

GARAGE SALES

Buying Second-Hand Pet Products

Our pets are more than just animals, for many of us, they're family members.

It's important to us that we keep them safe, even if we're doing so on a budget. By and large, garage sale pet products are safe to purchase and use, provided they aren't recalled for any reason. Here's what you should do to get your newfound treasures ready for your pet.

CHECK IT OUT

Before you buy any garage sale pet products, even if they still have the tags attached, check them for sharp edges, loose pieces or anything else that can harm your pet. A chew toy for one dog could quickly turn into a choking hazard for another. A climbing tree one cat used may have an exposed nail that the previous owner didn't notice that your cat will find on the first jump. Be extra cautious and check everything meticulously.

Avoid any items that are heavily chewed or scratched because those areas can harbor bacteria. Also look for weak points from general use on things such as leashes and carriers. Avoid using pre-owned airline carriers as most airlines require you to use



© ADOBE STOCK

new travel crates if your pet is traveling as cargo.

CLEAN IT UP

Once you have your items home, clean and disinfect them thoroughly. If it's bed-

ding or clothing, run it through a hot water wash. If your washer has a sanitize option, now would be a good time to use it. Clean your new-to-you items as well as you can while still going by the

manufacturer's cleaning instructions.

You may also consider washing items with a soap specially made to eliminate pet odors. While it may smell fine to us, our pets have much

more keen senses of smell. The odors from other pets and other households can cause your pets to avoid these items or even to mark them with their own odors to overpower the other scents.

WHERE YOU CAN SAVE

Fish tanks and bird cages are big-ticket items that sometimes show up at garage sales and are great buys if you're planning on adding a pet or if your bird or fish need a new, larger home. Like other pet products, you need to make sure to disinfect these habitats thoroughly before introducing your bird or fish.

For an even better deal, ask the seller if they have any other bird or fish accessories and try to strike a deal for the whole bundle.

THINGS TO AVOID

Don't purchase any plastic pet items, including food and water bowls, with any damage at all. Even tiny scratches can harbor bacteria that can make your pet sick. Dog chew toys, even ones with the tags still attached, can also be dangerous. There's no guarantee the seller's Fido or Fifi didn't get hold of the chew toys. Also pass up any pet foods or treats that have been opened, even if most of the product is still there.

GARAGE SALES



© ADOBE STOCK

Buying Second-Hand Pet Products

Our pets are more than just animals, for many of us, they're family members.

It's important to us that we keep them safe, even if we're doing so on a budget. By and large, garage sale pet products are safe to purchase and use, provided they aren't recalled for any reason. Here's what you should do to get your newfound treasures ready for your pet.

CHECK IT OUT

Before you buy any garage sale pet products, even if they still have the tags attached, check them for sharp edges, loose pieces or anything else that can harm your pet. A

chew toy for one dog could quickly turn into a choking hazard for another. A climbing tree one cat used may have an exposed nail that the previous owner didn't notice that your cat will find on the first jump. Be extra cautious and check everything meticulously.

Avoid any items that are heavily chewed or scratched because those areas can harbor bacteria. Also look for weak points from general use on things such as leashes and carriers. Avoid using pre-owned airline carriers as most

airlines require you to use new travel crates if your pet is traveling as cargo.

CLEAN IT UP

Once you have your items home, clean and disinfect them thoroughly. If it's bedding or clothing, run it through a hot water wash. If your washer has a sanitize option, now would be a good time to use it. Clean your new-to-you items as well as you can while still going by the manufacturer's cleaning instructions.

You may also consider washing items with a soap specially made to eliminate pet odors. While it may smell fine to us, our pets have much

more keen senses of smell. The odors from other pets and other households can cause your pets to avoid these items or even to mark them with their own odors to overpower the other scents.

WHERE YOU CAN SAVE

Fish tanks and bird cages are big-ticket items that sometimes show up at garage sales and are great buys if you're planning on adding a pet or if your bird or fish need a new, larger home. Like other pet products, you need to make sure to disinfect these habitats thoroughly before introducing your bird or fish.

For an even better deal, ask

the seller if they have any other bird or fish accessories and try to strike a deal for the whole bundle.

THINGS TO AVOID

Don't purchase any plastic pet items, including food and water bowls, with any damage at all. Even tiny scratches can harbor bacteria that can make your pet sick. Dog chew toys, even ones with the tags still attached, can also be dangerous. There's no guarantee the seller's Fido or Fifi didn't get hold of the chew toys. Also pass up any pet foods or treats that have been opened, even if most of the product is still there.

BUYER'S TIP

Garage Sales Can Lead to Friendships

Not only are garage sales great opportunities to find deals on pet products, but they're also a chance to find like-minded people to network with. If you're looking for a doggy playdate or someone else who is as into parrots as you are, a garage sale with lots of pet gear is a great place to start.

AD SPACE