

GARAGE SALES

Sale Finds as Home Décor

Ride the trend for everything vintage and turn your garage sale treasures into home décor. Even the ones that weren't intentionally meant to be home décor. It just takes some imagination and a little bit of elbow grease to get going.

FURNITURE

First, let's consider the bones of the room. Consider what you want to be the focal point of the room. Is it a fireplace? Television? A wall of windows? Arrange your seating to take advantage of that. Give your room space for traffic to flow through it and also make sure it's balanced — that means that one side of the room weighs as much as the other. No, not in how heavy the furniture actually is, but how heavy it looks. For instance, you can balance out a sofa on one wall with a pair of chairs on the other.

Now, on to the garage sale. When looking for used furniture, keep in mind that you're looking at the bones. The color, finish, hardware and



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those things? You can change those. What you want to make sure is that the piece is well constructed. Look at the joints. Make sure any veneers are securely adhered. Look for water damage, loose legs and drawers that stick, then negotiate the price accordingly.

VINYL RECORDS

Got a music lover in your life? Scour garage sales for records from their favorite genres or, barring that, for

records with really interesting cover art. You can hang them inside the sleeves or out in an artful arrangement that can take up a whole wall for just a few dollars. If you're stuck on how to hang them, cut out parchment paper or wax paper in squares or circles the approximate size of the albums, then use those to position them on the wall.

TEA TOWELS

In days of yore, tea towels

sported gorgeous patterns and designs — some even hand-stitched. Look for these lovelies at garage sales and frame them to make fantastic fabric art in your dining room, butler's pantry, kitchen or breakfast nook. Some popular themes were birds, state symbols, flowers, and kitchen activities. To keep your fabric arts looking their best, keep them out of direct sunlight and handle them as little as possible. If they need to be

washed, hand wash them in warm water and a gentle detergent. Remember that stains can give them character; don't work too hard to get out all the coffee drips.

OLD BOOKS

Vintage books, the kind with worn leather covers and marbled page edges, make marvelous décor. Group them together on shelves by color. If the binding is too far gone, use the pages (often set in typefaces no longer used) as wall art. If the books are illustrated, salvage those plates and make some beautiful framed art for any space that needs it.

VINTAGE PURSES

Give your walls some bag swag. Look for vintage handbags from your favorite time period — the more structured the better — and hang them on hooks to add a sculptural element to your walls. Look for bags with a little bit of character; fine cracks and rubs are just fine. You also want to make sure the colors and textures compliment your décor, but you're bound to find a bag that you just can't live without. Before hanging them, go through the insides and make sure you're not bringing in any unwanted guests.

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SELLER'S TIP

Offer Bundle Deals on Similar Items

If you have a lot of a certain item — such as books or vinyl — offer bundle deals to encourage shoppers to clear it out quickly.

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