



Meet Ava

Metal detectorist

Age: 9

When did you start metal detecting? When I was 7, I went with my mum to Blackpool Beach. I had a go with her metal detector and managed to find an old 10p coin.

What is the best thing you've ever found? My favourite finds are musket balls. They can be different sizes and smooth to touch. They're really heavy.

What do you enjoy about metal detecting? I love history, so I enjoy taking my finds into school and explaining the history behind them.

What's the hardest thing about it? Sometimes you only find tin cans, ring pulls, bottle tops ... I take these home and recycle them. Also, when the weather is icy, the ground can be really hard to dig.

What advice would you give other kids who want to try it? Have a lot of patience! You won't always find something exciting, but when you do it's worth the hard work.

Do you have any tips? Always ask permission to dig. Research how to clean and store your finds. Take home all the rubbish you find and recycle it. Enjoy and have fun!

Get started

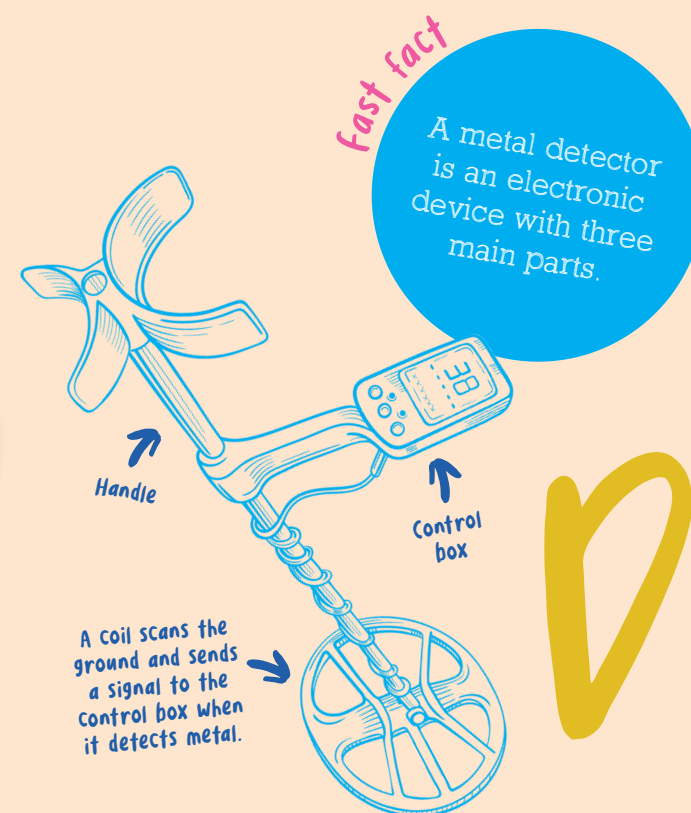
National Council for
Metal Detecting
www.ncmd.co.uk

Top tips

- Borrow a metal detector or ask your parents to buy you a good quality junior detector.
- Take a small spade or trowel, or a sand scoop if you're detecting on the beach. Dig carefully and cover up any holes after you are finished.
- Carry a bag to keep your finds in.
- Wear comfy, breathable clothing that will keep you dry if it rains (such as a waterproof jacket and boots), or a hat and sun cream if it's sunny.

Did you know?

In the Treasure Act of 1996, metallic objects over 300 years old and partly made from precious metal (such as gold or silver) are "treasure", and must be declared to authorities.



Dig it!

Give it a go!

Learn the lingo

Detectorist: person who uses a metal detector for a hobby

Artefacts: made objects found while detecting (coins, buttons, buckles)

Prospecting: searching for coins, gold, jewellery and other metals

Relic: object from another time

Target: metallic item sensed by a detector

Get outside and discover what hidden treasures might lie beneath your feet, writes **Emma Green**.

If you want to know how people from the past lived and the kind of objects they used, or you're curious to find out if there's buried treasure in your garden, then metal detecting might be for you!

Not only is metal detecting a great way to enjoy being outdoors, you can also learn about your area's history and geology. Before going on a hunt, speak with your local librarian about where you plan to go detecting and what relics you might find (they might be able to connect you with a historian). That empty field next to your school may be the site of a Saxon roundhouse or a medieval battleground!

Remember though, there are strict rules about where you can use a metal detector, so make sure you get an adult to check before you start digging. The best places to start are in your own garden or at the beach. Try burying a few coins or old tins, so that you can get used to listening to the detector's signals.

You'll need patience and perseverance, but the more you search the better your chances of finding something really special! **K**