

# GARAGE SALES

## Mastering the Art of Negotiation

For many people, the art of the deal is the draw of garage sales.

Haggling or negotiating for the best price is part art, part science and, for some people, all anxiety. Here are some negotiation tactics you can try on your next garage sale outing.

### **KNOW WHAT YOU WANT AND WHAT YOU WANT TO PAY**

Before planning a big purchase, such as a television or furniture, do your research. Know exactly what items like that one are going for around your area, know what you want to pay and also have a plan to take direct action. Some sellers may give you a price break if you can take a large item, such as a living room set, with you right then rather than having to round up a friend with a truck.

Remember, though, you want to be frugal but not cheap. Don't insult sellers with lowball offers that will



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bring you scorn instead of deals. You won't get far in any negotiation with a terrible opening bid.

**DRESS FOR SUCCESS**  
Walking into a sale wearing expensive clothing and jewelry tells the seller that you

have plenty of money to spend. Wear weather appropriate clothing, especially if you are visiting several sales,

while avoiding brand names. Bring a friend to bounce ideas off of or even to play the foil and turn the deal in your favor. You also want to be pleasant and relaxed, never confrontational. Ask your friend to help you role play several negotiating techniques if you get nervous.

### **WINNING STRATEGIES**

There are several winning strategies when it comes to successful garage sale negotiations. First, if a sale has several items that you're interested in, try asking for a bundle deal. Instead of buying 10 books for 50 cents each, ask if you can get all 10 for \$4. You'd be surprised what you can get people to agree to if you're taking several items off their hands.

If you can find defects on an item, pointing them out to the seller (politely!) may net you a lower price. Never let on how much you want an item. Even a little enthusiasm can cause the seller to stand firm with a higher price.

Which brings up the most important point. Be willing to walk away. If you reach an impasse, thank the seller politely, then walk away. Don't look back. And don't be surprised if the seller suddenly stops you with a better offer.

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### BUYER'S TIP

#### Bring Cash, Be Ready to Move

Bring cash with you and be ready to pay on the spot and take the item with you, even large purchases such as furniture. Getting things out of the way can be a huge incentive for a seller to let some items go for a song, so come prepared to move. Have a truck and strong backs if not with you, then on call and nearby. Bring the cash with you — or have Venmo or other payment apps — ready to go so you can close the deal as soon as acceptable terms are offered.

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