

The Ultimate Win-Win

Cut Clutter & Make Money

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

Yard sale. Garage 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 "pads" 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. Organise 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 loonies and five dollar bills.
- Make signs to post around the neighbourhood—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.



Online Auction Success Secrets

The world is your market on eBay® and other auction sites, but there's a bigger strategy to online selling success than simply, "post it and they will come." Here are a few suggestions to make sure you sell your things quickly (and for the best possible price):

- **Price it right.** Do your research and price your product comparably to other items on the auction market. Be sure to research the auction process to make sure you understand the basic steps to posting items and handling transactions.

- **Pictures, please!** There's no argument here—a picture is worth a thousand words. Most auction shoppers won't make a purchase without first seeing one or more pictures.

- **Don't forget shipping costs.** As the seller, shipping is determined by you. Make sure you include the shipping cost to potential buyers in your original listing.

- **Sell your items with words.** Write an enticing auction listing that contains keywords shoppers will search for. Be sure to include descriptive details to encourage people to buy your item.

- **Let's talk about money.** The more payment methods you offer the easier it will be for buyers to purchase. PayPal®, for example, is a popular service that makes it easy for private parties to transfer money quickly. You can also accept money orders or drafts, or even personal cheques (though there could be risk involved). It's recommended that you don't ship an item until a personal cheque clears the bank.

Anything Can Sell

Take a look around your house. You'd be surprised what you can sell at online auction sites.

1. Old sporting equipment
2. Your collection of cow mugs
3. Sewing machine
4. Books
5. Tapes, DVDs, Vinyl records
6. Baby clothes
7. Maternity clothes
8. Table linens
9. Computer equipment
10. Furniture
11. Bedding sets that you've never opened
12. Dish sets and silverware
13. Vases and other glassware
14. Household tools
15. Holiday decorations

The easiest way to eBay.

If you have stuff you could sell on eBay but lack the time or motivation to do so, consider using a selling service. All you need to do is drop off your goods or ship them to the selling service. The selling service will photograph the items, write descriptions and post them on eBay. Then, they'll ship them to the buyer, collect payment and send you a cheque. It's that easy.

iSOLD It® is the largest seller on eBay.

eBay Trading Assistants are experienced eBay sellers who will sell your items for you on eBay for a fee. They may have a specialty, such as selling cars or antiques.

OrbitDrop.ca will help you sell on eBay or other online outlets.

QuikDrop has drop-off locations in four countries and will help you sell on eBay.

www.isolditcanada.net

www.ebay.com/tahub

www.orbitdrop.ca

www.quikdrop.com

How to donate to charity.

- **Useable, not junk.** Junk is junk. If an item is broken or if a 100-piece puzzle has only 97 pieces, it should go in the trash, not to a charity.
- **Get your write-off.** Most charities will give you a receipt where you can fill in the value of the items you donated. Save these receipts for your taxes. It's important to itemize and describe the contents of each box.
- **Get hooked up.** Log onto www.canadahelps.org and search for local charities that will accept your donations.

