



## The Zippo Lighter Collectors' Guide

**D**ear Zippo Lighter Enthusiast,

One night in 1933 above a garage in Bradford, Pennsylvania, George Blaisdell pushed the first insert into the first case of what would be the first Zippo lighter. That was more than 385 million Zippo lighters ago. Mr. Blaisdell would be amazed to know that today there are thousands of Zippo lighter collectors all over the world, communicating through newsletters and faxes, e-mail and web pages, as well as getting together at shows, conventions, and the biennial Zippo/Case International Swap Meet.

He would be dumbfounded to learn that for many, collecting Zippo lighters has become a hobby, and for some, it has even become a business. Zippo introduced its own lighter collectors' club, Zippo Click, in 2002, attracting more than 2000 members in the first six months. Zippo Click provides an opportunity for serious and casual collectors alike to share their interest in Zippo lighters. Members have access to the exclusive website, [zippoclick.com](http://zippoclick.com), a quarterly magazine, an exclusive annual lighter, and special limited edition lighters throughout the year.

In light of the ever-growing international interest in the Zippo windproof lighter, we are pleased to present this guide as an introduction to the novice lighter collector. This is a place to start. It is not meant to be a complete guide to Zippo lighter identification or collecting.



Every Zippo lighter tells a story and some of those stories – and some of the Zippo lighters – are priceless. Let this also be a word of caution. Collecting Zippo lighters is truly an enlightening experience. Try to keep it that way. Zippo Manufacturing Company makes no claim as to how much a single lighter, however old or in whatever condition, is worth.

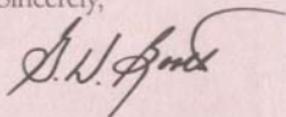
The collectible market is extremely volatile and any given piece is worth only whatever someone else wants to pay to begin or complete a collection.

Yes, there are Zippo lighters that have brought quite a bit of money to the finder. But collecting Zippo lighters, I believe, is about fun, about history, about people.

Several books have been published about Zippo lighters and lighter collecting. For a

current list, visit [zippo.com](http://zippo.com). For the latest information about Zippo lighter collecting, visit [zippoclick.com](http://zippoclick.com)

Sincerely,



Gregory W. Booth  
President and CEO  
Zippo Manufacturing Company



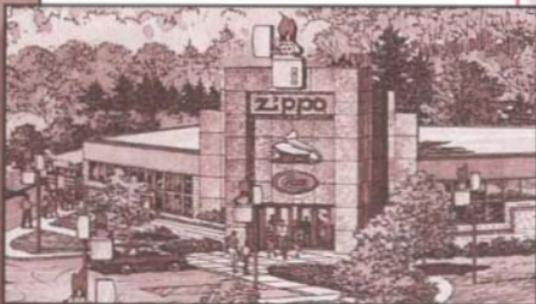
The Zippo/Case Visitors Center houses one of the country's most unusual and special collections of Americana.

The Visitors Center contains the Zippo/Case Museum, the Zippo/Case Store and the Zippo Repair Clinic, where the legendary Zippo guarantee is carried out. The museum displays the

Like Zippo, W. R. Case & Sons Cutlery, a subsidiary of Zippo since

# Spark Yo

1993, produces a legendary product, which has become one of the most collectible items in the world.



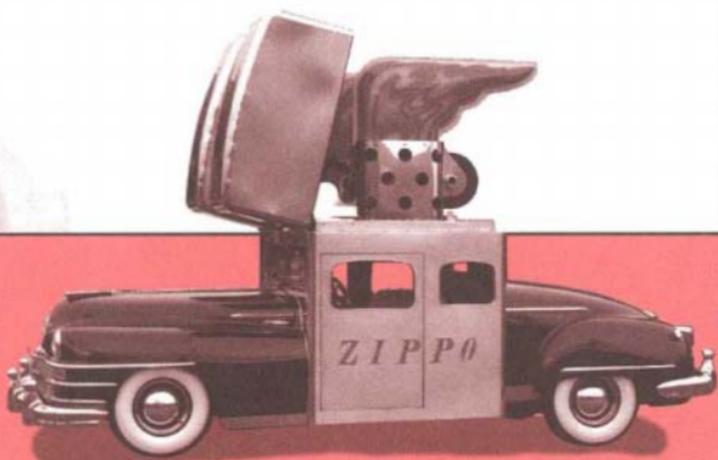
The Zippo/Case Visitors Center is located at 1932 Zippo Drive, Bradford, PA 16701. Hours are Monday through Saturday, 9 a.m. - 5 p.m. Sunday hours are seasonal. Closed major holidays. Call the visitors' information line at (888) GGB-1932, or visit [zippo.com](http://zippo.com) for information.

history of the Zippo windproof lighter, both the product and the people who have made this an icon of American cultural history.



Note: Most of the Zippo windproof lighters shown in this guide are historical; many are extremely rare. Since we no longer produce these models, they are not available for purchase from Zippo Manufacturing Company.

# our Interest.



Visitors often catch the unique Zippo Car on display at the Zippo/Case Visitors Center.

The current Zippo Car, a recreation of the 1947 original, was made in 1997 to commemorate the 50th anniversary of the Zippo product mobile. Visit [zippo.com](http://zippo.com) to read more about the mysterious disappearance of the original Zippo Car, and track the current Zippo Car in its travels across the country.



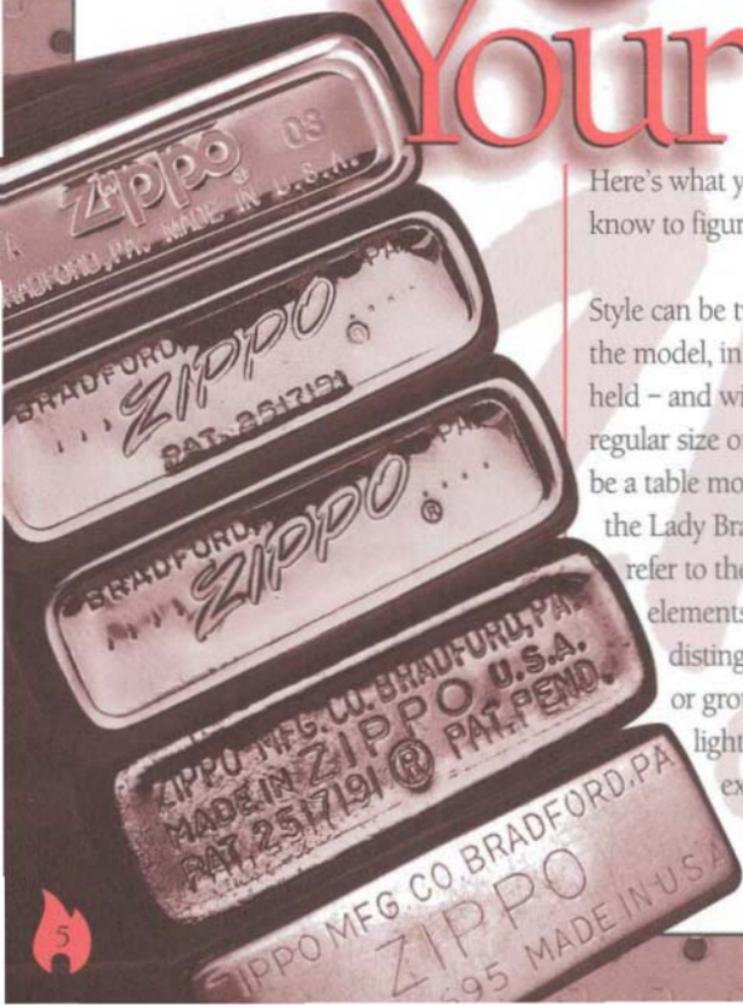
The most important information you want to glean from your Zippo lighter is what style it is, what condition it is in and how old it is.



# How Your Zip

Here's what you need to know to figure that out.

Style can be two things. It can signify the model, in that it may be a hand-held – and within that it can be a regular size or a slim model – or it can be a table model, like the Barcroft or the Lady Bradford. Or style can also refer to the decorative elements that distinguish lighters or groups of lighters. For example, does it have



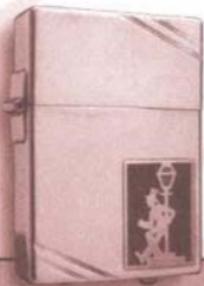
# How to "Read" Zippo Lighter.

diagonal cuts or is it 1/4" taller than the current models, marks of some early Zippo lighters? Does it wear a metallique? Is it a Town & Country? This book will help you determine that. Condition means everything in lighter collecting (with the possible exception of sentiment).

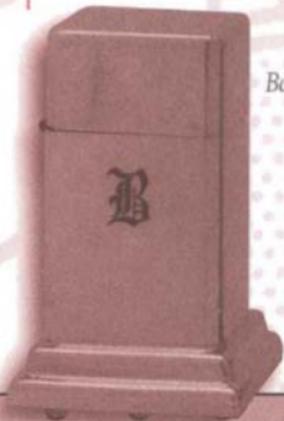
Now what does "condition" mean? To some collectors, it means that the lighter is as pristine as the day it was made. "Never lit means mint" to some aficionados.



*Lady Bradford*



*Barcroft*



ZIPPO MFG. CO. BRADFORD, PA.  
ZIPPO  
STERLING  
PAT. 2032695 MADE IN U.S.A.

ZIPPO MFG. CO. BRADFORD, PA.  
ZIPPO  
PAT. 2032695 MADE IN U.S.A.

ZIPPO MFG. CO. BRADFORD, PA.  
ZIPPO  
PAT. 2032695 MADE IN U.S.A.

BRADFORD, PA.  
ZIPPO  
PAT. 2517191

BRADFORD, PA.  
ZIPPO  
PAT. 2517191

But here's a rule of thumb: "Mint" generally means that the lighter is in superb condition. The chrome is in top shape. The lighter has all original parts. It has never been repaired. If painted or enameled, the colors are not chipped or scratched. The cam spring is strong. It opens with that distinctive Zippo lighter "click" and closes with that solid, reassuring "thunk". Many collectors use a rating scale from "Mint" to "Excellent" to "Fine" to "Good"



to "Fair" to "Poor", depending on these variables of condition. And finally, does the Zippo windproof lighter still have its original packaging? Original boxes, labels, and printed inserts add

considerably to the collectibility of the lighter.

Determining the date of a Zippo lighter is fun and

easy. Because Zippo founder George G. Blaisdell offered a lifetime guarantee on his lighters, he had the bottom of each Zippo lighter made since the mid-1950's encoded with a series of dots and/or slashes so he could identify which run of lighters was being returned for repairs. What began as a quality-control tool for Mr.

Blaisdell has become a collector's dream and a way to precisely date most Zippo lighters. Over the years, the date code format has been modified, most recently

in 2001.

We've included a key to the code on the next pages.



Research conducted in 2001 identified 4 million Zippo lighter collectors in the United States alone. In response to these aficionados, Zippo Click Collectors Club was founded in 2001, and registered its first members at the Zippo/Case International Swap Meet in July, 2002. For more information about Zippo Click or Zippo lighter collecting, visit [zippoclick.com](http://zippoclick.com), or contact Zippo Click at (814) 368-2700.

# ZIPPO LIGHTER IDENTIFICATION CODES

YEAR	LEFT	RIGHT
------	------	-------

As with most collectibles, the date of manufacture of a Zippo lighter often affects its value. Valuable information on the bottom of every Zippo lighter can help you determine its date of manufacture. Most lighters fabricated between 1933 and 1957 can be identified by style and model and the patent or patent-pending marks.

Starting in the mid 50's date codes were stamped on the bottom. The original purpose was for quality control. The date codes have since become an invaluable tool for Zippo collectors.

The appearance of the word "Zippo" in the bottom stamp provides another clue to dating. There have been three major changes, as shown below.

From 1933 to the mid 50's the word Zippo was stamped in block letters.

## ZIPPO

1933	Patent Pending
1937 - c.1950	Patent 2032695
1942 - 1946	Black Crackle, Patent 203695. (This number was stamped in should have Patent 2032695)
c.1950 - c.1957	Patent 2517191
c.1950 - c.1957	Patent 2517191 with patent pending

Zippo records indicate an overlap of bottom stamp configurations from 1949-1957. Also some lighters produced between 1955-57 were date coded, however, specifics remain unclear

The Zippo script logo was developed in the late 40's and was phased-in on the lighter bottom stamp around 1955.

## ZIPPO

YEAR	LEFT	RIGHT
------	------	-------

1958	Patent Pending	
	****	****
1959	****	***
1960	***	***
1961	***	**
1962	**	**
1963	**	*
1964	*	*
1965	*	
1966		
1967		
1968		
1969		
1970		
1971		
1972		
1973		
1974	////	////
1975	////	///
1976	///	///
1977	///	//
1978	//	//
1979		

An error was made in the date code. One of the slash marks was removed from the left of the Zippo trademark instead of being removed from the right; thus the code read: / //. This date code error was corrected within the same year to read: //

In the late 70's the logo was redesigned. It was incorporated into the bottom stamp in 1980.



## ZIPPO LIGHTER IDENTIFICATION CODES

YEAR	LEFT	RIGHT
1980	/	/
1981	/	
1982	////	////
1983	////	///
1984	///	///
1985	///	///
1986	///	///

Effective July 1, 1986 the dot and slash system was replaced by year / month code. Year is noted with roman numeral; letter designates month (A=Jan., B=Feb., etc.)

1986	G to L	II
1987	A to L	III
1988	A to L	IV
1989	A to L	V
1990	A to L	VI
1991	A to L	VII
1992	A to L	VIII
1993	A to L	IX
1994	A to L	X
1995	A to L	XI

YEAR	LEFT	RIGHT
1996	A to L	XII
1997	A to L	XIII
1998	A to L	XIV
1999	A to L	XV
2000	A to L	XVI

Beginning in 2001, the Roman numerals indicating the year were replaced with numbers corresponding to the last digits of the year of manufacture as follows:

2001	A to L	01
2002	A to L	02
2003	A to L	03
2004	A to L	04
2005	A to L	05
2006	A to L	06
2007	A to L	07
2008	A to L	08
2009	A to L	09
2010	A to L	10

For more collecting information, consult one of several books about Zippo lighters or visit [zippoclick.com](http://zippoclick.com).

## SLIM LIGHTERS

Slim lighters were first introduced in 1956, with a flat bottom and no date code. The first markings were added in 1957 and overlapped into 1958. From 1957-1965 the code configuration on the slim lighters differed from the regular lighters. From 1966 on the configuration has been the same.

1957	****	****
1958	****	****
	****	***
1959	***	***
1960	***	**

1961	**	**
1962	**	*
1963	*	*
1964	*	
1965		

In the unlikely event that your Zippo lighter needs to be fixed, here is the Zippo repair policy. *Please note that the finish of the lighter is not guaranteed.*

THE WORLD FAMOUS  
**ZIPPO**  
**GUARANTEE**

Any Zippo lighter, when returned to our factory, will be put in first-class mechanical condition for all time. It is never put in shape to suit the owner. If a Zippo lighter, regardless of age or condition, is returned to us for repair, it is guaranteed.

The Zippo Company, at no expense, will re-construct any one Zippo lighter which has been used in any manner other than as a lighter. Lighters which are not Zippo Manufacturing Company products are not repaired.

**Zippo** Lighters  
Zippo Manufacturing Company  
21 East Main Street  
Bradford, PA 16701

To preserve the collectibility of your vintage windproof Zippo lighter, your original insert will be returned to you in the same condition as received.

# It Works Or V

The case of the lighter will be repaired as much as possible and a new insert (the inside lighting mechanism) will be fitted into the lighter case.

We suggest you send your lighter via insured mail. Your lighter will be returned at our expense. For safety, please remove the flint from the lighter and allow the fuel to evaporate for two to three days before mailing.

Mail to:  
**Zippo Repair Clinic**  
1932 Zippo Drive  
Bradford, PA 16701

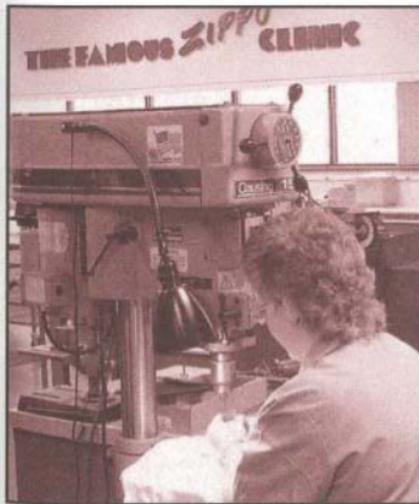




**FYI: Counterfeit Lighters**  
As interest in collecting Zippo lighters has increased, so has the manufacture of counterfeit Zippo-style lighters. Zippo is taking aggressive measures to confront this problem.

# We Fix It Free™

How to send them in.



Please be aware that many counterfeit lighters look very much like the real thing. This is especially true of lighters which depict the designs and sentiments of the Vietnam War era.

Lighter collectors clubs are a good source of information to learn more about the differences between real Zippo lighters and counterfeit lighters.



### Zippo Click Collectors Club

33 Barbour Street  
Bradford, PA 16701  
USA

Tel: 814-368-2700  
Fax: 814-368-2874  
www.zippoclick.com  
E-mail: zippoclick@zippo.com

### Zippo Club Austria

A-1090 Vienna, Muellnergasse 5/16  
Austria, EU  
Tel/Fax: +/01/586/2600  
E-mail: vacano@telering.at

### Northern Lights Pocket Lighter Club

P.O. Box 43541  
180 James Street South  
Hamilton, Ontario  
Canada L8P4V0

### Zippo Club Denmark

Soenderskovvej 79  
8520 Lystrup  
Denmark  
Tel: 45-86-74-35-95  
www.zippoclub.dk  
E-mail: formand@zippoclub.dk

### The Lighter Club of Great Britain

186 Wards Road  
Newbury Park  
Ilford, Essex  
IG2 7DY  
England  
Tel: 020 8554 5647  
www.lighterclub.co.uk  
E-mail: lcgbbond@aol.com

### Zippo UK Collectors Club

Zippo UK Limited  
Unit 27 Grand Union Centre  
336B Ladbroke Grove  
London W10 5AS  
England  
Tel: 020 8964 0666  
Fax: 020 8968 0400  
www.zippo.co.uk

### Zippo Sammelclub Lebenslicht (ZSL)

Eggersweide 61  
22159 Hamburg,  
Germany  
Tel: +49 40 6437744  
Fax: +49 40 6454515  
www.beratung-training.com/zippo  
E-mail: lebenslicht@nexo.de

### Zippo Club Italia (ZCI)

Via Muzzinello 6/A  
40017 San Giovanni in Persiceto (BO)  
Italy  
www.zippoclubitalia.it  
E-mail: info@zippoclubitalia.it

### Lighter Club of Japan

3-39-2 Nakano  
Nakano-Ku  
Tokyo  
Japan  
Tel: 81-3-5385-5801  
Fax: 81-3-5385-5804



# The Lighter Clubs.

## Zippo Collectors Club Holland

P.O. Box 115  
3738 ZN Maartensdijk  
The Netherlands  
Tel: 31-346-213690  
Fax: 31-346-213584  
www.zippo.nl  
E-mail: zippo@americanoriginal.nl

## Lighterklubben RO-ZI

P.O. Box 587  
2304 Hamar  
Norway  
Tel: +47-62-57-80-84  
Fax: +47-62-58-49-62  
E-mail: ovreidar@online.no

## Funke und Flamme (FUF)

International Lighter Collectors' Club  
Postfach 121  
CH-9413 Oberegg  
Switzerland  
Tel/Fax: 41-71-891-1322

## Spark International (TM)

P.O. Box 41  
CH-5412 Gebenstorf  
Switzerland  
Tel/Fax: 0041-56 225 06 75  
www.members.aol.com/IntSpark/welcome.html  
E-mail: u.baetschmann@pop.agi.ch

## Southern Lights™

3221 Jenkins Circle  
Southside, AL 35907 USA  
Tel: 256-442-7653  
www.southernlights.homestead.com  
E-mail: SLLC1@webtv.net

## Great Lakes Lighter Collectors

524 West Lincon Avenue  
Ionia, MI 48846  
Tel: 616-522-9425  
www.gllighters.com

## Pocket Lighter Preservation Guild (PLPG)

P.O. Box 327  
Wentzville, MO 63385-0327 USA  
Tel: 314-651-0693  
Fax: 636-639-8990  
www.PLPG@plpg.org  
E-mail: PLPG1@aol.com

## On the Lighter Side (OTLS)

International Lighter Collectors  
P.O. Box 1733  
Quitman, TX 75783-1733 USA  
Tel: 903-763-2795  
Fax: 903-763-4953  
www.otls.com  
E-mail: info@otls.com

This information was current as of January 2003.  
Contact information can change frequently. Please  
refer to zippo.com for an updated listing.



*"Build your product with integrity...  
stand behind it 100% and success will follow."*

*– George G. Blaisdell*

*Founder, Zippo Manufacturing Company*



**zippo**

33 Barbour Street, Bradford, Pennsylvania 16701 USA  
[zippo.com](http://zippo.com)    [zippoclick.com](http://zippoclick.com)