

Your Guide to Sports Card Shows

Introduction

Welcome to the Card Show Guide! This E-book contains our experience and knowledge of card shows. The topics range from How to Find a Card Show to What Mistakes You Should Avoid. We have been going to card shows for quite a while now and want to share what we have learned with you.

We highly recommend reading this book before your first card show. This way you will be prepared for what lies ahead. Your first card show can be intimidating if you do not know what to do.

We also encourage any seasoned collectors in the hobby to read this e-book because we believe that you might learn a thing or two.

-Ryan Nolan and Steven Lazar

@breakoutsports (on Youtube, Instagram, and Tiktok)

[YouTube](#)

[Instagram](#)

[TikTok](#)

Biggest Card Shows

The Nationals

Nothing really in comparison, this show is often in Atlantic City or Chicago. You can find 1000+ tables here, autographs, breaks, industry leaders and much more.

Dallas Card Show

The best upcoming show. The Dallas card show happens every 2-3 months. On top of that there are 400 tables. We have made [several videos about the Dallas Show](#) as it is one of the biggest shows in the United States

White Plains Card Show

A large 300+ table show that takes place in New York at the Westchester County Center. It's currently on pause with covid.

Philly Card Show

This is one of the largest shows in the north east. A 3 day event with a ton of tables. You can find it at the Valley Forge Casino

Virginia Card Show

Another large show on the East coast. The Virginia CSA show takes place every few months and has well over 300 tables.

Clearwater Card Show

The biggest show in Florida, the Bay Area (Clearwater Card show) takes place once a month. This show features over 100+ tables.

Sport Card Expo Ontario

This show is on pause because of covid, but it is the largest show in Canada.

How to Find a Show

Breakout Sports Cards Website

We have a bunch of shows listed on our website from almost every state. There is information about where, when, how much the show costs, and how long it lasts.

You can [check it out here](#):

Local Card Store

Ask your LCS owner if they know of any shows. People who are in the hobby know about these shows and might have been going to them for a while. Often your LCS will be tabling at them. They might even run one!

One of the [card shows in Jacksonville](#) is based out of a card shop.

Facebook Groups

Facebook groups get barated with card shows. Especially if you are in a local trading or collecting group. We advise that you make sure the dates are accurate. As long as you do that, you are ready to roll.

You could also make a post there asking if anyone knows shows local to the area. If you are in an active group, people will be more than willing to help you out.

Card Show Etiquette

Cards in Cases

You need to ask to see the cards in the cases. Don't go and open a display case without the dealers permission. This is an easy way for them to think you are stealing or for you to get on their bad side. Remember to ask nicely and wait until the dealer has your undivided attention.

Graded Cards

Remember to always take a good look at graded slabs. One reason is to see the eye appeal of the card. This can sometimes have an effect on the price. Especially with vintage cards.

Another reason to take a look at graded cards is to see if the slab is fake. We know this is uncommon, but it is still important to check. This phenomenon has been occurring more frequently in recent years

Taking out cards of plastic sleeves

Always ask before you take a card out of a sleeve. It's proper. If you don't, the dealer can get upset. If a dealer won't let you, chances are he's hiding a defect on the card.

When you remove the card from the sleeve, please handle the card with care. The card is not yours, therefore it is respectful to show the dealer you care about their cards

Negotiating

It is imperative that you always negotiate the price of any card you buy at a card show. No price is set in stone. When you do negotiate, please do not blatantly low ball the dealer. It is okay to go under the asking price, but if you go ridiculously low, it is seen as disrespectful.

Also, keep in mind that dealers like buying/selling/collecting cards. This is important because you can sometimes trade cards or use cards and cash to make a deal

Selling

When selling your cards at a card show, be aware that you probably will not get full market price for your cards. The dealers are trying to make money, so they will typically not pay full price for your cards. The only exception to this is if the dealer wants your card for their personal collection

Buying

When buying, make sure to use either ebay, 130 point, or beckett to make sure that you are not overpaying for a card. This can save a lot of capital over the long run. Also, looking up the prices of cards can help you find deals because the prices fluctuate.

Trading

Trading is a fun aspect of cards and you might have done this as a little kid. We would like to inform you that you can still trade with others! As a matter of fact it is encouraged.

Only certain dealers are willing to trade, however if you can find them, you can trade your cards and possibly get a great deal. We believe that there is a way where both parties can go home happy. Trade on!

What you can find at shows

Besides sports cards/memorabilia, There are an assortment of items such as comics, Funko Pops, jerseys, political memorabilia, and shoes at shows.

You can almost find any type of collectible here. Often dealers are in multiple markets and hit up different shows every weekend. One alternate card investment that has gotten hot is Pokemon!

You never truly know what exactly you will find at the shows. The possibilities are endless.

Finding Deals at Shows

You shouldn't be paying at or above eBay comps at shows.

If a dealer wants you to pay above, walk away. It is not worth the money.

On the deal side of things, the best thing to do is get multiple cards at once and eventually become a regular at shows.

Dealers give deals to those who continually buy from them to make sure they get your business in the long run.

How Should You Pay For Cards?

Cash is King.

No one is going to turn down your cash at the show. Whether someone is 20 or 70 years old. Cash is the best for everyone involved. It is also extremely convenient

PayPal

Almost every dealer also uses paypal. This is because some people do not like taking too much money to the show. When you pay someone, make sure to use friends and family so that there isn't a surcharge.

Venmo

More younger dealers tend to use venmo as it's easier to use then paypal and has no fees. I've found that the older dealers don't know how to use it. We recommend you stick to Paypal because more dealers tend to use it. However this option is not too bad either.

Zelle

Another way some deals prefer to pay online is zelle. There are no fees and funds directly hit the bank account instead of waiting a day or 2.

Credit Card

There are fees for a seller, but it's still a way to transfer funds. This is the least desirable way, but it still works. Most would rather the former option, but credit cards get the job done.

What Should You Bring to the Show?

Penny Sleeves

If you go through dime boxes, some dealers don't use penny sleeves. If you want to protect your cards, you need a sleeve.

Also some dealers put cards in top loaders without a penny sleeve. If you do buy one of these cards please be careful because the card can get damaged.

Top Loaders

Top loaders are another great way to protect cards. After affixing a penny sleeve, these top loaders protect the card if it gets dropped or slammed into any object. This item is not only imperative for card shows, but used frequently when sending cards through the mail

Cash

As stated previously, cash is king when it comes to cards. Please remember to bring some if you plan on buying cards at the show

Cards to Trade

Always bring your cards to the card show! You never know what you might find at the show and you might trade some of your cards for new cards.

When you bring cards to the show, you have extra leverage. This allows you to have more power at the show. Use this leverage wisely.

Backpack/ Container

If you bring cards to the show, you will need somewhere safe to carry them. This is why you should bring either a backpack, container for cards, or even tupperware to a show.

Not only does bringing a container protect your cards, but it also helps you carry them around the show.

Summary

You can find great deals at card shows

People buy, sell, and trade

Make sure to have proper etiquette and equipment when at a show

Have fun and Happy Collecting!

If you have any questions, feel free to email us

breakoutsports3@gmail.com or message on Instagram.

Make sure to Check out the [Breakout Sports YouTube channel](#) for weekly card show video.