

Look, Up in the Sky. It's a Bird. It's a Plane. No, it's Superman (on U.S. Stamps)

Superman, the first true American superhero, has appeared on only three U.S. stamps.

The first stamp was on the Celebrate the Century 1930s pane of 15 32-cent stamps (Scott US #3185f) issued on September 10, 1998 (at right). This was to commemorate the first appearance of Superman in *Action Comics #1* in June 1938 and shows him in his first costume, as created by Jerry Siegel and Joe Shuster.



At the same time, the USPS issued a Commemorative *Action Comics #1* with a first day cancel of this stamp in Cleveland, OH on September 10, 1998. This comic was actually an anthology of seven different stories. Only the Superman character continued. Also, in conjunction with this series, the USPS collaborated with DC Comics to publish a series of 10 comic books highlighting the 10 panes (one for each decade) titled *Super Heroes Stamp Album*.

Superman was born on the planet Krypton as Kal-El and sent to earth as a baby by his parents Jor-El and Lara just before the planet exploded. He was raised by Jonathan and Martha Kent in Smallville, Kansas and later became a reporter for the *Daily Planet* newspaper in Metropolis in his secret identity as mild-mannered reporter Clark Kent.

The second time Superman appeared on U.S. stamps was as part of a pane of 20 39-cent stamps honoring 10 superheroes from DC Comics which was issued on July 20, 2006 at the San Diego Comic-Con. The 10 superheroes are, in order: Superman, Green Lantern, Wonder Woman, Green Arrow, Batman, The Flash, Plastic Man, Aquaman, Supergirl, and Hawkman. The first ten stamps show the superhero and the next ten various covers from their comic books. The first stamp (at left) shows him changing into Superman from his Clark Kent secret identity (Scott US #4084a) while the second stamp (at right) shows the cover from *Superman #11* issued in July/August 1941 (Scott US #4084k). In addition, two postal cards, Scott US #UX458 and #UX459, (in a set of 20) depict Superman and were issued at the same time as the DC Comics pane, showing the same images as on the stamps. The USPS also issued a 22-page spiral-bound folio titled *Comic Book Icons on Stamps* that provided information on each stamp and included a full pane of the stamps.

