BILL'S HOME TECH

Home & Small Business Tech Solutions

AN EXTENDED GUIDE · NO. 1826

Updated November 2026

Cataloging Comic Books with an App — A Plain-English Guide

Scan, organize, and value your collection — without typing every issue by hand

Tech Made Simple. Service Made Personal.

Bill Davis — Bill's Home Tech

(330) 200-8042 · bill@billshometech.com · Atwater, Ohio

Book a visit · billshometech.com/book

What's Inside

Everything in this guide, with page numbers. Skip to whichever chapter answers your question right now.

The 60-Second Version 3

Why Use an App for Comics 4

The Main Apps and What They Do 4

Cataloging Fast With Barcode Scanning 5

Cataloging Older, Barcode-Free Comics 6

Condition, Grades, and Key Issues 7

What to Record for Each Issue 8

A Word About Values 8

Protecting Your Catalog 9

Just Getting Started 10

Everyday Cheat Sheet 11

A Picture to Follow Along 12

A Second Look 13

A Note From Bill 13

Your Visit — and My Promise 14

THE 60-SECOND VERSION

1 The 60-Second Version

The whole idea in a minute.

A comic cataloging app lets you build an organized, searchable list of your collection, and the great time-saver is barcode scanning: point your phone at the barcode on a modern comic and the app fills in the title, issue, cover, and more. Older comics without barcodes you add by searching the app's database by title, number, and year. The leading apps for this are CLZ Comics and Collectorz Comic Collector; League of Comic Geeks is popular for tracking releases and community.

- Scanning barcodes makes cataloging modern issues fast.
- Older issues are added by searching the database instead of scanning.
- Back up the finished catalog and tell your family where it lives.

You do not need to be especially tech-minded to use one of these apps, either. The everyday tasks — scanning a barcode, confirming the issue, noting the condition — are simple and repetitive, and the app does the hard work of looking everything up. If the initial setup feels unfamiliar, it is a fine thing to have a grandchild or friend help you get going, after which the scanning itself is easy to do on your own.

> **GOOD TO KNOW**
>
> For a large collection, barcode scanning is the difference between an afternoon and a month. If most of your comics are from the barcode era, an app will catalog them far faster than any spreadsheet.

WHY AN APP

2 Why Use an App for Comics

More than a list.

A comic app does things a plain list cannot. Beyond recording what you own, it can look up each issue's details and cover image, estimate values, track which issues you still want, and let you search your whole collection in seconds. For a collection of any size, that transforms it from a wall of identical-looking boxes into something you can actually navigate.

The practical wins show up constantly. Standing in a comic shop wondering whether you already own an issue, you check your phone instead of guessing and buying a duplicate. Planning to complete a run, you pull up exactly which numbers you are missing.

Thinking about insurance, you have a documented list with values and covers ready to go. And for your family, there is a clear record of what the collection contains and what it may be worth — which matters enormously if they ever need to understand or sell it without you.

The app turns a wall of identical-looking long boxes into something you can actually search — 'do I have that issue?' answered in two taps instead of an afternoon.

THE APPS

3 The Main Apps and What They Do

Pick by what you need.

A few apps dominate, and they serve slightly different purposes, so knowing the difference saves you from choosing the wrong tool for how you actually collect.

App	Best for

CLZ Comics	Dedicated cataloging with barcode scan and value lookups
Collectorz Comic Collector	Detailed, barcode-driven cataloging
League of Comic Geeks	Tracking new releases and community, plus collection
Key Collector	A free reference for important 'key' issues

If your goal is to inventory a physical collection, a dedicated cataloger like CLZ Comics or Collectorz Comic Collector is the natural choice — both are built around quickly adding issues by barcode and keeping rich details and covers. If you mainly want to keep up with new releases and connect with other readers, League of Comic Geeks leans that way while still tracking what you own.

Key Collector is more of a research reference for the important 'key' issues than a full catalog. Most collectors settle on one dedicated cataloger and stick with it.

SCANNING

4 Cataloging Fast With Barcode Scanning

The modern-issue shortcut.

The reason an app beats hand-typing is the barcode. Comics from roughly the 1980s onward carry a barcode, and scanning it tells the app exactly which issue you are holding, pulling in the title, number, cover date, and cover image in a second. For a collection built largely of modern issues, this turns an overwhelming job into a steady, almost meditative rhythm.

1. Open your app and choose to add a comic by scanning.
2. Point the phone's camera at the barcode on the back cover.
3. Confirm the issue the app finds, adjusting the specific printing if asked.
4. Note the condition, and add any detail like whether it is signed.
5. Move to the next comic — a steady rhythm makes short work of a long box.

TIP

Set up a little assembly line: a stack to scan, a spot for the phone, and a box for the done pile. Scanning becomes a pleasant, repetitive task you can do while listening to the radio.

OLDER ISSUES

5 Cataloging Older, Barcode-Free Comics

A gentler, slower hand.

Comics predating barcodes — and the older, often more valuable part of many collections — cannot be scanned, so you add them by searching the app's database by title, issue number, and year, then selecting the right one. It is slower than scanning, but still far easier than building a record from nothing, because the app supplies the details and cover once you find the match.

Because these older issues are frequently the ones that carry real value, they reward a little extra care in the cataloging. Take the time to pick the correct printing and to note condition honestly, and consider photographing the most valuable ones yourself rather than relying only on the app's stock cover image. These are the comics an insurer or an heir will most want solid documentation of, so the slower pace here is time well spent.

GOOD TO KNOW

If your collection is mostly older, pre-barcode issues, cataloging will be more hunting than scanning — but it is also where a good record matters most, since those issues are the ones most likely to be valuable.

Rather not do this yourself? I'll come to your home and set it up for you — a flat $99 first visit across Portage County, Ohio and nearby communities. Outside the area? I also help remotely by phone or screen-share. Book at billshometech.com/book or call (330) 200-8042.

CONDITION

6 Condition, Grades, and Key Issues

Where value really lives.

Two ideas drive a comic's value more than almost anything else: its condition and whether it is a 'key' issue. Condition — how well the comic has been kept, from a battered reading copy to a crisp, flawless one — can swing the same issue's worth enormously. Key issues are the ones that matter to collectors for a reason: a first appearance of a character, a famous cover, a pivotal story.

Professional grading adds another layer. A comic can be sent to a grading company that examines it, assigns a numeric grade, and seals it in a protective case; such graded comics are judged and valued differently from raw, ungraded ones. You do not need to grade your whole collection — far from it — but it helps to record condition honestly in your catalog and to flag the key issues, because those are the comics where condition and grade make the biggest difference to value.

WATCH OUT

Treat any app's value estimate as a rough guide, not a firm price. For a comic you believe is genuinely valuable — an early key issue, say — get an opinion from a reputable dealer before buying insurance on it or selling it.

WHAT TO RECORD

7 What to Record for Each Issue

The details that count.

The apps capture most details automatically, but a few fields are worth your own attention because they shape the collection's usefulness and value. The app handles the title, number, and cover; you add the human judgment.

- Condition: note it honestly, since it is the biggest driver of value.
- Key-issue status: flag first appearances, famous covers, and notable stories.
- Signed or graded: record any signatures or professional grading, which affect value.
- What you paid and when: your cost and the issue's story.
- Which box or where it is stored, so you can actually find it later.

That last point — recording where each comic physically lives — is a small habit that pays off hugely in a large collection. An app can tell you that you own a given issue, but noting which long box it sits in means you can actually put your hands on it without searching every box. For a collection spread across dozens of boxes, that location note turns the catalog from a list into a map.

VALUES

8 A Word About Values

Estimates, not appraisals.

Comic apps often show an estimated value, which is useful for organization and insurance but should not be mistaken for a firm price. A comic's real worth depends on its exact condition, its rarity, current collector demand, and what a buyer will actually pay — none of which an automatic estimate can fully capture, especially from a stock image rather than your actual copy.

- Use app values as a rough guide for insurance and sorting, not as a selling price.
- Remember that condition can multiply or slash a value, and the app cannot grade your copy.
- For genuinely valuable key issues, seek a reputable dealer's or grader's opinion.

- Be cautious of a buyer's offer as a measure of value — it is naturally on the low side.

The sensible stance is to record reasonable estimates for everyday organization while treating your genuinely valuable issues with more care — those deserve a real appraisal before you insure them for a specific amount or consider selling. Keeping that line clear protects you from both over-insuring on inflated numbers and, worse, letting a truly valuable comic go for far less than it is worth.

PROTECT IT

9 Protecting Your Catalog

Keep the work safe.

Once you have invested the hours to build a catalog, make sure it cannot be lost and that others can find it. This is the step collectors most often skip, and the one that matters most for insurance and inheritance.

1. Turn on the app's cloud backup or sync if it offers one, so the catalog is not only on one phone.
2. Export a copy of your data if the app allows — a spreadsheet-style export is ideal for the long term.
3. Keep a backup of cover images and any value documentation.
4. Tell a trusted family member that the catalog exists and how to reach it.
5. Update it as you buy and sell so it stays accurate.

Imagine your collection having to be understood and perhaps sold by someone who does not know comics — a spouse, a grown child. A catalog trapped inside an app on your locked phone helps them very little. An exported copy they can open without the app, kept somewhere they know to look, along with a note of which issues are the valuable keys, is what ensures your years of collecting are honored rather than sold off by the pound.

GOOD TO KNOW

For insurance or for your family, a catalog trapped inside one app on one phone is fragile. An exported copy they can open without the app — and a note of where it is — turns your effort into lasting protection.

GETTING STARTED

10

Just Getting Started

Start with a single box.

The hardest part of cataloging a big collection is simply beginning, so do not try to do it all at once. Pick one box and one app, and let the habit build from there — progress, not perfection, is the goal.

- Choose one dedicated cataloging app and learn it on a single box.
- Scan the modern, barcoded issues first for a fast sense of progress.
- Tackle the older, hand-entered issues in smaller sessions.
- Add every new comic to the catalog as you buy it, so you never fall behind again.
- Enjoy it — revisiting the collection as you catalog is part of the pleasure.

Many collectors find that cataloging rekindles their love of the collection itself. As you scan and sort, you rediscover issues you had forgotten, notice runs you are close to completing, and get a satisfying sense of the whole that a pile of boxes never gave you. What begins as a chore for insurance or tidiness often turns into an evening's pleasure — which is the best possible reason to keep it going until the last box is done.

Start with one long box and the barcode scanner. The satisfying speed of those first scans is usually enough to carry you happily through the rest of the collection.

CHEAT SHEET

Everyday Cheat Sheet

Keep this page handy. It points you straight to what to do for each task.

I want to…	Do this…
Why an app	It organizes, searches, and values a collection you can't hold in your head
The time-saver	Scanning the barcode pulls in the issue's details automatically
Main apps	CLZ Comics and Collectorz for cataloging; League of Comic Geeks for tracking
Older comics	No barcode means searching by title, issue, and year instead
Values	Treat app values as estimates; grading matters enormously
Protect it	Back up the catalog and share where it is with family
Get help	Call Bill: (330) 200-8042

AT A GLANCE

A Picture to Follow Along

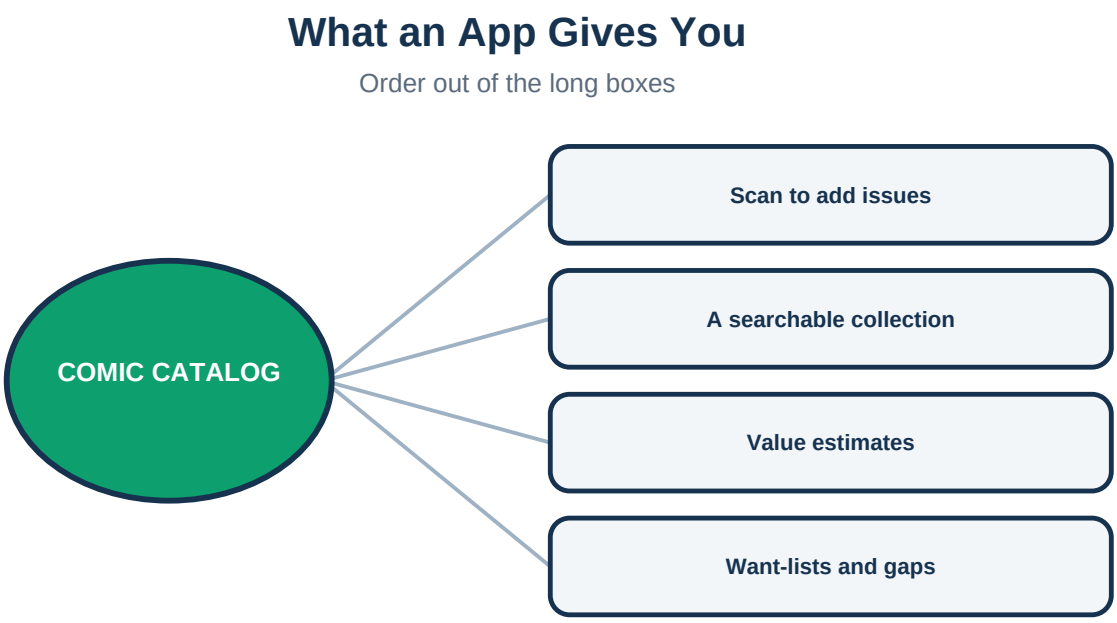


Illustration — a schematic. Set-up screens differ; each takes only a few minutes.

AT A GLANCE

A Second Look

Cataloging Quickly

The fast path through the boxes

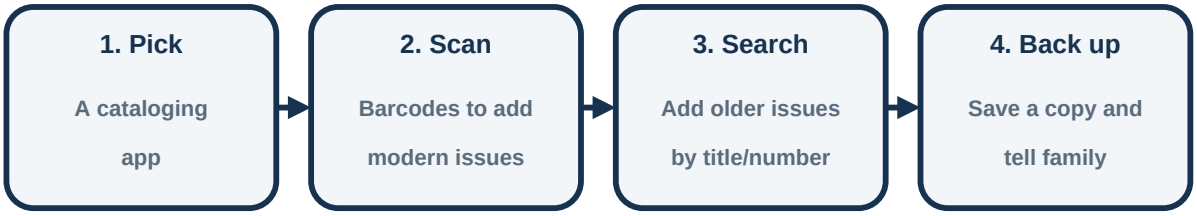


Illustration — a schematic. The order is a suggestion; do one box at a time.

A schematic of the plan — company steps vary; the order does not have to.

BEFORE YOU GO

A Note From Bill

A quick note from Bill. I write these guides to make home tech a little less frustrating, and I do my best to keep every step accurate and up to date. Still, every home, device, and setup is a bit different, so I can't promise a guide will match yours exactly or fix your particular problem. These guides are for general information only — they're not professional, legal, or financial advice, and they don't replace your device's own manual or the manufacturer's instructions. Please go slow, use your own good judgment, and use everything here at your own risk. If a step involves electrical wiring, a gas appliance, a water heater, plumbing, or climbing a ladder — or if anything just doesn't feel safe — please stop and call a licensed professional (or give me a call at 330-200-8042). Bill's Home Tech and Bill Davis can't be responsible for any damage, data loss, or injury that results.

HOW I CAN HELP

Your Visit — and My Promise

You don't have to remember all of it — just that a friendly, patient person is one call away, whenever you'd rather have a hand.

KEY SPECS

In your home — $99 flat for the first visit, no contracts and no surprises, with a 30-day come-back-free follow-up. In-home visits cover Portage County, Ohio and nearby communities.
Outside the area? Remotely — $49 for a screen-share session (free for Support Plan members, $39/mo), refundable if I can't fix it — and credited toward a visit if you'd rather have me in person. Book either at billshometech.com/book.

GOOD TO KNOW

My promise — If you're not 100% satisfied with your visit, I'll come back at no charge, or refund the full $99. No questions, no awkwardness. That's how I'd want to be treated.

Whenever you're ready, I'll come to your home anywhere in Portage County, Ohio and nearby communities, at your pace. Too far for a house call? I also help remotely. Book at billshometech.com/book or call (330) 200-8042. — Bill

Call or text (330) 200-8042 · bill@billshometech.com

This free guide is for general information only — not professional advice, and no substitute for your device's own manual. Any prices or outside products mentioned can change; please confirm current details before you buy. Please use your own good judgment and follow it at your own risk — for anything involving electricity, gas, water, or heights, stop and call a licensed professional. Bill's Home Tech and Bill Davis can't be responsible for any damage, data loss, or injury that results. © 2026 Bill's Home Tech, LLC.