

Research

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## Research

Before starting your Aladdin collection, it is important to research and learn as much as you can about Aladdin lamps both past and present. Before you go looking for lamps, you will want to know what types of lamps exist, how to tell an Aladdin from other old lamps, as well as distinguishing originals versus reproductions. If you already have a general interest in Aladdin lamps, this should be a fun part of the process. You will be fascinated the more you learn.

### Helpful Resource Books:

- *Aladdin: The Magic Name in Lamps*, by J.W. Counter
- *Aladdin to Ziu*, by Tom Small and Jim Christner
- *Aladdin Collectors Manual and Price Guide*, by J.W. Counter

### Helpful Resource Website:

- [AladdinLamps.com](http://AladdinLamps.com)

The *Aladdin: The Magic Name in Lamps* book is great for learning the history of Aladdin, as well as to view photographs of many lamp models and styles. There is very detailed information for Models A through 23, while just some basic information is presented for Models 1-12. *Aladdin to Ziu* gives a lot of very specific details about Models 1-12, which cannot be found in *The Magic Name in Lamps* book. It also contains many other early lamp brands, in addition to Aladdin. The *Aladdin Collectors Manual and Price Guide* is essential for giving you a good idea what lamps are worth. It is also a great, concise list of all the lamp options that exist. It will be an important tool to use later when you create your wish list and budget.

If you intend to burn any of the lamps you acquire, you will most definitely want to familiarize yourself with all the parts and how they work. It is very important to learn how to operate them safely. Be sure to check out all of the instructional documents, diagrams, and videos found on the Aladdin website.

## Wish List & Budget

After you've done some research and have a good idea of what types of lamps you want to look for, the next step is to make a wish list. This can be as detailed as you want – anything from a running list of lamps you like, or as detailed as ranking the lamps in the order you would like to have them, even by color within the type of lamp. Ranking by color is helpful so that you can keep in mind what color options are out there, and you aren't tempted to go for the first one you see and then wish you had waited for a different color. You can also think about what your goals for your collection. Do you want to look for the rarer lamps, or stick to what's popular? Do you want to have a lamp from every model? Do you want every color of a certain style? Do you have a favorite color you want to collect, or do you want a variety?

Once you have a wish list, you will want to use the *Price Guide* to find the going rate for your list of lamps. This will prepare you for shopping, so you don't vastly overpay or don't miss out on a good deal. Everything is subjective, of course, but it's a good place to start. You'll get a better feel for pricing as you begin your search.

Budgeting is an extremely important companion to the wish list. Setting up a budget before you get started will help you get a clear picture of how much you are willing to spend to avoid getting in too deep before you get the lamps you really want. Know how much you can spend and over what time-frame. Everyone has their limits, whether it's money, display/storage space, or both. This is not a cheap hobby for most, and it's also very addicting once you get started.

Once you've assigned approximate prices to your wish list lamps, go back to your wish list, re-evaluate your rankings, and make adjustments as needed.

## Search

Now that you know what lamps you want to look for and what you are prepared to spend when you find them, the question is: "Where do I start looking?" First, ask yourself if you are looking for currently produced lamps or antiques.

If you want the latest and greatest from Aladdin, you can use the Aladdin website to locate a dealer near you. However, if you are looking for antiques, the search becomes a little more complicated, as each option has pros and cons.



## Online - eBay and other online sellers:

- **Pros:**
  1. You can search from the comfort of your own home any time you want
  2. You can create searches and be notified if something you're interested in shows up
  3. There is always a wide variety of lamps available
- **Cons:**
  1. You can't physically inspect the lamps before buying, so you may not know about chips, scratches, or missing pieces (but you can request more photos and details from sellers if you know what to look for and ask about)
  2. There is a risk of damage in shipping
  3. Pricing can sometimes be higher and bidding wars can drive prices up higher than you would like to spend
  4. There are often shipping costs

## In-Person - antique stores, flea markets, auctions:

- **Pros:**
  1. You can physically inspect lamps before you buy to make sure there are no chips, scratches, or missing pieces
  2. You never know when you might stumble on a really good deal or hidden gem
  3. You may be able to barter or negotiate
- **Cons:**
  1. Finds are hit-and-miss - you may travel and come home empty-handed having not found anything
  2. You will often come across lamps that are missing pieces or mixed-and-matched with pieces from different models, or even non-Aladdin parts

## Catalog & Photograph

Having a collection of two or three lamps is pretty easy to keep track of, however, when you start accumulating ten, twenty, thirty, or more lamps, you can easily lose track of what you have, what lamps are missing what parts, when you purchased them, and how much you spent. For this reason, cataloging and keeping track of the details of each lamp can be extremely helpful. Starting a record from the beginning will save you a lot of time in the future. Not only does it give you a definitive list of what you have as you look for more lamps, it also gives you details you may need if you ever want to sell part of or all of your collection, or when it comes time to pass the collection on to the next generation.

Cataloging can take whatever form you want, but a using a spreadsheet is a pretty simple and straightforward method. Some of the information you may want to include would be:

- Model and lamp name
- Year(s) produced
- Date purchased and from where
- Price paid
- Current Low/High book price of worth (update as more current pricing is published)

Those are just some of the very basics. You can get even more detailed by adding columns for parts like burners, chimneys, etc. to keep track of what came with the lamp or what might be missing that you want to look for later.

The more lamps you add to your collection, the more you will appreciate having a list of what you have and how much you've invested. Keeping track of money spent will help you see if you are keeping in line with your budget and whether adjustments need to be made.

You might consider using an online application, such as Google Drive, to create and edit your spreadsheet. This allows you to access your spreadsheet anywhere, at any time. You never know when you might need to consult your list when you're out and about.

Keeping a photo album for each of your lamps is something else you might want to consider. Keeping the album online using Google Photos (or something similar), allows you to access your collection anytime you need to. The more detailed your photographs, the more helpful they will be if you aren't home to look at your lamp. Online albums also make it easy to share your collection with family and friends and keep them updated on new additions to your collection.

## Enjoy

Utilizing these tips will help you build your perfect collection. You can now sit back and enjoy your lamps, whether you plan to burn some or all of your lamps, or simply put them on display.