

TIPS FOR HOLDING THE **MOST SUCCESSFUL** YARD SALE YOU'VE EVER HAD!



YARD SALE BASICS...

Get. Out. Of. Bed. No sleeping today. For whatever reason, tradition dictates that hardcore yard salers get rolling between 6 and 7 a.m. (Personally, we aim for 7 a.m.). Get up and be ready to greet the early risers with a smile and a cup of coffee.

Define money duty and patrol shifts beforehand. If you have a number of participants, let everybody know when you'd like to take a break, and make sure to keep money separated for each seller.

Go against the norm. Offer coffee and donuts or something unusual and surprising to customers the first couple hours. At larger sales, sell hot dogs and cold sodas for \$1. You'd be surprised the turnout.

Lastly, set an appointment with local charities/shelters who will come and pick up any of the items that didn't sell. Scheduling beforehand will make the end of the sale much sweeter. Leave the stuff on the curb. Enjoy your Saturday night.

ADVERTISING...

The single most important aspect of a successful yard sale is the advertising. How else will people know you're hawking your treasures of past? But don't be an amateur with the signage. **A cardboard sign with "YARD SALE" written with a Sharpie gives the feeling of a crap sale.** And we're not just talking about the signs on the street. Think outside the proverbial box.

- ▶ Use creative, **nontraditional** yard sale signs
- ▶ Hang at least four signs at the nearest busy intersection, or two intersections if available
- ▶ Use "Almost There" signs to keep the passerby coming
- ▶ Hang postcard signs at coffee shops, community boards, or mail them to friends. (Nobody uses postcards...it's such a genius idea!)
- ▶ Newspapers are sooo last generation. Strategically use social sites like Facebook, Twitter and Craigslist (see advertising instructions).



Yard Sale “Do’s”

Background Music

Use it smartly. Don’t blare Pantera and expect to sell a bunch of stuff. Especially if you place your items inside your garage, like a weirdo. Keep it fun, easy listening and let them enjoy.

Merchandising

Think about walking through a mall or by storefronts - the layout of the merchandise is thoroughly conceived, and for good reason. Let’s take a lesson from already established best practices - place highly desired items near the sidewalk (but make sure to keep an eye on them); use tables to organize your items; clearly price items or groups of items; make it look pretty and you’ll be able to haggle a higher price.

Do Be Happy

Even if you’re not a morning person, which we most certainly are not, there is no excuse to be rude. Always put on a coffee-fueled happy face and be totally AWESOME. Your customers will love it. Get some coffee and donuts. Enjoy the day.

Yard Sale “Dont’s”

Don’t Pile Your Stuff

Don’t throw it on the ground. Honestly. That’s so not awesome. And blankets and tarps are no-no’s, too. Tables and hangers are key. If you insist on piling, make them neat, organized and navigable.

Don’t Sell Broken Stuff

Damaged and broken items shouldn’t be sold at yard sales. If they are worthless, take them to the dump. If it can be repaired, make sure you tell the customer. See the “Make It Easy” section for how best to do this. Unless it is an AWESOME deal, put it in the trash where it belongs.

Make it Easy

Have you ever bought something from a not awesome yard sale and the owner told you “Yeah, works like a champ” and then you get home and it doesn’t work and you want to go back and throw your new machine through their window? It could have been easily fixed with an extension cord. Get one. Plug it in. Let your customers use it. (Also, have extra batteries on hand.)



W E E K B E F O R E . . .

Step 1: Resource. Check your newspaper - most daily publications have online forms for community events. Check your local paper and definitely use this option if available.

Step 2: Organize. This is the hard part. Time to gather all the stuff you no longer need and present it as a treasure to somebody else.

Step 3: Recruit. Seek out neighbors or friends interested in joining forces. Have them spread postcards (effective word-of-mouth marketing at its finest).

Make it an event. Use postcards to advertise the main sale day(s), but also offer a sneak peek Friday night with the postcard. This will provide a sense of urgency and exclusivity - both of which play to the minds of people looking to score a deal. Also, you can price stuff higher Friday night.

Step 4: Define. After looking over what you'll be selling, determine how much money you want to make. (NOBODY wants to spend all day haggling and walk away with \$20.) If that's the case, give it to charity.

Step 5: Advertise. Send out postcards to friends, family and local businesses who have community post boards.

Step 6: Utilize. Make an event on Facebook for the yard sale. In the description, focus on the big items and use DESCRIPTIVE copy. Only use photos if they're good. Invite all local friends.

Schedule a yard sale or garage sale around the first of the month. That's when people have dollars to spend. Make it easy for everyone and schedule yard sales on the first Saturday of the month.



D A Y B E F O R E . . .

Make it a group thing. Recruiting your neighbors will help add inventory to your site (which you can use to boost your advertisements). Also, tell them about your Awesome Yard Sale sign package and have them kick in a few dollars to help the cause. While you're at it, have them distribute some postcards themselves.

Step 1: Scout out sign spots in your neighborhood.

Step 2: Look for existing yard sale signs in your area. These are great places to direct yard-salers to your sale after they leave other sales in your area. Post your signs at the exit route of these houses.

Step 3: Update the Facebook event. People are lazy and forget. Also, make a post on your wall telling people about the sale. Feel free to use the "tagging" option to have the post appear on selected friends' walls.

Step 4: Update the Craigslist post. Use your street name, neighborhood and power terms like "HUGE SALE," "Saturday ONLY!" and "BEST Yard Sale EVER!!" in the title and description. Always make sure to include the time and address.

Step 5: Make sure all the stuff is ready to go in the garage. Get \$30 to \$50 dollars in change (1's, 5's and quarters oughtta do the trick).

M O R N I N G O F . . .

Step 1: Some basic rules - establish absolute lowest prices on anything deemed sentimentally valuable, don't leave the money unattended, use common sense.

Step 2: Set up shop in the driveway. Going into somebody's garage is, on many levels, a bit creepy.

Step 3: Use curb appeal. Don't stick decapitated dolls or busted tennis rackets closest to the street. Think like a consumer. Display what you would want to see displayed.

Step 4: More on the previous - unfold chairs and display on the lawn, display books on a bookshelf, place TV's on entertainment centers, etc. Make it look good.

Step 5: Design a customer-centric layout. Piles of ratty clothes and boxes of miscellaneous junk will never sell. Try to organize as much as possible, identify clearly with table signs, make it comfortable and appealing to others. Ask: Would I buy that?

Step 6: Break out the radio. A little music is a good addition to the vibe of your sale. No Pantera. No Celine Dion. No extremes either way. Keep it mellow with '80s classics or Jack Johnson.



FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS...

What about balloons?

Balloons are definitely AWESOME! If you have a few extra bucks, definitely mark your yard with a few. All the more AWESOME if you hand them out to bored toddlers waiting for mom and dad (of course, ask for parent approval first).

Do people really want food or drink at a yard sale?

In our experience (which is vast and awesome), people love it, and you can even charge a bit for it. We've been to plenty of AWESOME yard sales where kids have their lemonade and cookies for sale, BBQ hot dogs sell for \$1 and a cooler full of ice cold sodas on a hot day (\$1). Adding these to your sale make it an event. Events make money. Do it.

What about music?

We've already given a brief overview of our music policy. We find it awesome if yard sales have some background music while we're there. However, we've been to a few large yard and neighborhood sales where there was a band playing live music! Talk about ridiculously AWESOME! Live music, lots of people, hot dogs and sodas, junk and treasures...events like these are more like parties. And people love parties.

Why would I spend money on this?

Simple. To make money. Yard sales are a dime a dozen. In the summertime, you can count on at least one yard sale in your neighborhood every weekend. Well, if you want to make some money, get rid of some of the stuff in your garage, and be considered completely AWESOME by people you don't even know, use these tips and signs to get the results you want. With a few dollars and some extra effort, you can turn a bland day into a fantastic event to be appreciated and remembered. Buy some signs, make some money, have a good time. That's what it's all about, right?

