

Best Tips for Having a Successful Garage Sale

From DaveRamsey.com

1. Clean out what you don't need.

This might seem like the most annoying garage sale tip, but it has to be said! Dig through your garage, basement, attic, closets, cabinets, and under all the beds. A good rule of thumb is: if you don't use it or wear it regularly (or you forgot it even existed), it probably needs to go. You'll be able to take inventory of what you have and *maybe* even gain some extra space in the process. Decluttering never felt so good!

2. Sort and organize your items.

Having a garage sale can be a daunting task, so go ahead and do the major work ahead of time. As you're unearthing all of those tennis rackets, clothes, and old board games, sort them into **three basic categories: Keep, Sell and Trash.**

Don't worry about pricing anything right now—just focus on sorting and getting organized. Your main goal is to get rid of the junk and find a permanent home for the stuff you're going to keep. Once your piles are made, pull out all of the items you sorted

3. Get whatever supplies you might need.

You can buy simple pricing stickers and blank labels at the dollar store or any office supply store. Or if you're wanting to be really budget friendly, just pick up a permanent marker and masking tape and get to pricing your items. Grab a table and chairs so you can have a designated area to cash people out (and stay comfortable).

And you're going to need some space to show off all the one-of-a-kind items you're selling. You can set out blankets, boxes and storage containers, or even lay a board over two sturdy boxes. Whatever you do, make sure breakable items are supported on a stable surface.

4. Name your price.

Here's the key to garage sale pricing and one of the top garage sale tips to remember: **Be careful not to attach sentimental value to your stuff** and overprice it in the process. If you need an objective opinion, ask a friend to come over and tell you what they would reasonably pay for the item.

Do a quick search online to check the current value. Keep it realistic by pricing things a quarter or a third of what they would cost brand new. If you price a sweater you bought for \$80 at \$50, it's probably not going to sell. But an \$80 sweater for \$25? Now you've got yourself a deal.

If you're not sure how to price a garage sale item, here are some pricing suggestions to start you off:

Baby clothes

Suggested price: \$1 to \$3 for gently used/good condition, or less than \$1 for well-worn items.

Adult Clothes

Suggested price: \$3 to \$5 (more if the item still has tags on it)

Shoes

Suggested price: \$3 to \$7

Coats

Suggested price: \$5 to \$15

Jewelry

Suggested price: 50 cents to \$2 (but if you think the jewelry is valuable, have it appraised first)

Books

Suggested price: \$1 to \$2 for hardcover, or 25 to 50 cents for paperback

Blu-ray Discs, DVDs, or CDs

Suggested price: \$3 to \$5

Toys and Games

Suggested price: \$1 to \$3 each

Home Décor

Suggested price: \$3 to \$5

Furniture

Suggested price: \$10 to \$30 for low-quality furniture, but no more than one-third of the price for high-quality pieces.

5. Make prices visible.

Make sure your prices are in plain view by using price tags or stickers. If you don't have time, at least group similarly priced items together with a sign that breaks down the cost. Or use colored stickers and hang up a chart that specifies the cost by color, like green stickers are 50 cents, blue stickers are \$1, etc. Just try not to confuse your customers.

Bigger items call for bigger price tags. Don't make the buyer search for a tiny sticker on that armoire you're selling. Make it big, noticeable and attractive to the buyer.

6. Bundle items.

It's easy to pass up DVDs at \$1 a pop. But if you offer them at four for \$5, you're sure to catch someone's attention. Look around for ways to make a deal. If it's the end of the day and you really want to move your items, let customers fill up a bag with items for a \$5 or \$10 flat rate.

7. Don't hike up your prices with the expectation to haggle.

Price your items so they'll sell. Period. Don't set the starting price high and expect your customers to haggle you down. Many potential buyers will walk away from big prices and never even bother to haggle—and you just lost a sale.

ON THE SALE DAY:

1. Have change on hand.

You don't want to lose a sale just because you don't have some spare George Washington's floating around (that's dollar bills, folks). Make sure you have enough small bills to make change for your customers.

2. Know how to negotiate/haggle.

Everyone wants a deal. That's why people wake up early to buy your castoffs! If the customer wants to negotiate, then let them negotiate, but stick to your guns if the price gets too low. You're not giving your stuff away! Well, not yet anyway.

3. Make it appealing.

If you really want your stuff to sell, you've got to make it look nice. Before you try to sell those things that have been collecting dust, actually clean them off! Fill bicycle tires and basketballs with air. Scrape the mud out of your kid's old soccer cleats.

If something needs batteries to run, fill it with some half-used batteries so the buyer knows it works. Keep an extension cord handy for buyers to test out appliances that require an outlet. And place a mirror near the clothing and accessories. It might seem silly, but going the extra mile can really make a big difference between making a sale or losing one.

4. Position your stuff.

The morning of the sale, get up early and do a little setting up. Make sure whatever you're selling looks attractive. Put your more interesting items closer to the street so people know you're selling more than just T-shirts, costume jewelry, and old coffee mugs.

For everything else, keep it organized, clearly priced, and easy to sort through. Stock your checkout area with plastic grocery bags and newspaper to wrap up fragile items. Those small touches will go a long way!

5. Get your family involved.

If you have a teenager, you know it's hard to get them excited about most things that happen early on a Saturday morning—let alone a garage sale. So, why not cut them in on the profits? Make a deal with your teen: if they gather up their unwanted items to sell, you'll let them keep whatever cash they make. Is this just a secret ploy to get your teen to clean their room? Absolutely. But they'll never know.

Do you have younger kids? Let them get involved by manning a lemonade stand or bake sale booth. Who can resist a pint-sized entrepreneur?

6. Be safe.

Okay, this might seem like a strange garage sale tip, but stay with us. Most shoppers are well-meaning people just out looking for a good deal. But the reality is, you're still letting strangers shop on your front lawn. So just stay aware of what's going on.

It's a good idea to keep the doors of your house locked during the sale. Don't let anyone into your house to use the bathroom or get a drink of water. Just keep a pitcher of complimentary water outside and point them in the direction of the nearest gas station.

Be on guard when it comes to all that cash, too. Keep the smaller bills in a cash box or on your body with an apron or fanny pack. If someone makes a purchase with a large bill, it's best to give it to a family member to take inside for safekeeping.

7. Figure out what to do with unsold items.

If you still have some higher-dollar items left at the end of the day, sell your stuff online! Post something inside your community's Facebook group, list items on [Craigslist](#) or [eBay](#), or share them on apps like [Swap](#), [OfferUp](#), [VarageSale](#) and [Letgo](#). Consider selling clothing on places like [Poshmark](#) and [thredUP](#).

Just be sure to *always* include pictures of your items. People won't even consider buying your antique floor lamp if your listing doesn't have a picture. And research similar items before you price yours so you can get an accurate idea of what to ask.

8. Have a truck.

Everyone has leftover stuff after having a garage sale. You will too. If you just want it all gone, ask a friend if you can borrow a truck to haul the items off to donate. Or, if it's available in your area, call Goodwill or your local thrift store to request a pickup in the late afternoon on the day of your big sale.