

Royal hobby: The Queen's curious hobbies - Favourite things to do in her spare time; QUEEN ELIZABETH II is first and foremost a public servant as a member of the Royal Family, having conducted her business to cameras and crowds for most of her life. In her private moments, however, she has some odd hobbies.

Express Online

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Body

Queen Elizabeth II took to the throne in 1953 and reigned over the UK for the last 66 years. In this ***time***, she has made countless royal appearances, among them tours to the most curious parts of the world. While the Queen is regarded as the picture of proper, she chooses to entertain some bizarre hobbies.

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What are the Queen's hobbies?

The Queen maintains a selection of interests outside of her work on the throne.

Many of these are traditional royal pastimes, while others have the potential to earn the monarch millions of pounds.

Below are some of the most curious hobbies the Queen maintains.

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Pigeon racing

According to the Royal Pigeon Racing Association , racing pigeons has been a hobby of the Royal Family since 1886.

Pigeons were gifted to the family and took up residence in the Sandringham estate, with both King Edward VII and King George V quickly taking to the races.

After serving in World war Two as carrier pigeons, they returned to the estate, and Queen Elizabeth II maintains an interest in the sport as patron of several pigeon racing societies.

Stamp collecting

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The Queen has a collection of stamps so massive it is said to fill roughly 300 albums and 200 boxes, stored securely in a vault at St James's Palace.

Talking to Fabulous Digital, Royal expert Phil Dampier said the Queen takes great joy in the collection - which is worth more than £2 million - and often take it out to show visiting heads of state.

He added: "It is one of her pride and joys, not only because she owns some of the world's most valuable stamps, but also because she has built on a family treasure and feels she has done her father and previous monarchs who owned it proud."

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Football

Many members of the Royal Family are football fans, with Prince William recently having taken his son George to watch favourite team Aston Villa in Norwich.

The Queen is an avid supporter of Arsenal, as revealed by former team midfielder Cesc Fabregas.

He once disclosed the Queen was "a fan" during a reception at Buckingham Palace.

Horse riding

The least bizarre of the Queen's hobbies is horse riding, which she does despite being in her early 90s.

She is regularly spotted on horseback in her estates, accompanied by family members and royal staffers.

In 1982 the Queen famously received US President Ronald Reagan while on horseback while he was visiting the UK.

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