

# GARAGE SALES

## It's Tool Time

Garage sales, yard sales, estate sales and are great places to stock up your home's tool chest on a budget. Hand tools, power tools and garden tools can all be found, usually for much less than the retail price.

### **BUYING HAND TOOLS**

Hand tools are things like saws, hammers, pliers and other tools that need a little elbow grease to make them work.

They're simple tools, and it's pretty easy to see if they're worth their price. Look for metals and handles that are in good condition with intact grips. No rust or corrosion.

Make sure any moving parts move freely. Don't be afraid of a little dirt; hand tools are usually pretty easy to clean up. Blades should be straight and free from grinder marks.

Also, know your manufacturers. Some have a lifetime warranty for their tools, so purchasing a broken hand tool made by the right company may net you one with a little time on the phone with



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customer service.

### **BUYING POWER TOOLS**

Look first at the tool's plug and cord. No wires should be visible. At all. If they are, opt for another tool. The plug should have the original prongs, too. Sellers offering power tools for sale should let you test them to make sure they run. Plug it in and turn it

on, listening for odd noises or vibrations. Watch for smoke and look for cracks, missing screws, missing guards and missing parts.

For cordless power tools, remember that the battery packs don't typically last very long. Only buy a cordless tool when the seller can tell you how old it is. Run the battery pack long enough for you to

be confident it's still in good shape.

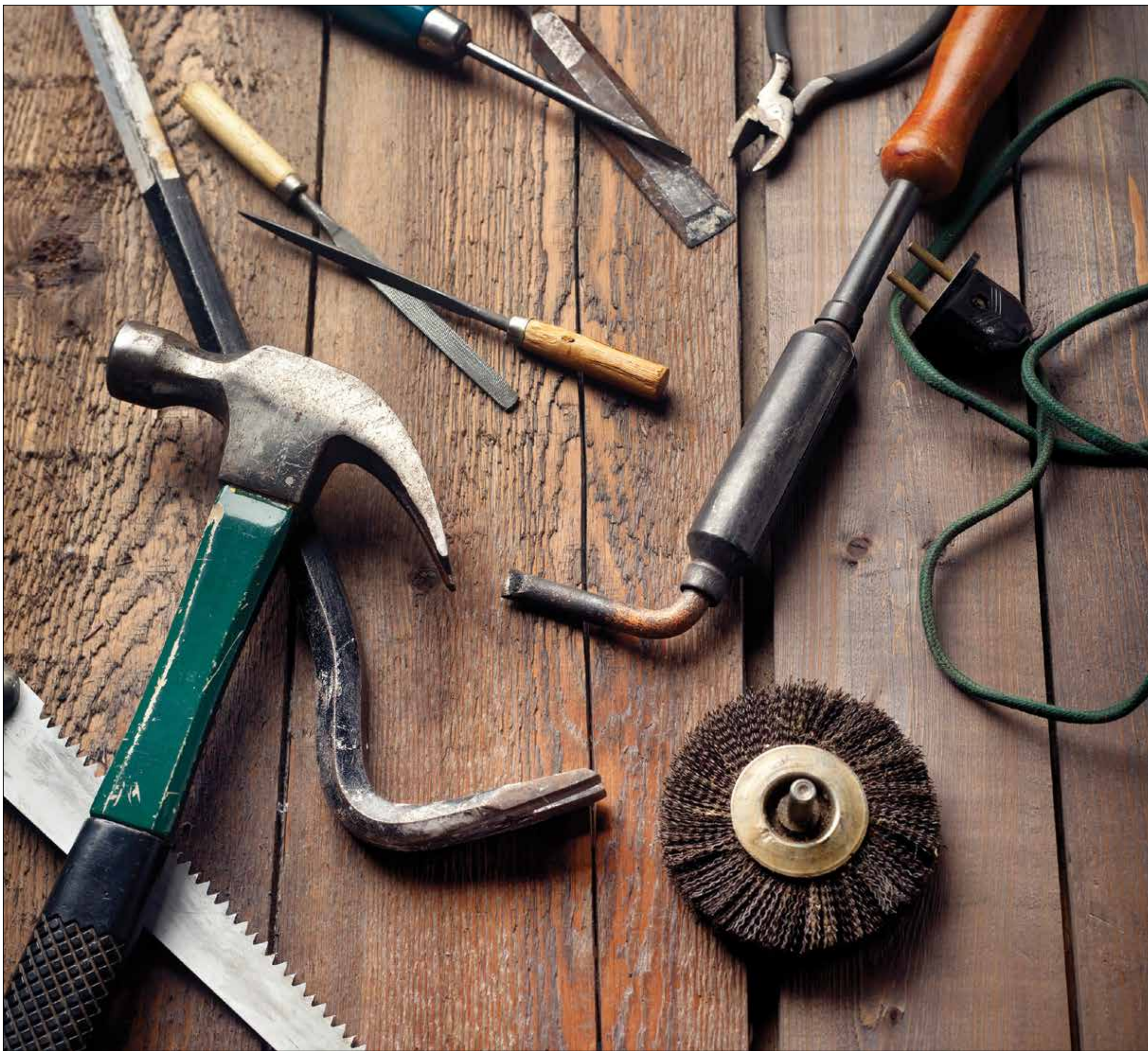
Make sure power tools have all the accessories they're supposed to have with them, such as attachments, extra blades, extra guards or other items. If you're looking to buy a bundle of tools, ask the seller for a volume discount. You might be surprised about what they say.

### **AVOIDING STOLEN TOOLS**

While tools are a popular garage and yard sale item, they're also pretty popular with thieves and unscrupulous sellers.

Keep an eye out for large lots of tools or tools with a price that's too good to be true. It probably is.

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### BUYER'S TIP

#### Get Good Advice

Before you start hitting up garage sales, take a trip to the local hardware store. Price out the tools you need around your home and talk to the experts there about what brands are best to buy. And don't just look at homeowner brands. Contractor brands can also show up at garage sales and can be a great value. They're built to take more abuse than most consumer brands and can last much longer. Once you've got an idea of what you're looking for, do your research. Make sure you walk into a sale knowing exactly what you're looking for and how much it would cost new so you know if you're getting a good deal.

## AD SPACE