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Top 10 Collectibles for 2008

We've shopped the shows and chatted with dealers to come up with our 14th annual hot list. Let's go antiquing!

1. HENS ON NESTS

WHAT ARE THEY?

Colorfully painted hens on nests topped many tables in 19th-century England. People were drawn to their decorative outsides (and the hard-cooked eggs often kept inside). Some of these pieces of Staffordshire pottery (made in Staffordshire, England) were painted to represent actual breeds of hens.

HOW MUCH WILL I PAY?

You'll pay anywhere from \$300 to \$3,000, with big, colorful hens more expensive than small, plain ones, says **Dennis Berard** of Dennis & Dad Antiques. The earliest hens aren't marked. A hen stamped "England" or "Made in England" is newer, from the late 19th or early 20th centuries.

DISPLAY IDEAS

The hens are made of heavy ceramic and are not easily chipped, making them perfectly at home on your kitchen table and around the house, says dealer **Jane McClafferty**. The smaller hens are nice on a dressing table holding jewelry or trinkets.

MORE TO KNOW

The whimsical, as well as practical, nature of the hens makes them collectible. Restored hens are still collectible as long as the restoration has been done well.

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