

The basic rules of detecting



- 1. You must have permission to detect on any land.** This includes parks, public spaces, woods, common land and public footpaths! Permission must be from the land owner (and the tenant if the land is leased). Beaches are a good place to detect and Crown Estate and Scottish beaches are generally fine. However please double check before travelling as on some detecting is not allowed.
- 2. Never, ever detect on protected sites.** Important historical sites are scheduled, giving them legal protection; it's a criminal offence to detect on them and you will be prosecuted if caught. Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) are also protected because of nesting birds, protected wildlife or rare fauna and flora.
- 3. The land owner owns everything found on their land unless they agree otherwise.** Have a written agreement to avoid any misunderstandings.
- 4. Dig carefully and fill in your holes properly.**
- 5. Dispose of all rubbish responsibly.** Bring it home and bin it.
- 6. Follow the Countryside code** - close gates, don't block field entrances, and be respectful of crops, plants and trees as well as the animals and wildlife that live there.
- 7. Stop digging and get expert help immediately if you dig anything unusual** - this includes bombs, ammunition, human bones, burials, archaeological remains and hoards.
- 8. Know and follow the Treasure laws.** Recording other finds is voluntary, but encouraged. This leaflet tells you more.

For more detailed information and links to further advice please visit our website, or check out our videos on YouTube.



Introducing the National Council for Metal Detecting

If you are reading this, it is highly likely that you already enjoy or are interested in becoming a metal detectorist.

Welcome to our community!

The NCMD is committed to represent the interests of our hobby at the highest level of Government. We lobby on your behalf, ensuring we protect, promote and encourage metal detecting as a recreational pastime.

Thanks in part to our promotion of the NCMD Code of Conduct that protects any finds, the land, our nations' history, and our members, we have forged good relationships with Government departments, Treasure Trove Scotland, the Portable Antiquities Scheme, the archaeological community, and with the Police dealing with heritage crime.

This booklet will help you to become familiar with the basic rules of our hobby, as well as providing information on treasure law and how to record your finds. For more information, guides and links to useful resources please visit our website.



Consider joining the NCMD and enjoy our protection, the latest metal detecting news, public liability insurance and much more!

Visit our website to find out more

www.ncmd.co.uk

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NCMD



TO PROMOTE
TO PROTECT
TO ENCOURAGE

Detecting guidance and advice

National Council for Metal Detecting

The recognised voice of Metal Detecting

Finding treasure

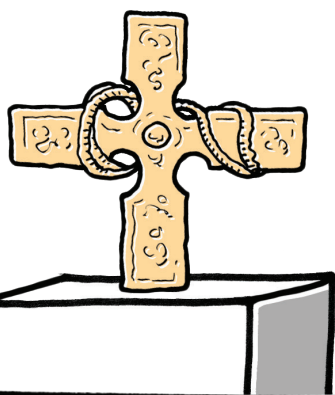
Metal detectorists love to find historically significant things and, thanks to our land's rich history, it is possible to have some thrilling finds. It's important that finds of cultural significance are protected and preserved for the benefit of the nation. There are different treasure laws across the United Kingdom. Here's a reminder:

What is treasure?

England, Wales and Northern Ireland

A legal definition of treasure is found within the Treasure Act 1996. In short, treasure is:

- Any metallic object that is at least 300 years old and made from at least 10% precious metal - this does not include coins
- Any prehistoric object where any part is made from precious metal
- Two or more prehistoric metallic objects of any composition that come from the same find.
- 2 or more coins that are at least 300 years old and contain 10% gold or silver
- 10 or more coins of any metal
- Any object, of any composition, that is found in the same place as objects considered to be treasure.
- Objects that are less than 300 years old, that are made substantially of gold or silver, that have been deliberately hidden with the intention of recovery and whose owners or heirs are unknown.



Remember:

Treasure objects are Crown property and do not belong to the finder or landowner. Finders have a responsibility for the safekeeping of treasure objects until they are handed over to a relevant authority, such as a Finds Liaison Officer (FLO) or museum.

An object/coin is part of the 'same find' if it is found in the same place as another object/coin or if they had been buried together previously before being scattered. If the owner can be traced, then it is not considered to be treasure.

Scotland

The Scottish definition of treasure is supported by Scottish Law and is described by Treasure Trove Scotland.

Any portable antiquity, no matter their age or material, is the property of the Crown and may be claimed as Treasure Trove and must be reported. Modern objects, like Victorian coins and machinery fragments do not need to be reported.

If the find is confirmed as Treasure Trove, the finder will be offered an ex-gratia payment and the object allocated to a museum to be made accessible for public display and research.

If the find is not claimed as Treasure Trove, it is returned to the finder along with a certificate formally disclaiming the item.

What should I do if I think I've found treasure?

England, Wales and Northern Ireland

You must legally report all treasure finds to a coroner for the district in which they are found

- either within **14 days** after the day on which you made the discovery or
- within **14 days** after the day on which you realised the find might be treasure

In England, contact your local Finds Liaison Officer (FLO), who can assist you in determining whether a find is potentially treasure and can report the find to the coroner on your behalf. In Wales, contact your local FLO or Amgueddfa Cymru/ National Museum Wales. If you fail to report an item you can receive a 3-month prison sentence, a heavy fine and lose all or part of the treasure reward.

*contact details available on <https://finds.org.uk/contacts>

Northern Ireland

You can also take your find to a museum for examination and if they determine that it might be treasure, they will report it to the local coroner on your behalf.

Scotland

- You should report the find to the Treasure Trove Unit as quickly as possible. Forms can be downloaded from their website. Where possible include images of the find.
- You should record where the object(s) were found as accurately as possible. Please reduce any potential damage to the object(s).
- Hand in the object(s) to the Treasure Trove Unit at the National Museum of Scotland, with your local museum or local authority archaeologist

England and Wales

Record your finds to PAS and help increase knowledge

Every year many thousands of archaeological objects are discovered. By recording these objects on the PAS online database, you can help advance knowledge of our shared history. PAS is short for the Portable Antiquities Scheme, which is run by the British Museum (in England) and through Amgueddfa Cymru - National Museum Wales (in Wales).

Recording finds with the PAS gives you:

- Help from trained specialists with identifying and recording objects, and advice on conservation and storage
- Information about The Treasure Act 1996 and its processes
- Understanding the importance of your find both locally and nationally
- Satisfaction that you have contributed to research and knowledge which help us to understand more about our past.

How to record your finds

- For guidance and access to the PAS database visit: <https://finds.org.uk>. You can access information about any find but precise find spots are only available to researchers
- Contact your local Finds Liaison Officer (FLO) in England or Wales. You can find your local contact at www.finds.org.uk/contacts
- Please supply a minimum 6-figure National Grid Reference for all finds - without a location they have little archaeological value.
- The PAS is interested in seeing all archaeological objects and coins but may be selective in what they record. They will borrow finds from you and they will be returned once they have been identified and recorded.

