

GARAGE SALES

Stress-Free Negotiations

Confident Ways to Respond to Low Offers and Bundle Requests

Negotiating is part of garage sale culture — and for some sellers, it's the most uncomfortable part. Shoppers expect to haggle, especially later in the day, and even clearly marked prices can invite counteroffers. But negotiation doesn't have to feel awkward or frustrating.

With a little preparation and the right mindset, you can stay calm, protect your profits and still make buyers feel like they're getting a good deal.

SET EXPECTATIONS EARLY

One of the easiest ways to reduce stress is to set the tone from the start. Clear price tags prevent confusion and cut down on constant questions. If you're firm on certain items, label them "Price Firm." If you're open to offers, a small "OBO" — or best offer — can signal flexibility.

It also helps to group items by price. A sign that says "All Books \$1" or "Clothing \$3 Each" keeps transactions simple and makes bargaining less necessary.

Before the sale begins, decide your bottom line on higher-ticket items. If you've



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priced a lawnmower at \$40, know in advance whether you'd accept \$30 or \$25. When you've already made that decision, you won't feel pressured in the moment.

RESPOND CALMLY TO LOW OFFERS

At some point, someone will offer you far less than you expected. Instead of reacting emotionally, keep your response simple and polite. Try: "I can't go that low, but I could do \$35." This keeps the

conversation moving without sounding defensive.

Remember, most buyers aren't trying to insult you — they're following garage sale tradition. Counteroffers are normal, and many shoppers expect a little back-and-forth before settling on a price.

If an offer truly doesn't work for you, it's fine to say no. A friendly smile and "I'll stick with this price for now" maintains goodwill. Often, shoppers circle back later if the item is still available.

"Fill a bag for \$10." These structured markdowns reduce constant negotiation and give buyers a clear incentive.

It also helps to read body language. If someone keeps returning to a table or holding onto an item while browsing, they're likely interested. That's a good moment to offer a small concession that closes the deal.

KEEP THE BIG PICTURE IN MIND

The goal of a garage sale is usually to clear space as much as it is to earn money. If an offer helps move an item you don't want to haul back inside, it might be worth accepting — even if it's slightly lower than planned.

On the other hand, if you're in no rush, you can hold firm. Confidence is often the deciding factor. Buyers sense when you're unsure, but they also respect a seller who knows their price.

Negotiation doesn't have to feel like conflict. When handled calmly and strategically, it becomes just another tool — one that helps you move items efficiently and end the day with fewer boxes to pack away.

USE BUNDLES TO YOUR ADVANTAGE

Bundle deals are one of the easiest ways to negotiate without cutting deeply into individual prices. If someone is holding three items and asks for a discount, you might respond with, "I can take \$2 off if you take all three." That way, you move more inventory while protecting value.

Late in the day, you can introduce broader discounts like "Half off after noon" or

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SELLER'S TIP

Set Your Bottom Line Before You Start

Decide in advance the lowest price you'll accept for higher-value items. It's much easier to negotiate confidently when you've already made that decision.

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