

The Ultimate Win-Win

Cut Clutter & Make Money

The secrets to parting with stuff you *can* live without.

Yard sale. Garage sale. Rummage sale. Tag sale. No matter what the name, it's a great way to get rid of extra things to earn some additional cash. The amount of money you bring in depends on a few valuable secrets. Make sure your sale is a success by following some of the suggestions below.



A season for selling.

Statistically, summer is the best season for a sale. People have more flexibility during the longer daylight hours; plus, more vacations and time off means more shoppers. If you have a sale during August or September, you'll benefit from the large number of college students who need to furnish their "digs" on a budget.

Stuff to sell.

So, what to get rid of? The basic rule of thumb is if you haven't used or worn something in two years, it's probably time to get rid of it. Traditionally, the best-selling items at garage sales are baby goods (strollers, high chairs, cribs, etc.), sporting goods, furniture, tools, books, kitchen items and toys.

The emperor's clothes.

With the exception of designer duds and children's apparel, clothing doesn't sell very well. You will have to price items very low (like 50 cents to one dollar per item) if you want them to move. For baby clothes, rather than making customers search through a large pile, it is helpful to sort them in boxes by age: three to six months, six to twelve months and so on. This makes it even easier for shoppers to quickly

locate items they are interested in purchasing.

Also, keep in mind that presentation is everything—a clean and pressed shirt will likely fetch a higher selling price than a wrinkled item.

The real treasures.

If you have antiques or possible collectibles, it's a smart idea to take those items to an antique dealer or appraiser to determine their value.

Catch the early birds.

By nature, garage sale hunters tend to be early risers. It is best to schedule your event early in the morning (around 8 a.m.) and run it until the mid-afternoon. While some garage sale hunters start their hunts very early and may flock to your home as early as 6 a.m., don't be afraid to put up a sign that says business will begin at 8 a.m.

Remember, don't underestimate the time needed to set up. Organize items before the big day and don't be afraid to ask for assistance from family and friends.

Garage Sale Checklist

Here are a few useful tips to help your sale run smoother:

- Be sure to get change ahead of time. Start with five dollars worth of quarters, along with one and five dollar bills.
- Make signs to post around the neighborhood—be sure to take them down after the sale. (Check with your city hall for local ordinances regarding posting signs.)
- Take advantage of free Internet advertising that allows you to promote your sale in addition to running a print ad in the newspaper.
- Provide plastic bags for your shoppers—it's a great way to re-use those grocery store bags.

