

GARAGE SALES

Shopping at a Flea Market

Flea markets or swap meets are places where many different sellers gather to sell items, especially used or handmade items.

They tend to be all-weekend affairs, and some may raise money for charity. Flea markets can be either outdoor or indoor, and bartering is usually acceptable. Here are some tips for scoring great deals at the flea market.

MIND HOW YOU DRESS

You want to dress comfortably, especially if the flea market is outside, but definitely dress down. Leave the brand names and the jewelry at home. You want to look as frugal as possible. Haggling is common practice at the flea market, and many items may not even be priced so that vendors can name a price on the spot based almost solely on your appearance. To get the best deals, you'll need to look the part.

CARRY CASH

This isn't the place to whip out your card. Cash is king, and to pull off your no-disposable-income ruse, carry small bills unless you're looking to make a big purchase



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like home furnishings. Keep your cash separated so you don't flash a big wad to the vendor, even if it is all \$1 bills and \$5 bills.

THE EARLY BIRD GETS THE DEALS

Hit the flea market when the doors open to make sure you get what you're looking for, at the best price. If you arrive late, you may get a good deal as vendors look to liquidate before packing up, but you also risk some of the

best vendors selling out or their goods being picked over. For the best selection, get there early.

DECIDE ON THE SPOT

When you can, make a decision quickly and stand by it. Walking away could mean missing out on a deal or it could mean the price going up. If the item is large, the seller should be willing to hold it for you so that you can enjoy the rest of the market. And if the answer is no, stick

with it. If the vendor won't meet your targeted price, move on. There are other fish in the sea.

BRING A SHOPPING BUDDY

Have a friend come with you to bounce ideas off of and to provide a second pair of hands and eyes. A friend can also help you stake out items and get larger buys home safely. Friends can also help you haggle for better prices. Work out your strategy

before you go.

BRING A PAPER AND PEN

It's a good idea to bring something to take notes with, such as the location of certain items, the names and numbers of vendors who may have something worth looking at offsite, where you parked, and a list of what you're looking to buy today. Make your lists, check them twice, and get the best deals you can.

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BUYER'S TIP

Keep Hydrated

Bring snacks and water to keep your energy up. Many flea markets span acres and acres of stalls, and they may not have food and water available on site.

AD SPACE