

GARAGE SALES

Spotting Hidden Gems

How to Find Special Items When Shopping at Garage Sales

For savvy shoppers, garage sales offer the thrill of discovering valuable items overlooked by others. Knowing how to spot hidden gems can help you uncover unique finds that can be valuable additions to your home or collection.

Here's how to approach garage sales with an eye for treasure.

KNOW WHAT TO LOOK FOR

Certain categories hold more potential for hidden gems, such as vintage furniture, rare collectibles, and artwork.

Furniture made from real wood — like oak, walnut, mahogany or cherry — tends to last longer than particle-board and can often be refinished.

Signs of quality include dovetail joints, minimal wobbling and sturdy hardware, all indicators of a piece that can be restored to its former glory.

Vintage items and collectibles like old toys, vinyl records and first-edition books can be valuable if they're in good condition.

Check for stamps, labels or signatures that may indicate



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rarity or an established maker. Art can also be a great find, even if the frame or glass is damaged; sometimes the artwork itself is a hidden gem.

USE A KEEN EYE FOR QUALITY

Assess each item's condition and potential, even if it looks a bit worn.

Quality construction, such as solid-wood furniture or

hand-crafted details, can make an item worth restoring.

Tools and kitchenware are often overlooked, but vintage cast-iron skillets, well-made hand tools and durable baking dishes can still be useful and may last longer than their modern counterparts.

If an item needs a little work, don't be afraid to get creative. Many pieces, from side tables to mirrors, can be upcycled with paint, polish or

simple repairs.

Items with solid construction but surface scratches or dents can often be refurbished or used in DIY projects that add charm to your home.

TRUST YOUR INSTINCTS

Hidden gems are often found in less organized piles or tucked under tables. Take your time, look closely, and trust your instincts when you sense potential.

Garage sale sellers are typically open to negotiation, so don't be afraid to make an offer, especially if an item is priced high due to cosmetic wear.

Remember, a little patience and a sharp eye can lead to remarkable discoveries. By being open to a bit of elbow grease and trusting your judgment, you can uncover valuable finds that others may overlook.

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SELLER'S TIP

Look Beyond Appearances

Hidden gems may need a little TLC. Items with potential—like a scratched table or faded art—can be restored and become valuable pieces. Look for quality materials and sturdy construction when evaluating these finds.

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