

GARAGE SALES

Hosting a Garage Sale as a Fundraiser

Raise Money for a Cause With a Community-Driven Event

Garage sales aren't just for decluttering — they can also be a powerful way to rally your neighborhood around a shared cause. Whether you're raising money for a school club, medical expenses, a nonprofit or even a local disaster recovery effort, a well-planned garage sale fundraiser can bring in both cash and community spirit.

Here's how to turn your typical sale into something with purpose.

MAKE THE MISSION FRONT AND CENTER

The biggest difference between a regular garage sale and a fundraiser is messaging. Be upfront and proud about why you're hosting the sale. Make a simple sign that says "All Proceeds Benefit Our Youth Soccer Team" or "Garage Sale for Cancer Treatment Fund."

Place that sign near the checkout table and repeat the message in any advertising. Shoppers are more likely to be generous if they know their money is helping someone in the community.

You can also include a donation jar at checkout for those who want to contribute even if they don't find anything to buy.



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COLLECT DONATIONS FROM FRIENDS

A fundraiser garage sale doesn't have to rely on your own clutter. Ask others to donate gently used items to the cause. Many people are happy to clear out their garages if they know it's for something meaningful.

Make donation drop-off easy by setting up a few times during the week before the sale. Be sure to sort and organize items ahead of time —

just because it's a fundraiser doesn't mean it should feel chaotic.

If you're representing a school, team or church group, consider asking members to volunteer their time for setup, pricing, or staffing the sale.

PROMOTE IT WITH A PERSONAL TOUCH

When advertising the sale, highlight both what you're selling and why. Use your local newspaper's classifieds

to get the word out to serious buyers, and consider posting flyers on community boards, libraries, and grocery stores.

On social media, share a short story about who the fundraiser is helping. A few heartfelt details — without oversharing — can create a strong connection with potential shoppers.

If you're fundraising for an organization, ask if they'll help promote the event through their channels as well.

ADD EXTRA WAYS TO BOOST DONATIONS

Consider offering a few small extras like baked goods, lemonade or coffee. Even if you charge just \$1 per item, these little touches can raise more money and make your sale feel more like an event.

You can also add a "pay what you can" section for miscellaneous items, which encourages larger contributions from generous guests.

Finally, let buyers know they can round up their totals at checkout. That extra 50 cents here and there can really add up — and people are often happy to do it when it's for a good cause.

KEEP IT HONEST AND ORGANIZED

If you're collecting money on behalf of a group or someone in need, keep records of what you've raised and how it will be used. It's not only the right thing to do—it builds trust in your effort and encourages future support.

Fundraisers work best when they combine practicality with heart. With the right planning and a clear message, you can turn old stuff into real support for something that matters.

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SELLER’S TIP

Be Clear About the Cause

Shoppers are more likely to support a sale when they know where the money’s going—use signs, flyers or posters to share your fundraising goal.

AD SPACE