

# GARAGE SALES



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## Garage Sale Mistakes

### Learn From Common Slip-Ups and Make Your First Sale a Success

Your first garage sale doesn't have to be perfect, but avoiding a few rookie mistakes can go a long way toward making it profitable — and enjoyable. From pricing errors to poor organization, here are some of the most common missteps new sellers make and how you can steer clear of them.

#### NOT PRICING EVERYTHING

Many first-timers skip pricing, thinking they'll just make up numbers on the spot. But this can backfire. Shoppers don't want to ask about every item, and sellers may forget

what they intended to charge.

Fix it: Use pre-printed price stickers or masking tape and a marker. If time is short, group items with signs like "All Books \$1" or "Toys: 2 for \$5." Clear pricing saves time and encourages buyers to bundle.

#### CLUTTERED, HARD-TO-BROWSE LAYOUTS

Piling everything on the ground or cramming tables with mismatched items can overwhelm buyers. A disorganized setup can also cause people to miss great finds — or walk away altogether.

Fix it: Group items by category and give each section

some breathing room. Use tables, bins and hanging racks to lift items off the ground. Neat displays not only help shoppers but also make your sale look more appealing.

#### NO SMALL BILLS OR CHANGE ON HAND

Buyers often carry \$20s, especially early in the day. If you don't have change, you risk losing a sale — or taking a loss by accepting less.

Fix it: Start the day with at least \$50 in small bills. A good mix includes plenty of ones, fives, a few tens and some quarters for small items. Keep it in a secure place like a cash box or a waist pouch.

#### OVERPRICING ITEMS

It's tempting to attach personal value to items, especially ones you once loved or paid a lot for. But garage sale shoppers are bargain hunters, and pricing too high can lead to disappointment.

Fix it: Aim for about 10 to 30 percent of an item's original retail value. If you're unsure, check local listings for similar second-hand items. It's OK to set firm prices for higher-value goods, but be ready to negotiate.

#### FORGETTING TO ADVERTISE EFFECTIVELY

Putting up a single sign at the end of your street won't

draw a crowd. If buyers don't know your sale is happening, they won't show up.

Fix it: Use multiple forms of promotion — online posts, community boards, local newspaper listings and good old-fashioned signs. Make signs bold and legible, and post them at nearby intersections a day or two in advance.

Avoiding these common mistakes can turn a stressful first garage sale into a smooth and successful one. A little planning, smart pricing and clear communication go a long way in making your first sale a hit.

#### SELLER'S TIP

##### Keep a Cash Box With Small Bills

Lack of change is one of the most common mistakes at garage sales. Be prepared with plenty of ones and fives, plus a secure spot to keep them.

# AD SPACE

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