

GARAGE SALES

The Garage Sale Etiquette Guide

Friendly Dos and Don'ts for Buyers and Sellers Alike

Garage sales bring together neighbors, bargain hunters and curious shoppers in a relaxed setting — but that doesn't mean there aren't unwritten rules. Whether you're hosting your first sale or just browsing for deals, a little courtesy goes a long way. Here's how to keep things smooth, respectful and enjoyable for everyone involved.

FOR SELLERS: MAKE IT WELCOMING

Buyers appreciate a clean, organized setup where they can browse comfortably. Greet shoppers with a simple hello, but don't hover or pressure them. Let your pricing and layout speak for themselves.

It's also good etiquette to have change available, prices clearly marked and items clean and ready to go. If you have an item with damage or wear, label it honestly. Surprises at checkout can lead to awkward moments or lost sales.

If someone makes an offer that's lower than you'd like, respond politely. You can say, "I was hoping to get a bit more for that," or, "I'll come down in price later if it hasn't sold." Staying respectful



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helps maintain a positive atmosphere — even if you decline.

FOR BUYERS: RESPECT THE SELLER

If a sale starts at 8 a.m., don't show up at 7:15. While some hosts don't mind early birds, others find it disruptive — especially if they're still set-

ting up. Unless the ad specifically says "early birds welcome," try to arrive at the posted time.

Once you're browsing, handle items carefully. If you decide not to buy something, put it back where you found it. Avoid blocking pathways or monopolizing the seller's time if other shoppers are

waiting around.

If you want to negotiate, keep your tone friendly and your offers fair. Lowballing a \$10 item to \$1 might not go over well — but offering \$8 could be just fine. Asking, "Would you consider taking less?" is often a better approach than naming a very low price.

KEEP THE CONVERSATION POLITE

Garage sales aren't just about stuff—they're also about people. A friendly compliment ("Nice setup!" or "You've got great taste") can go a long way. If you're selling, try not to judge what people are buying — or not buying. And if you're shopping, avoid negative comments like "This is overpriced" or "This would be better if it worked."

Politeness is especially important when children are around. Whether they're helping run the sale or tagging along with parents, it's a great chance to model respectful behavior and community spirit.

WHEN IN DOUBT, BE KIND

Most garage sale transactions are low-stakes, but they can feel personal — especially when someone's selling items they once cared about. A little patience, honesty and kindness help everyone enjoy the day.

The best sales leave both sides feeling good: the seller with a little extra space and spending money, and the buyer with a great find and a pleasant experience.

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SELLER'S TIP

Be Polite but Firm

It's OK to decline an offer or say "no thanks" to a low bid. Just do it with a smile — it keeps the tone friendly and the experience positive.

AD SPACE