

GARAGE SALES

Buying Used Appliances

Updating your kitchen can be an eye-popping experience, both in the improvement it makes and the price tag it brings. One way to pare down your bill is by shopping for gently used appliances. You may be surprised at the deals you can score.

WHERE TO SHOP

Look for appliance resale shops as well as some charity thrift shops like Goodwill and the Habitat for Humanity ReStore, which offer gently used appliances in good working order. Also look for large garage sales or estate sales where they're clearing out an entire house full of merchandise.

HOW TO SHOP

Unlike at appliance stores, you can definitely haggle over the price of used appliances. Start your negotiations low, be respectful and courteous, and you may end up with a really great deal. Also understand, though, that buying a used appliance — whether it's from a private seller or a thrift



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shop — means that there's no warranty. Occasionally, for a newer item, there may still be some manufacturer's warranty remaining, but you may also need a receipt, if the sell-

er can provide it.

To make sure an appliance is in good working order, ask the seller to plug it in and show you that it works, if they can. If a washing machine, for

example, isn't hooked up to a water line, you aren't going to be able to see it run. What you can do is to pay a local appliance repair shop to come with you and evaluate the

appliance. Sure, it costs a little more, but it's hard to put a price on peace of mind.

DELIVERY

Most of the time, a private seller or thrift shop won't deliver and install for you. You may get lucky, though, and find one that will. If it's a private seller, don't haggle and then ask for a free favor. If you're going to ask for delivery, go in prepared to pay full asking price. A thrift shop probably won't install the appliance for you, but it may bring the item to your home and leave it in the driveway or in a garage. You'll still need help getting in the house and putting it in, but it's a good start.

INSTALLATION

With a new-to-you appliance, consider opting for clean, new water lines, plugs and ducts. You can find these in most home appliance stores, and you may also be able to pay an appliance repair shop to come install your appliance for you and bring these items with them.

It's tempting, we know, to reduce, reuse and recycle these items. But a dirty dryer vent can spark a fire, as can worn plugs. New water lines guarantee a clean and healthy supply of water and ice to your new-to-you refrigerator, and new water lines to a washer can keep leaks at bay.

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BUYER'S TIP

Buy Used Like You'd Buy New

When you're considering buying a used appliance, you'll want to follow many of the same steps as you would follow buying new. Measure carefully to make sure your new appliance fits in your home, including the doorways you'll need to use to get it in. Also, get the model number from the seller and check for recalls and consumer reviews.

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