To most, a stamp, or more technically postage stamp, is one of those drab, small, usually rectangular but sometimes come in other shapes, serrated, gummed paper you lick or glue to stick into letter envelopes, parcels, post cards or any other items of mail, which is bought at the post office or other authorized postal agencies. The presence of postage stamp on any item of mail indicates that the person sending has paid for the delivery cost and the post-mark, otherwise known as the cancellation mark, is a measure taken to prevent stamps from being reused.

Before the introduction of postage stamps in England (its known origin), items of mail were paid for by the recipient, and there was no restriction or control imposed on the amount, size or weight of the items being mailed. As a result, the postal service suffered significant losses on mail items that recipients refused or were unable to pay. As part of an attempt to reform and improve the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland’s postal system, which was in chaos and prevalent with corruption in the early 19th century, the English reformist, Sir Rowland Hill, in 1839, proposed the use of postage stamp.

The first postage stamp, the Penny Black, featuring the bust of Queen Victoria, was introduced for sale in May 1, 1840 and was made valid from May 6, 1840. Two days later, the second postage stamp, the Penny Blue, which also featured Queen Victoria, was issued.

The introduction of postage stamp had been a great leap forward in the postal service, benefiting both the mailer and the postal officials, and effectively addressed the issue of recovering postal service costs. It eventually resulted in a better and faster postal system, leading to significant increase in mailing. After its introduction in England, other countries, in the late 1840s followed suit, issuing their stamps and by 1860, most countries had their own stamps.

With its worldwide acceptance, postage stamps presented a new object and subject of interest among hobbyists, collectors and historians, and led to the creation of a new discipline - philately, the study of postage stamps and postal history. As mailing continued to increase, so did the interests and usage (or non-usage acquisition among philatelists, collectors and later, investors) of postage stamps in the early to the middle of the 20th century. Introduction of more modern methods of indicating postage payment of mail items, coupled with the advancement in communications and information technology at the turn of the 21st century, however, had caused a decline not only in the postal service revenues, but also on the usage and therefore, interest in postage stamps.

A close look at how postage stamps have evolved and continue to evolve worldwide - from the first gummed paper-printed Penny Black to the recent issues, naming a few: the special silk stamp from Hong Kong to commemorate the Chinese Lunar Year of the Dog; the self-adhesive, oak tree-shaped, oak wood stamp from Austria, marking the 20th anniversary of the Austrian Federal Forestry Office; the 3D motion stamps from Russia, showing the official mascot Wolf Zabivaka ‘kicking the ball’, ‘heading the ball’ and ‘dribbling the ball’, to celebrate Russia’s hosting of the 2018 FIFA World Cup; the special stamp made of silver, to celebrate the 100th anniversary of the Republic of Estonia; the holographic, self-adhesive stamps featuring celestial bodies (Horsehead Nebula, Orion Nebula, Hale-Bopp Comet, Sun, Mercury, Venus, etc.) from Japan; the stamps that glow-in-the-dark under UV light, from Isle of Man, to commemorate 100 years of the Royal Air Force; the thermochromic stamps from Alderney which features six coastal locations experiencing partial eclipse (by touching and warming with the fingers, one can see the altitude and direction of the eclipse in each of the coasts); and the ‘augmented reality’ marine life stamp from Guernsey, which when scanned with a smartphone or tablet loaded with the SEPAC Stamps app, shows a 3-minute high definition film on natural history of crustaceans - these, among many other interesting issues,
undoubtedly can change one’s perception of postage stamps. They are much more than what most know of as small, boring, postal items printed always, if not only, on gummed paper. Postage stamps are tiny art pieces that bespeak of a country’s people, culture, history, aspirations, accomplishments, arts, biodiversity, etc. They are small stores of valuable information and are considered a nation’s pride, “little ambassadors, representing a country through the people, places and history, depicted on them”.

Postage stamps have kept pace with today’s technologically-inclined age. Postal authorities worldwide have pursued technological advancements to produce innovative stamps that appeal even to the Generation Y and maybe beyond (as evident in the renewed and growing following on unusual stamps by a majority of younger folks). Advanced printing technologies and creative innovations have become the new norm in the production of postage stamps for some countries. In recent years, some security features used in bank notes have been adopted on postage stamps by many countries to counter the problem of fake or counterfeit production.

This article presents Malaysian postage stamps, detailing special features, majority of which are not mentioned in cover information sheets, posters, media preview coverage, in Pos Malaysia Philatelic website (https://www.pos.com.my), or any other local philatelic groups’, collectors’ or dealers’ blogs and websites.

![FIGURE 1: Silver ink application on three value set commemorating the 25th anniversary of the installation of His Royal Highness Tuanku Ismail Nasiruddin Shah, issued on 16 December 1970.](image)

Table 1 lists stamps issued by Pos Malaysia from 1982 till 30 April 2018, highlighting special features.

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Malaysian Postage Stamps with Special Features

Silver Ink Application

FIGURE 2. First Malaysia Plan (5v: 15c x 5) 1966 01/12 (15c stamp, “Rural Health”).

FIGURE 3. National Rice Year (2v: 15c, 75c), 1969 08/12. (15c stamp).

FIGURE 4. 25th Anniversary of the Installation of His Royal Highness Tuanku Ismail Nasiruddin Shah (3v: 10c, 15c, 50c) 1970 16/12.

FIGURE 5. 25th Anniversary of the Installation of Raja Syed Putra (3v: 10c, 15c, 50c) 1971 28/03.

FIGURE 6. Opening of Bank Negara, Kuala Lumpur (2v: 25c, 50c), 1971 15/05 (25c stamp).

FIGURE 7. 50th Anniversary of the International Criminal Police Organisation (2v: 25c, 75c) 1973 15/09 (25c stamp).

FIGURE 8. 25th Anniversary of the National Electricity Board (2v: 30c, 75c), 1974 01/09.

FIGURE 9. 4th World Conference on Tin in Kuala Lumpur (3v: 15c, 20c, 50c), 1974 31/10.

FIGURE 10. 25th Anniversary of Malaysian Trade Union Congress (3v: 20c, 25c, 30c), 1975 01/05.
FIGURE 11. 75th Anniversary of the Institute of Medical Research (3v: 20c, 25c, $1) 1976 06/02 ($1 stamp).

FIGURE 12. 25th Anniversary of the Employees Provident Fund, Malaysia (3v: 10c, 25c, 50c), 1976 18/10 (25c stamp).

FIGURE 13. 25th Anniversary of the Malaysian Association for the Blind (2v: 10c, 75c), 1976 20/11.

FIGURE 14. 2nd Board of Governors Meeting of the Islamic Development Bank (2v: 30c, 75c) 1978 15/03.
FIGURE 15. World Telecommunications Exhibition, Geneva (3v: 10c, 15c, 50c), 1979 20/09 (10c stamp).

FIGURE 16. Freedom for Palestine (2v: 15c, $1), 1982 21/08 ($1 stamp).

FIGURE 17. 25th Anniversary of Independence of Malaysia (4v: 10c, 15c, 50c, 80c), 1982 31/08 (silver 10c stamp).

FIGURE 18. 25th Anniversary of Independence of Malaysia (4v: 10c with silver frame around centre vignette, 15c, 50c, 80c), 1982 31/08.

FIGURE 19. Handicraft of Malaysia (3v: 10c, 15c, 75c), 1982 26/11 (75c stamp).
FIGURE 20. 25th Anniversary of the Installation of His Royal Highness Sultan Abdul Halim Mu’Adzam Shah (3v: 20c, 40c, 50c) 1983 15/07.

FIGURE 21. 25th Anniversary of Bank Negara Malaysia (2v: 20c, $1) 1984 26/01.

FIGURE 22. Petroleum Production in Malaysia (3v: 15c, 20c, $1), 1985 04/11 ($1 stamp).

FIGURE 23. 3rd Commonwealth Parliamentary Conference (2v: 20c, $1) 1987 01/09.

FIGURE 24. Installation of Sultan Azlan Shah (3v: 20c, 40c, $1) 1989 18/09.

FIGURE 25: Royal Visit (Prince William and Kate) / TRH The Duke and Duchess of Cambridge (RM2.50 x 2), 2012 13/09.

FIGURE 26: Overprint of MC-450M Royal Visit (Prince William and Kate) / TRH The Duke and Duchess of Cambridge for Bangkok Stamp Exhibition – The Magnificent Heritage (RM2.50 x 2), 2013 02/08.


FIGURE 29: Launch of MEASAT (Malaysia East-Asia Satellite) 1 (RM5), 1996 13/01.

FIGURE 30: Petronas Twin Towers (RM5), 1999 30/08.


FIGURE 32: Freshwater Fish Series 3 (RM5), 2006 25/05.

FIGURE 33: Malaysian Currency (Premium Stamp Silver of .999 purity, RM50), 2010 18/01.

FIGURE 34: Malaysian Currency (6v: 50c x 6), 2010 18/01.

FIGURE 35: Malaysian Currency (RM5), 2010 18/01.
FIGURE 36: Malaysian Currency, Series 2 (2 sheetlets, each with 3 MS, of RM5 value), 2012 16/07.

FIGURE 37: 750 Years Anniversary of Melaka (RM7.50), 2012 07/10.

FIGURE 38: Overprint of MC-452M (750 Years Anniversary of Melaka) (RM7.50), 2012 07/10.
FIGURE 39: 100 Years RHB Bank (4v: 60c x 4), 2013 23/11. On left, enlarged view of stamps

FIGURE 40: Edisi Khas Siri 3: Seri Paduka Baginda Yang Di-Pertuan Agong (15v: RM1 x 14, RM5 x 1), 2017 09/09.

FIGURE 41: Traditional Children’s Folk Tales (RM5), 2007 26/06.
FIGURE 42: Malaysian Currency, Series 2 (4v: 5c & 10c obverse and reverse), 2012 16/07.


FIGURE 44: Lat – Malaysian Cartoons (RM5), 2008 01/12.

FIGURE 45: Festive Greetings (RM5), 2017 28/03.

22 Carat Gold Stamp

FIGURE 46: The Baba & Nyonya Heritage (RM50), 2014 01/12 (embossed copper stamp, plated with 22 carat gold).

Gold Foil Application

FIGURE 47: 50th Anniversary of Malaysia Independence (RM5), 2007 31/08.
FIGURE 48: Children’s Pets (RM5), 2011 18/01.

FIGURE 49: Overprint of MC-422M (Children’s Pets) for INDIPEX 2011 (RM5), 2011/12–18/02.

FIGURE 50: Overprint of MC-422M (Children’s Pets) for INDIPEX 2011 (RM5), 2011/12–18/02 (imperforate sheet).

FIGURE 51: Overprint of MC-412M (125 Years of Malayan Railway) for PHILANIPPON ’11 (RM3), 2011/28/07–02/08.


FIGURE 53: Overprint of MC-443M (Installation of the 14th DYMM SPBYDP Agong) (RM2 & RM3), 2013 20/03.

FIGURE 54: Horses (RM5 Gold MS), 2014 27/01.

FIGURE 56: Ornamental Fishes (RM5), 2018 30/01.

FIGURE 58: Overprint of MC-437M (Legacy of the Loom) for Indonesia 2012 Stamp Exhibition (RM5 sheet), 2012 18–24/06.

Embossed Gold Foil Application

FIGURE 57: Legacy of the Loom (RM5 sheet), 2012 12/01.

FIGURE 59: Malaysian Currency, Series 2 (4v: 20c & 50c obverse and reverse), 2012 16/07.

FIGURE 61. 9th Commonwealth Parliamentary Conference, Kuala Lumpur (2v: 20c, 30c), 1963 04/11.

FIGURE 62. First Malaysia Plan (5v: 15c x 5) 1966 01/12 (15c Agriculture & 15c Education stamps).

FIGURE 63. Solidarity Week (3v: 15c, 20c, 50c), 1969 08/02.

FIGURE 64. National Rice Year (2v:15c, 75c), 1969 08/12 (75c stamp).

FIGURE 65. Satellite Earth Station (3v: 15c, 30c x 2), 1970 06/04 (30c stamp).

FIGURE 66. Installation of Yang Di-Pertuan Agong (Tuanku Abdul Halim Shah) (3v: 10c, 15c, 50c), 1971 20/02.

FIGURE 67. Opening of Bank Negara, Kuala Lumpur (2v: 25c, 50c), 1971 15/05 (50c stamp).

FIGURE 68. South East Asian Peninsular Games (3v: 25c, 30c, 50c) 1971 11/12.

FIGURE 69. Pacific Area Tourists Association Conference (3v: 30c x 3) 1972 31/01 (gold ink applied on turtle image and Iban headdress).

FIGURE 70. 50th Anniversary of the International Criminal Police Organisation (2v: 25c, 75c) 1973 15/09 (75c stamp).
FIGURE 71. Setting Up of the Malaysia Airline System (3v: 15c, 30c, 50c) 1973 01/10.

FIGURE 72. 50th Anniversary of the Rubber Research Institute of Malaysia (3v: 10c, 30c, 75c) 1975 22/10.

FIGURE 73. 25th Anniversary of the Employees Provident Fund, Malaysia (3v: 10c, 25c, 50c) 1976 18/10 (gold ink applied on KWSP logo).

FIGURE 74. In Memory of the Late Tun Haji Abdul Razak (3rd Malaysia Plan (5v: 15c x 5), 1977 14/01.

FIGURE 75. 100th Years of Natural Rubber (3v: 10c, 20c, 75c), 1978 28/11 (10c & 75c stamps).

FIGURE 76. International Year of the Child (3v: 10c, 15c, $1) 1979 24/02 (10c stamp).

FIGURE 77. Coronation of His Royal Highness Sultan Tengku Ismail (3v: 10c, 15c, 50c) 1980 30/03.

FIGURE 78. Installation of the Yang Di-Pertuan Agong Sultan Haji Ahmad Shah (3v: 10c, 15c, 50c) 1980 10/07.

FIGURE 79. Coronation of Sultan Mahmud (3v: 10c, 15c, 50c) 1981 21/03.

FIGURE 80. Freedom for Palestine (2v: 15c, $1) 1982 21/08 (15c stamp).

FIGURE 81. 50th Anniversary of the Malaysian Armed Forces (4v: 15c, 20c, 40c, 80c) 1983 16/09.

FIGURE 82. 25th Anniversary of Parliament (2v: 20c, $1) 1985 30/03.
FIGURE 83. Coronation of His Royal Highness Sultan Azlan Shah (3v: 15c, 20c, $1) 1985 09/12 ($1 stamp).

FIGURE 84. 50th Anniversary of the United Nations (2v: 30c, RM1) 1995 24/10.

FIGURE 85. Golden Jubilee of the Reign of His Royal Highness The Raja of Perlis (2v: 30c, RM1) 1995 04/12.

FIGURE 86. Centenary of the Conference of Rulers (3v: 30c, 50c, RM1) 1997 31/07.

FIGURE 87. 50th Anniversary of National Electricity Bhd. (3v: 30c, 50c, RM1) 1999 09/09.

FIGURE 88. Islamic Arts Museum, Malaysia (4v: 20c, 30c, 50c, RM1) 2000 06/04 (30c stamp).

FIGURE 89. Aga Khan Award for Architecture (1v: 50c) 2007 04/09.

FIGURE 90. Golden Jubilee of the Reign of His Royal Highness Sultan Abdul Halim Mu’Adzam Shah (3v: 30c, 50c, RM1) 2008 15/07.

FIGURE 91. 50 Years of Malaysia (1v: 60c) 2013 16/09.

FIGURE 92. 50 Years of Malaysia, Stamp Week (RM2.40) 2013 13/11.
FIGURE 93. World Youth and 29th Asian International Stamp Exhibition 2014 [7 sheets: RM3 (x 1), RM1 & RM2 (x 1), RM2 & RM3 (x 2), RM5 (x 3)] 2014 1–6/12 (gold ink applied on MS featuring Bangunan Sultan Abdul Samad, top, and MS featuring Mak Yong, bottom).

FIGURE 94. Installation of Paduka Seri Sultan of Perak XXXV Sultan Nazrin Muizzudin Shah (3v: 60c, 80c, RM1.20) 2015 06/05.

FIGURE 95: Pertabalan KDYMM Seri Paduka Baginda Yang Di-Pertuan Agong XV- Sultan Muhammad V (1v: 60c), 2017 24/04.


Metallic Gold Ink Application

FIGURE 97: World Youth and 29th Asian International Stamp Exhibition 2014 [7 sheets: RM3 (x1), RM1 & RM2 (x 1), RM2 & RM3 (x 2), RM5 (x 3)], 2014 1–6/12 (applied on Orangutan).

Copper Foil Application

FIGURE 98: Malaysian Batik (RM3 stamp - Batik Metal Block), 2017 20/06.


FIGURE 101: Firefly (RM5), 2010 10/05.


FIGURE 104: Exotic Pets (RM5 MS), 2013 05/02.
FIGURE 105: Malaysian Serama (Malaysian Bantams) (RM8 MS), 2017 10/01.

Holographic Transparent Glitter Foil Application

FIGURE 106: 1 Malaysia: People First, Performance Now (RM5), 2009 31/08.

FIGURE 107: Malaysian Festivals, Series 2 (5v: 60c x 5), 2012 27/09.


Scented Stamps

FIGURE 110: Roses in Malaysia (RM1 & RM2), 2003 25/01.
FIGURE 111: Aromatic Plants (RM5), 2012 24/05.

FIGURE 112: Roses, 2nd Series (RM5), 2014 14/02.

FIGURE 113: Scented Flowers, 2nd Series (RM5), 2016 07/03.

FIGURE 114: Nocturnal Animals (RM5), 2008 13/03.

FIGURE 115: Nocturnal Animals (RM5), 2008 13/03 (imperforate sheet).

FIGURE 116: Lighthouses in Malaysia, Series 2 (RM5), 2013 30/04.

FIGURE 117: Overprint of MC- 463M (Lighthouses in Malaysia, Series 2) for Australia Stamp Exhibition (RM5), 2013 10/05.

Glow-in-the-Dark Stamps / Miniature Sheets
FIGURE 118: Butterflies of Malaysia (RM5), 2008 24/04.


FIGURE 120: The Baba & Nyonya Heritage (RM5), 2013 29/11.

FIGURE 121. Coronation of His Royal Highness Sultan Ibrahim Ibni Almarhum Sultan Iskandar Sultan of Johor (RM5) 2015 23/03.

FIGURE 122. Installation of Paduka Seri Sultan Perak XXXV Sultan Nazrin Muizzudin Shah (RM5) 2015 06/05.

FIGURE 125: Electric Train Service (RM6), 2018 20/03.

FIGURE 124: NegaraKu (2 MS: RM3 & RM6), 2017 14/09.

FIGURE 126: Musical Instruments of Malaysia, Series 2 (RM5), 2018 10/04.

FIGURE 127: Malaysian Citrus (RM6), 2018 24/04.
FIGURE 128: Post Boxes (Stamp Week) (5v: RM1 x 5), 2011 10/10.

FIGURE 129. Islands and Beaches of Malaysia (4v: 30c x 2, 50c x 2), 2003 28/06 (30c Pulau Ligitan and 50c Pulau Sipadan).

FIGURE 130. Islands and Beaches of Malaysia (2v: 50c x 2), 2003 28/06 (50c Pulau Ligitan).

FIGURE 131. Mountains of Malaysia (4v: 30c x 2, 50c x 2), 2006 26/04.

FIGURE 132: Unique Birds of Malaysia (RM5), 2009 21/01.

FIGURE 133: Overprint of MC-391M (Unique Birds of Malaysia) for China 2009 Stamp Exhibition (RM5), 2009 10/04.

FIGURE 134: Arachnids (Stamp Week) (RM5), 2009 07/12.

FIGURE 135: Woodpeckers of Malaysia (RM5), 2013 13/01.
FIGURE 136: Malaysian Batik (RM3, Batik wood block stamp), 2017 20/06.

Braille Embossed Stamps

FIGURE 137: UNICEF – A Caring Society Gives Children Their Rights (RM1 stamp), 2009 09/10.


UV Spot Varnish (Visible Under UV Light)

FIGURE 139: Traditional Past Time Games with Upin and Ipin and Friends (6v: 60c x 6), 2010 13/12.

FIGURE 140: Traditional Past Time Games with Upin and Ipin and Friends (RM5), 2010 13/12.

Other Effects of UV Light

Figure 141. Historical Buildings – Lighthouse (4v: 30c 1324), 2004 31/01.

FIGURE 143: Installation of the 14th DYMM SPBYDP Agong (Sheetlet with 14v: RM1 x 13 & RM5 x 1), 2012 11/04.
FIGURE 144: Underwater Life (RM5), 2012 21/03.

FIGURE 145: Underground Engineering Excellence (6v: 60c x 6), 2011 21/11.

FIGURE 146: Children’s Hobbies: Boboi Boy (Stamp Week 2012) (6v: 60c x 6), 2012 19/11.

FIGURE 147: Lighthouses in Malaysia, Series 2 (3v: 50c, 60c x 2), 2013 30/04.

FIGURE 148: Wonders of Malaysian Forests (in 3 MS, each RM1 x 5), 2013 13/05.
FIGURE 149: River Transportation in Sarawak (3v: 70c, 80c, 90c), 2016 26/05.

FIGURE 150: River Transportation in Sarawak (RM3), 2016 26/05.

FIGURE 151: Tourists Destinations - Kedah and Kelantan (4v: 80c x 4), 2016 27/07.

FIGURE 152: Tourists Destinations - Kedah and Kelantan (RM2 x 2), 2016 27/07.

FIGURE 153: Battle Sites (4v: 60c x 2 80c x 2), 2016 15/09.
FIGURE 154: Battle Sites (RM3), 2016 15/09.

FIGURE 155: Festival Food Series-Malay (3v: 60c, 80c, 90c), 2017 06/06.

FIGURE 156: Festival Food Series-Malay (RM5), 2017 06/06 (crenulated, die-cut MS with circular stamp).

FIGURE 157: SEA Games 2017 (4v: 60c x 4), 2017 19/08.

FIGURE 158: NegaraKu (4v: 50c x 2, 60c x 2), 2017 14/09.

FIGURE 159: Tourists Destinations – Pahang, Perak and Terengganu (6v: 60c x 6), 2017 21/11.
FIGURE 160: Children’s Holiday Activities (6v: 60c x 6), 2017 04/12.

FIGURE 161: Ornamental Fishes (3v: 60 x 3), 2018 30/01.

FIGURE 162: 100th Year Anniversary of Yu Hua School, Kajang (3v: 60c x 3), 2018 03/03.

FIGURE 163: 100th Year Anniversary of Yu Hua School Kajang (RM5), 2018 03/03.

Fluorescent Ink Application

FIGURE 164: Primates of Malaysia, 2nd Series (3v: 60c, 70c, 80c), 2016 26/01
Thermochromic Ink Application

FIGURE 165: Primates of Malaysia Series 2 (2 sheets: RM3 x 2 and RM3), 2016 26/01.

FIGURE 166: Museums and Artefacts (10v: 60c x 10), 2013 31/08. Top- before application of heat; Bottom- after application of heat.
Colour Shifting Ink

FIGURE 167. National Definitive Series – Orchids (6v: 60c, 70c, 80c, 90c, RM1, RM1.10), 2017 21/02.

FIGURE 168: The Baba & Nyonya Heritage (RM35), 2015 15/02.

FIGURE 169: KLIA2 (RM5), 2014 24/06.

FIGURE 170: Farm Animals (RM15), 2015 16/02.

FIGURE 171: International Co-operative Project on Giant Panda Conservation (RM4 x 2), 2015 25/02.

Embroidered Stamp

Wooden Stamp

Flocked Paper Stamps / Miniature Sheets

Textured Rough Surface Application
FIGURE 172: International Co-operative Project on Giant Panda Conservation (RM4 x 2 x 2). Imperforate pair of MS, 2015 25/02.


Pearlescent Stamp

FIGURE 174: Pearls (RM5), 2015 29/07.

FIGURE 176: Malaysian Calligraphy (RM5), 2016 28/06.

FIGURE 177: Seven Wonders of Malaysian Flora and Fauna (Sheetlet with 7v: 30c x 1, 50c x 2, 60c x 2, 70c x 1, 80c x 1), 2016 23/08.

FIGURE 178: Seven Wonders of Malaysian Flora and Fauna (RM2), 2016 23/08.

FIGURE 179: Seven Wonders of Malaysian Flora and Fauna (RM2), 2016 23/08 (Imperforate MS).

FIGURE 180: Pos-Silang (World Post Day) (4v: 50c x 4), 2017 09/10.

FIGURE 181. 6th National Definitive Series- Garden Flowers (8v: 30c, 50c, 60c, 70c, 80c, 90c, RM1, RM2), 2010 01/07.
FIGURE 182: Rivers in Malaysia (RM8), 2018 27/02. Top, perforate; Bottom, imperforate.