



Garage Sale Guide



Dorothy Tucker
CBS 2 Consumer
Reporter

Top 5 items buyers want:*

1. Books
2. Kitchen & Bath
3. Furniture
4. Home Décor
5. Clothes: Children & Adult

INSIDE THIS ISSUE:

Promotion	2
The Setup	3
The Sale	3
Safety	4

What to Sell?

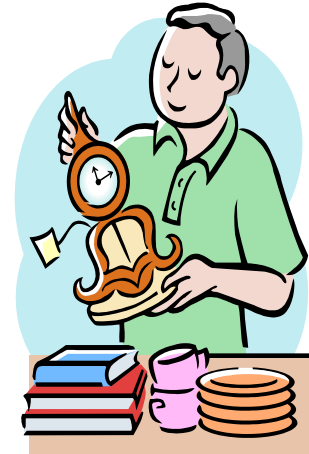
Having a garage sale certainly takes a lot of time, energy and thought. You should really **BEGIN 2 MONTHS IN ADVANCE** by doing one thing first: search every cluttered corner and room in your house for items to sell. As they say: one man's junk is another man's treasure.

So, what should you sell? Just about anything you find. According to our survey, shoppers said books were the biggest draw for them. Kitchen and bath items such as small appliances, linens, dishes, glasses, etc. were a very close second. Furniture came in third. Home décor

items such as vases, holiday decorations and floral arrangements were fourth. Baby clothes, adult clothes and shoes came in fifth.

If you don't have a lot of those items, don't worry. The experts tell us that **ANTIQUES AND COLLECTIBLES** also sell well. They are usually snapped up first by antique dealers who show up early. Also **SEASONAL ITEMS** are usually in great demand. For example, in the summer sell summery clothes, pool gear, exercise equipment such as bicycles and gardening tools. If you're hav-

ing a fall garage sale, drag out those coats, skis, leaf blowers and snow blowers.



How to Price Items?



You can always come down on a price but you can't go up. That's what the experts say about pricing. But, how do you find out the best initial price to put on your items?

First, do your **RE-SEARCH**. Look up every item you want to sell on eBay. Pay attention to "completed sales", what an item actually sold for instead of the price people are asking. Also, note the condition of the item and how yours stacks up to that. Then, price your item

about 20% lower to make it appear like the buyer is getting a bargain.

Be willing to **NEGOTIATE**. As the sale goes on, experts say you should lower your prices. If you're having a 2-day sale start that second day with prices half-off. Halfway through your last day come down 75%. And, an hour or two before the end of your sale your motto should be: **Make me an offer.**

How to Promote?



ADVERTISE!

Expect to pay about \$30 on average for a 5-line ad in many Chicago neighborhood newspapers. You should also consider association newsletters which might be cheaper. Many websites, like craigslist, are free. At craigslist garage sale postings are up 50% compared to 2008 and up 250% compared to 2007. On free listing sites you often have the ability to use an unlimited number of words. That allows you to be more specific about the items you're selling. For example, which brand is your toaster and which system is your video-game for? Many free sites allow you to add pictures. And, some even allow you to reply to buyers via email. **TIP: SET UP A SEPARATE, FREE EMAIL ACCOUNT** to handle those requests. There are several free sites (see figure to the right).

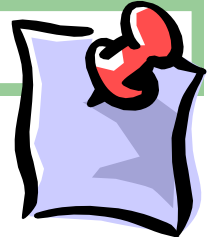
In your ad: include the **LOCATION** of the sale, the **DAYS** and **DATES** of the sale, the **HOURS** of the sale and the **ITEMS** being sold. Expert's tip:

Free garage sale listing sites:

1. www.craigslist.com
2. <http://garagesale.nearu.com>
3. www.pennysaver.com/garagesales
4. www.yardsaleresearch.com
5. www.garagesalehunter.com
6. www.garagesales.com
7. <http://classifieds.chicagoreader.com/chicago/index>

use **KEYWORDS** to attract shoppers. Some important keywords: multi-family, moving sale, huge selection and whether you're selling anything in addition. For example: lemonade (if the children have a stand set up) or baked goods.

FLYERS!



With home publishing programs readily available on most computers, it's very easy to design your own garage sale flyer. It took us about 20 minutes to design ours by modifying a template already available in Microsoft Publisher.

Be sure to include the same information you put into your advertisement. Also, when designing your flyer make it very colorful so it will get noticed. Keep in mind it costs about 50 cents a page to make color copies at office stores. So, print off just a few and use them in locations with the most traffic. Do more in B&W to hand out to friends and neighbors. In our small survey of shoppers, flyers ranked among the top 4 attention-getting promotions.

Top 4 best ways to promote:*

1. Garage sale signs
2. Community newspapers
3. Internet
4. Flyers

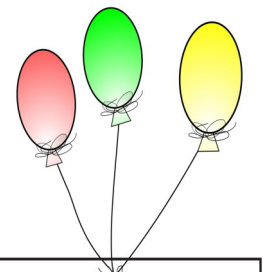
SIGNS!



ORDINARY SIGN

SIMPLE SIGN MAKEOVER SUGGESTIONS:

- Don't forget details: dates, location, hours
- List eye-catching items such as electronics, kids' toys
- Use bright, dramatic colors on both the signs and the arrows
- Use several signs with arrows to easily direct people to your sale
- Make sure what you've written can be seen by cars driving past



EXTRAORDINARY SIGN

How to Stage & Sell?

The Setup

MAKE SURE YOU HAVE ENOUGH SUPPLIES

- ⇒ A few weeks before the sale start stocking up on plastic grocery bags and newspapers to wrap up breakable items.
- ⇒ A few days before the sale go to the bank and get at least \$50 dollars worth of change including a roll each of quarters, dimes and nickels. The rest of the money should be in \$5 and \$1 bills.



- ⇒ The day of the sale make sure you have a calculator, pen, paper, extra price stickers.
- ⇒ Make sure you have the proper permits from your city or association.
- ⇒ Have batteries & extension cords so shoppers know toys & electronics work..

ORGANIZE YOUR ITEMS

- ⇒ A few days before the sale set up the

items in your garage so they will be easy to pull out quickly the morning of the sale.

- ⇒ Borrow tables from neighbors. Put everything on tables or utilize ledges around your driveway to get items off the ground.
- ⇒ Make sure you have enough hangers to hang up clothes. You can also create an area to hang clothes by putting a rod in between two ladders.
- ⇒ Group items by themes. Think like a retailer. For example if you have a lot of baby put them all together to make it appear like it's a mini nursery. The same concept goes for entertainment items (books, cds, video games), sports equipment, etc.

- ⇒ Price everything or make a color-coded chart that's visible.

Best days to hold a sale:*

- City:
1. Saturday
 2. Friday

Suburbs:

1. Thursday
2. Friday

69% of shoppers say price is more important because of:*

- Job loss or uncertainty
- Salary reduction
- Fixed budget

The Sale

When deciding which days to hold your sale take into consideration:

- When major employers in your area pay their employees and hold a sale near those pay dates.
- Holidays: do not hold sales on travel holidays such as Memorial Day or the 4th of July.

- Other events nearby: you have to work even harder to make yours stand out.



During the sale:

- Be friendly.
- Be willing to negotiate on price and extras such as delivery.
- Give out freebies: small toys that don't match, water if it's a hot day.

Don't Forget Safety!!

- ⇒ Always try to have a friend or family member help out to keep the sale running smoothly and to prevent theft.
- ⇒ Always lock the doors to your house – even the door that leads from the garage into your home.
- ⇒ Never leave money unattended. Keep the money as close to you as possible in a pouch or fanny pack.
- ⇒ Put tarps or sheets over items in the garage that aren't for sale. This cuts down on people asking about those items and prevents children from playing with something that might be potentially dangerous.
- ⇒ Check items you're selling to see if they've been recalled at www.cpsc.gov.



*** Results of a CBS 2 survey of shoppers attending a garage sale on Friday, June 5, 2009.**

Special thanks to:

Nancy Kirby of Nostalgia Estate Sales

Diane Hudec of Diane Hudec Estate & Liquidation Sales

All of the homeowners who let us film at their sales