

Sell or donate = Reduce your holdings



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Air Force Retiree still Serving my Community

Simple guide for conducting a garage or yard sale



Terminology

- The term yard sale and garage sale are synonymous and indicate families are getting rid of their excess materials. Estate sale indicates the owner has died and generally everything is being sold.
- There are numerous companies which will handle estate sales. They typically charge a set fee, and a percentage of the sales.

Time verses Effort

- What is your end goal? Is it to get rid of the items or sell them for a profit? People attending yard sales are looking for a bargain.
- Is it worth your time to conduct a garage sale?
 - Consider the amount of prep time, time to hold event, and the time to dispose of leftovers.
 - Do the math, is it better to donate the items to charity and take the tax write off?
- An option is to consider putting the more expensive items with an auction house, EBay, Next Door or Craigslist weeks ahead of the garage sale. If they don't sell, then you can include them in the sale.



What to sell

- Moving with professional movers gets expensive real quick and slightly less so with do-it-yourself (DIY) move, so get rid of as much weight as possible. Now is the time to get rid of heavy unwanted items. They are not worth their weight to move.
 - Can goods
 - Exercise equipment you never use except for a clothes rack
 - Furniture you really don't like
 - Garage items
 - Items not needed where you move (snow blower in Florida)
 - Old type heavy television sets
 - Particle board furniture (movers will not insure and they will probably not survive anyway).
- One obscure thing to remember when sorting items to sell is who gave it to you. If Aunt Bessie gave something "special" to you, and she comes to your garage sale and sees it with things being sold, there could be some hurt feelings.



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- Professional movers will not move Hazardous materials (HazMat). It will be best if you can sell these items, as the donation places will not typically accept these items either. Besides selling, your only option is to give them to family and friends. If you are moving yourself, you can move items which professional movers will not move. Below are the types of HazMat items professional movers will not move:
 - **Aerosol cans of any type**
 - Alcohol: grain, drinking, or rubbing
 - Batteries: car or household
 - Chemicals (cleaning, darkroom, or Yard/garden):
 - Ammonia
 - Bleach
 - Chemistry sets
 - Fertilizer
 - Nail polish or remover
 - Pesticides
 - Poisons
 - Weed killer
 - Fire Extinguishers
 - Flammable, corrosive, or explosive
 - Ammunition or gun powder
 - Charcoal or lighter fluid
 - Fireworks
 - Fuels, gas, kerosene, or sterno
 - Oil (fuel, lamp, or motor)
 - Paints, thinners, or varnishes
 - Matches
 - Guns, loaded
 - Perishable items:
 - Food without adequate preservation
 - Frozen foods
 - Produce
 - Refrigerated foods
 - Pets
 - Plants
 - Pressurized tanks (propane, scuba)

Event Planning

- Determine what you are selling
 - Make a determined effort to reduce your holdings
 - While you are sorting, come up with your prices.
 - Consider joining efforts with your neighbors and/or neighborhood to enlarge the garage sale. You would benefit of their sphere of friends for marketing. It is also good to have someone help keep an eye on the cash box and shop lifters. You can also take a quick break for a nature call when needed.
 - For expensive items, place them on Craigslist, next door and then if they don't sell, they place them in the garage sale.
- Come up with proposed dates, and take a look at the long range weather forecast.
- Advertising and marketing
 - Advertise as soon as you come up with the sale date and times - at least a full week or even two. Spread the word. Include lots of photographs of interesting or major items in the advertisements.
 - Websites to advertise your sale
 - <https://www.estatesales.net>
 - <https://www.garagesalefinder.com/>
 - <https://www.yardsalesearch.com/>
 - <https://nextdoor.com>
 - <https://denver.craigslist.org/>
 - Your personal sphere and network
 - Email your sphere of family and friends.
 - Social media – Let them know of your upcoming event.
 - Signs
 - Signs are relatively cheap and are available from Walmart, Home Depot or Lowe's.
 - Include directional signs in from main roads.
 - Use your personal sphere and network.
- Organizing and displaying
 - Finally put your kindergarten training to good use. Group like items together.
 - Use tables for displaying. Borrow folding tables from your family and friends. If you need, you can create tables from saw horses and plywood.
 - Determine where you will place your sales point (prevent someone from doing a cash box grab, and also to be to watch for shoplifters).
- Pricing
 - Labeling – Make the prices evident.
 - Bartering – Remember your end goal. Is it to make a profit or get rid of unwanted items? Be willing to barter and if someone is purchasing multiple items, make them a special deal. If these items are expensive, then set a minimum amount and stick to it. You can always sell these on craigslist prior to the yard sale.
- Safety and security
 - Will you let people into your house or use your restroom? Will you be cold hearted to tell a little kid doing the pee-pee dance “No, they can't use the restroom?” Have your medications, money, weapons, jewelry, and easily transported valuables in the house secured. Have enough people helping to cover contingencies by twisting the arm of your friends, family, and even neighbors.
 - There will be shoplifters, so be prepared watch for them. Considering this during your layout of tables and your cashbox.
- Educational
 - Use this event as an educational event for your kids or some neighborhood kids. Have them set up a desert bar, lemonade stand, or other entrepreneurial enterprise. Help them understand overhead expenses, profit/loss, salesmanship, product placement, and improving operations.

Dealing with leftovers - Aftermath – what to do with the rest?

- Have a plan of what you will do with the rest of the items. Is it something as simple as doing another garage sale?
- If you want to donate them, there are the typical places like Goodwill, American Red Cross (ARC), and Salvation Army. Remember if you donate anything, get a copy of the donation form for the tax writeoff. Your moving this year and will probably have enough deductions for write offs.
- Your local food bank might be able to handle your excess can and box goods.
- You can put things for sale on Craigslist or Next Door and if they don't sell, you can move them to the free section of each of these.
- If you have functional appliances or house components, Habitat for Humanity will accept most items.
- There are companies who will haul off junk for free or for a fee.
- If you look like you will have lots of items. Consider getting a roll-off dumpster. These come in different sizes.

ⁱ <https://images.pexels.com/photos/953162/pexels-photo-953162.jpeg?auto=compress&cs=tinysrgb&w=600>

ⁱⁱ <https://images.pexels.com/photos/6348123/pexels-photo-6348123.jpeg?auto=compress&cs=tinysrgb&w=600>

ⁱⁱⁱ https://cdn.pixabay.com/photo/2012/04/25/00/15/warning-41310__340.png