

GARAGE SALES

A Treasure-Hunting Kit

If you're going garage sale shopping looking for particular treasures or collectibles, you need to have some supplies handy. Here are some things you should consider bringing along on your treasure-hunting adventure.

A GOOD TOTE

First of all, you're going to need a tote to hold all this stuff. Make sure the top opens easily (and can be left open to calm sellers' nerves). Also check that the straps are long enough to go over your shoulder, leaving your hands free to dig for loot.

A FLASHLIGHT

The keychain light isn't going to cut it. Look for a good, bright light with a barrel handle that you can hold in your mouth, keeping your hands free for sorting and checking and holding. A wrist strap is a nice bonus.

MAGNIFICATION

Grab a good magnifying glass or even a jeweler's loupe. You can use them to identify makers' marks on silver, gold, porcelain, pottery and more.



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You can also spot flaws.

A PENCIL

Bring along a pencil with a good eraser. Not only are the writing utensils handy for taking notes and sketches, but the eraser will rub away tarnish on sterling silver. If you suspect something might be silver but you can't find or read the

marks, try rubbing it with an eraser. If it's silver, the tarnish will come off.

A MAGNET

A magnet is handy for identifying silver and brass. Magnets don't stick to those metals. Just make sure not to rub the magnet on the surface as it will scratch it and leave

you with an angry seller.

A BLACK LIGHT

You can go small here, like the keychain variety. Vaseline or uranium glass glows under a black light. And you don't need complete darkness. A shady spot and shading it with your hand should work fine.

BAKELITE TEST KIT

Some buyers can tell a real Bakelite piece by rubbing and sniffing. But if you can't, you need this kit made of Simichrome polish, a cotton swab and some tissues. That's it. Just rub a bit of the pink polish onto the suspected Bakelite with the swab. If the swab turns yellow after 15 or so seconds, you've got Bakelite. Rub the remaining polish off with a tissue.

A MEASURING TAPE

This is handy especially if you're buying large items or furniture. You'll need to know the dimensions to get it in and out of cars, trucks, doors and whether it'll fit in your space at all.

A BASIC TOOLKIT

This comes in handy to take apart furniture or other pieces for transport. Be sure to have screwdrivers (both kinds), an Allen wrench, a hammer, pliers and a regular wrench. Add in some masking tape to help you secure glass panes in doors or other breakables, scissors, a pocket knife or multitool, and a crowbar. Furniture blankets, bubble wrap or newsprint are also good additions, as are rope and twine. Some sandwich bags are also a great idea for storing screws, handles and other pieces that you may have to remove for transport.

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BUYER'S TIP

Ask Permission

Always ask the seller's permission if you are going to do any testing or examining that requires you to put something (such as Simichrome polish) onto an object or to take parts off, like drawers.

AD SPACE