

# GARAGE SALES

## Estate Sale Etiquette

An estate sale is a sale, auction or liquidation of someone's personal property. It means that the person or their heirs, in the case of a death, are selling all or nearly all of that person's possessions.

Estate sales are typically run by professionals and include a wide variety of household goods.

### **RULES OF THE ROAD**

Different estate sale companies have different rules for sales. Check the company's website not only for their rules, but also to sign up for mailing lists and notifications of sales in your area.

Some examples of estate sale rules are limiting the number of shoppers at a given time, and selling on a first-come, first-serve basis.

### **ESTATE SALE ETIQUETTE**

Other than the written rules, there are some general rules of etiquette that estate sale shoppers should follow. First things first, get there early. The best items tend to sell



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first, and that happens as soon as the sale opens. Don't ask the estate sale company to hold something for you to come later. Remember, first come,

first served.

Next, treat people the way you want to be treated. Don't cut in line or block people from seeing an item. Don't try

to barter on prices if it's not allowed (many companies don't allow negotiation on the first day of a sale, but may take offers on subsequent days).

In addition to respecting your fellow shoppers and the professional staff, you should also remember that you're in someone's home, whether they're there or not. Be respectful of their property, be it items for sale or the physical house itself. Stay away from areas marked do not enter. Don't crowd into small spaces and work not to damage anything.

Estate sales are also not a great place for dogs and small kids. Because the sales include so much of someone's life, including artwork, collectibles and other fragile items, it's not a good idea to have little hands and paws around.

Lastly, confirm the methods of payment before the sale and bring the type you need to pay. Once you've made your purchase decisions, pay promptly and don't try to negotiate after paying.

### **FINDING MORE ESTATE SALES**

Once you're hooked on estate sales, you can find more by signing up for mailing lists from your favorite estate sale companies. You can also visit websites such as EstateSales.net, enter your ZIP code and peruse listings of sales in your area, complete with photographs.

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### BUYER'S TIP

#### Timing is Everything

If you're bargain hunting, come back on the last day of an estate sale to score some real deals. Sellers are interested in offloading property and the estate sale company — often paid as a percentage of total sales — could be interested in cutting some deals. Some shoppers might consider two visits: One on the first day to snap up the best items and one on the last day to see how low prices will go. Just don't go on the last day expecting all the items to still be there or ask the company to hold something for you.

## AD SPACE