

GARAGE SALES

Selling Clothes

Clothing of all shapes and sizes are some of the most popular items at garage sales.

To get top dollar for your castoff fashions, though, is another situation entirely. The vintage clothes market is booming right now, but it can be tough to know what's vintage, what's not, and what's simply passed from fashionable forever.

GET STARTED

The first thing to do is sort your clothing. Anything stained, ripped or worn needs to go to recycling. Never donate clothes just because they still vaguely resemble a shirt or a pair of pants. Only donate clothing that you'd actually still wear. Otherwise, you're just passing the responsibility for disposal down the line. Instead, find a textile recycling center near you to take the clothes to. Definitely keep them out of landfills; according to GreenAmerica.org, 10 million tons of clothes per year get



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sent to landfills.

For the clothes you have left, sort them into piles for donation and clothes you think you can sell on your own. Take those clothes and wash and dry them before taking them to the donation center or getting them ready to sell.

READY FOR SALE

Here's where the real work begins. Once you've decided to sell some clothing, you

need to make note of the labels and sizes you have and include that in your advertising. This is especially true if you have any special sizes, such as men's big and tall or women's petite clothing.

The next step is to match up clothing into outfits, if you can, and prepare them for display. Make sure they are clean and smell good, have no staining and are ironed and ready for wear.

Think about how you buy clothing in your favorite retail shops and try to emulate that experience. This may include displaying outfits so they can be easily seen by sellers. You probably don't have a mannequin; try hanging the clothes on hangers from trees or from other structures in your yard.

PRICING AND SELLING

Try bundling your clothing

into outfits and then pricing the outfit for sale. It can be more attractive to some shoppers if they see a pair of jeans, a shirt and a blazer bundled together than each item on its own. Consider throwing in any jewelry you may have that goes with it as well. Resist the urge to get so inspired by your own outfits that they end up back in your closet; remember that we're getting rid of stuff, not trying to keep it.

You can also arrange items, especially kids clothes, into grab bags by size and purpose. Give these clothes particularly attractive pricing since people are going to be buying them sight unseen. Kids play clothes lend themselves well to this, as do adult activewear and things such as tees.

Since you probably aren't set up like a retail store in your garage or your yard, you're going to have to do some improvising with displays. Fold some clothes on tables where they can be easily seen and sorted, and make regular trips past it to straighten it up and keep it neat as shoppers move things around. Make hanging wracks out of ladders and broom handles, and press shepherd's hooks from your garden into service as makeshift clothing wracks for the duration of your sale.

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SELLER'S TIP

Offer a Fitting Room

If you've got a lot of clothing and a convenient space for it, consider offering a fitting room for people to try on clothes. Use a cheap wall mirror and a portable light so they can see themselves. You'll need to recruit a friend or family member to attend the dressing room to prevent theft as well.

AD SPACE