediately detectable.



NFTs, made simple

The technical basics - without the jargon

NFT = Non-Fungible Token. In plain English: a unique digital object that no one can duplicate identically.

Before going further, forget everything you may have heard about NFTs — the scandals, the crazy prices, the pixelated monkeys.

Here, we start from scratch. Because behind the word lies a very simple, almost obvious idea. And for crypto-stamps, this idea changes everything.

Applied to stamps: the contrast is perfect

Imagine a sheet of 100 "Marianne" stamps that has just been printed: each stamp is exactly identical. Same design, same value, same quality. If you lose one and someone gives you another, you won't see the difference: they can replace each other. They are said to be "fungible" (interchangeable).

Now, imagine a Rainbow crypto-stamp no. 7/50. Only 50 exist in total, and each has its own number. No. 7 is not no. 12: they are not "the same" object. If you lose yours, there is no replacement copy. It is said to be "non-fungible" (unique, non-interchangeable).

An NFT is like a digital ownership certificate that clearly states **"this crypto-stamp belongs to this person."**

Without an NFT, anyone could say: "I have no. 7". With the NFT, it is written on the blockchain (the large public ledger): at any given time, there is only one official owner, linked to a single digital account. This proof is what prevents counterfeits.



NFTs, made simple

The analogy that clarifies everything: the Mona Lisa

Think of the Mona Lisa. Millions of reproductions exist as posters, postcards, stickers, mugs. Anyone can print one at home. And yet, the original remains the original. The one in the Louvre. The one Leonardo da Vinci painted. The one worth billions.

Why? Because there is a universal consensus: we all know it is the real one. Experts can authenticate it. The whole world accepts it.

An NFT is exactly this mechanism but applied to the digital world. Your image file can be copied, downloaded, shared thousands of times. It doesn't matter. On the blockchain, only one original exists. And everyone can verify who it belongs to, in real time, without having to trust anyone.

MILLIONS DE COPIES
Imprimables chez soi

COPIES
Identiques et illimitées

IMPRIMABLE CHEZ SOI

Propriété vérifiée

Cet actif numérique est authentique et enregistré sur la blockchain.

DÉTAILS

Nom	Mona Lisa
Créateur	Leonardo da Vinci
Année	1503-1506

BLOCKCHAIN VÉRIFIÉE L'UNICITÉ
Chaque NFT possède un identifiant unique et infalsifiable

PROPRIÉTÉ VÉRIFIÉE
Authenticité et propriété garanties sur la blockchain

NFT / ORIGINAL SUR LA BLOCKCHAIN

NFT
ID : 7c1e...b9a9

RÉSEAU BLOCKCHAIN
Décentralisé et sécurisé

UNICITÉ
Identifiant unique et infalsifiable

SÉCURITÉ
Enregistré sur une blockchain décentralisée

TRANSPARENCE
Historique et propriété accessibles à tous

PROPRIÉTÉ VÉRIFIÉE
Authenticité et propriété garanties en permanence

NFTs, made simple

Fungible or non-fungible - the difference in 30 seconds

These two words should not be scary. They don't have to be. Here is the distinction in a single idea: can you exchange an object for another of the same type without losing anything?

If yes → fungible.

A 10 € bill. Your 2 € coin. 1 litre of petrol. A general admission concert ticket.

No matter which one you pick among these — they all have exactly the same value. They are interchangeable. They can be "replaced" without loss.



If no → non-fungible.

A signed painting. A 1st edition Pokemon card in perfect condition. A numbered VIP box ticket, row 1, seat 3. A photo signed by your favourite artist.

Here, each object is unique. You cannot say "it's the same thing" even if it looks similar.

How does it work?

Buying: a stamp like any other... or almost

You buy it exactly like an ordinary stamp: on the issuing Post Office's website, at the counter, or from a philatelic dealer. It is printed on gummed paper, perforated, with an official face value. It franks a real letter. At first glance, nothing unusual.

The difference is hidden on the front of the stamp: a unique QR code, sealed under an opaque film or a peelable strip. This code is the key. As long as it has not been scanned, the stamp is "unactivated" and the associated NFT waits on the blockchain, without an owner.

The digital value is there, dormant. You are the one who will awaken it.

Activation: the scan that changes everything

Activation requires almost nothing. Your smartphone acts as the key. The official app of the postal operator (Austria Post, Swiss Post, Deutsche Post...) connects to the blockchain. And your wallet, free to create in a few minutes, receives and stores your NFT from the very first scan. Three elements. One action. A permanent result.

You scan the QR code. Within seconds, the blockchain records the transfer: the NFT moves from "unclaimed" status to your personal wallet. This operation is irreversible and publicly verifiable like a postmark, but cryptographic.

One scan, and you are officially the owner. Forever. On the blockchain.



The French Post Office case

The French specificity

You buy an NFT online directly at <https://nftimbre.com>

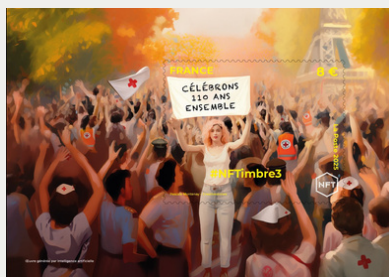
At this stage, there is no physical object in your hands yet.

You own a right, recorded on the blockchain: the right to receive the paper stamp

It is only afterwards that the physical stamp is sent to you by post, directly to you

The NFTs are stored in your collection on the site: <https://nftimbre.com/compte/>

In a future booklet, you will discover how to sell them on a Tezos platform.



Starting your collection

Before you start - What you need

Before buying your first crypto-stamp, gather these three elements. Everything is free to set up.

- 📱 A smartphone or computer: To scan, activate and manage your stamps.
- ✉️ An email address: To create your account on issuing sites Gmail, Outlook...
- 👛 A wallet (digital wallet): To receive and store your NFTs MetaMask or Trust Wallet - free.

Finding and buying a crypto-stamp

Crypto-stamps.org offers, from the start, a calendar that allows you to follow crypto-stamp news on an international scale. This section highlights important dates, new issues, events related to digital philately, and announcements likely to interest collectors. It therefore plays a central role in staying informed about releases and the evolution of this constantly innovating universe.

Beyond this calendar, the site presents itself as a reference platform dedicated to crypto-stamps, at the crossroads of classic philately and blockchain. It lists physical stamps associated with digital versions, often in the form of NFTs, issued by various postal services worldwide. Thanks to its structured catalogue and clear explanations, Crypto-stamps.org helps better understand how these hybrid collectibles work. The site thus addresses both philatelists and digital technology enthusiasts, offering an overview of a modern and innovative collecting practice.



Starting your collection

Creating your wallet

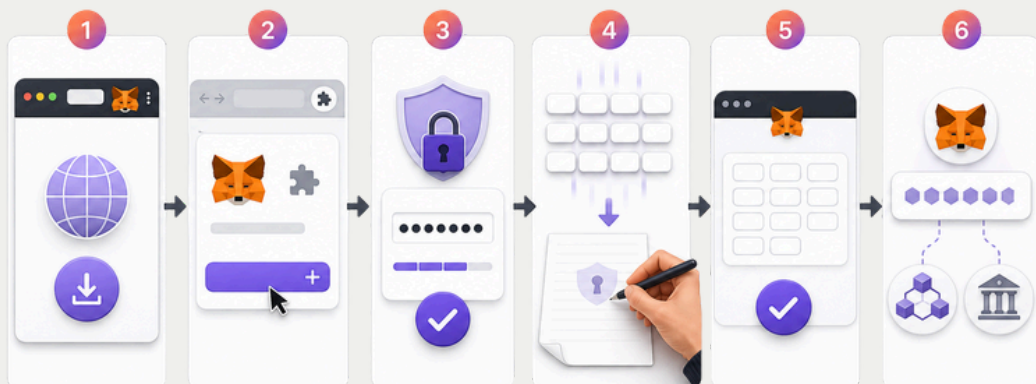
⚠ Warning: when you create your wallet, you receive a secret phrase of 12 words (called a "seed phrase"). Write it down on paper. Store it in a safe place. Never type it on the internet. Never share it with anyone. It is the only key to your digital vault — if you lose it, you lose access to your collection.

● **MetaMask** (recommended for stamps on Ethereum or Polygon)
Go to metamask.io from a browser (Chrome or Firefox preferred). Click "Download" then "Install the extension". MetaMask is added to your browser as a small orange fox in the toolbar.

Click the MetaMask icon → "Create a new wallet" → accept the terms → create a strong password (8 characters minimum, one uppercase, one number, one special character).

MetaMask displays your 12-word secret phrase. This is the most important moment. Write it down by hand on paper. Do not take a screenshot. Do not send it by email. Confirm that you have noted it correctly by re-entering it in order.

Your wallet is created. You see an address like 0x4f3a...b7c2. This is your unique identifier on the blockchain — like an IBAN, but for NFTs.



Best practices

**Keep your secret phrase offline.
Write it down and never share it.**

**Use official sources.
Always verify before buying.**

**Protect the physical stamp.
The paper still matters.**

**Stay attentive.
Origin, series, condition, platform.**

**Collect out of passion.
Enjoyment remains the best starting point.**

Curious, patient, cautious: that is the best approach.



Why people love it

Because the crypto-stamp is no longer just something you look at: it is something you experience.

It brings together several very contemporary dimensions in a single object:

Beauty - a carefully crafted visual, designed as a true collectible piece.

Rarity - limited editions, sometimes with several levels of scarcity.

Tangibility - a real stamp you can hold, keep, and show.

Digital - a unique digital version, linked to the object.

Multimedia - an animated image, a film, exclusive content that can appear after a scan.

Interaction - you don't just own it, you discover, activate, and explore.

Experience - the collector also becomes a spectator.

A crypto-stamp can thus offer much more than a simple static visual: by scanning it, you can reveal an animation, a video, a graphic universe, or exclusive digital content.

The stamp then leaves the album to enter a more vivid, more immersive, more contemporary experience.



The French Association of Digital Stamps

The FADS: your entry point into digital philately

You have just discovered crypto-stamps. But collecting alone, without guidance or a network, is like setting off on an adventure without a map. That is exactly why the French Association of Digital Stamps exists.

Officially launched on 7 November 2025 at the Salon Philatélique d'Automne, the FADS is the first French association entirely dedicated to crypto-philately. It brings together collectors, blockchain experts, traditional philatelists and digital enthusiasts around a single object: the digital stamp.

What the FADS concretely does for you

1. It keeps you informed - without jargon

The FADS regularly publishes in-depth articles on new issues, the blockchain technologies used, and market developments.

2. It authenticates - so you can buy and sell with confidence

One of the real problems in the secondary crypto-stamp market is the question of authenticity. A physical stamp can be counterfeited. The FADS provides access to a network of experts who can validate a piece before purchase or sale.

3. It connects you - to a real community

Joining the FADS means becoming part of a network of serious collectors, philately experts and Web3 specialists.

4. It is officially recognised

The FADS is affiliated with the FFAP (French Federation of Philatelic Associations, no. IC-1187). It is not an informal club; it is a registered association within the official French philatelic landscape. This matters when you want to enhance the value of your collection or be recognised as a serious collector.



Glossary

Activation The operation of "claiming" the NFT linked to a physical stamp. You scratch the hidden area, enter the code on the official website, and the NFT is transferred to your wallet. Once activated, it is irreversible.

Wallet address Your unique identifier on the blockchain. A string of numbers and letters like 0x4f3a...b7c2. It is the equivalent of an IBAN for receiving NFTs. It is public; anyone can send you tokens, but no one can access your wallet without your private key.

Blockchain A public digital ledger, shared among thousands of computers worldwide. Every transaction is recorded permanently and is verifiable by all. No one can modify or erase what is written. This is what makes NFTs reliable - the blockchain is their birth certificate.

Blockchain explorer A website that allows you to view all transactions recorded on a given blockchain. Like a public directory. You can verify who owns an NFT, its complete history, and the address of its current owner.

Ethereum → etherscan.io

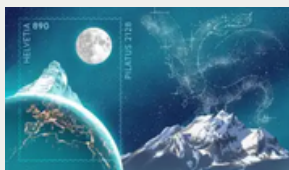
Tezos → tzkt.io

Polygon → polygonscan.com

Transaction fees (Gas fees) Small fees paid in cryptocurrency to validate an operation on the blockchain (activating an NFT, selling it, transferring it).

MetaMask The most popular digital wallet for managing NFTs.

Mint / Minting The action of creating an NFT on the blockchain. "Minting" a token means registering it for the first time - the moment it acquires its official digital existence. For crypto-stamps, minting occurs either at issuance (postal operator side) or at activation (collector side).



Glossary

OpenSea The world's largest marketplace for NFTs opensea.io.

Polygon (MATIC) A secondary blockchain connected to Ethereum, but with near-zero transaction fees and faster transactions. Used by some crypto-stamp issues to make activation accessible to everyone, free of charge.

QR code A two-dimensional barcode, scannable by smartphone. On a crypto-stamp, it can direct you to the activation site, or directly identify the associated token. Some stamps use a visible QR code; others hide their code under a scratch-off area.

SBT (Soulbound Token) A non-transferable digital token.

Tezos (XTZ) An alternative blockchain to Ethereum, known for its low energy consumption and very low transaction fees. Used notably by the French Post Office for its crypto-stamp issues.

Wallet (digital wallet) The application or extension that allows you to receive, store, send and manage your NFTs. It is not a "wallet" in the literal sense - it does not actually contain your tokens, but the private key that proves you are their owner on the blockchain. Main wallets: MetaMask, Trust Wallet, platform-integrated wallets.

Web3 The name given to the new generation of the internet, based on decentralisation and blockchain. As opposed to Web2 (social networks, centralised platforms), Web3 gives users direct ownership of their data and digital objects, such as crypto-stamps.



Join us

You are one click away from a new adventure

contact@af-td.fr

<https://af-td.fr/contact/>

