

# GARAGE SALES

## Setting Up An Estate Sale

Estate sales are different from garage sales because they typically are held to liquidate someone's estate — their worldly belongings.

This can happen when someone is planning to drastically downsize, after a divorce or when someone passes away. Estate sales are different from garage sales in that they feature a higher volume of sales and big-ticket items such as valuable artwork and furniture.

### HIRING A PRO

One of the easiest ways to have an estate sale is to hire a professional to take care of it for you. Estate sales are huge undertakings and will likely generate in the thousands of dollars — more than you should be responsible for on your own. The American Society of Estate Liquidators has established guidelines for conduct and ethics in the largely unregulated industry.

The organization says to ask professionals such as estate attorneys, financial planners, Realtors or accountants for recommendations of companies in your area, and, of



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course, your family and friends. Then, set up a meeting and ask some of these questions:

- How long have you been in business?
- Can you provide 2-3 professional references?
- Do you have any creden-

tials, certifications or special education?

- Do you charge a flat fee or a commission? What is the percentage of your commission?
- What services are included?
- Are there any additional

fees or services?

- What must I do to prepare for the sale?
- How many days will it take you to set up for the sale?
- How do you handle discounts or negotiation?
- How do you price items?
- How do you track

the items?

- Can the family be present?
- Are you insured and bonded?
- Do you also clean out estates?

### HOLDING YOUR SALE

Your sale may take place over one or more days, usually in the home of the estate in question. The estate sale professional you hire will help you set appropriate boundaries for family and for the use of the space. Professionals can control the flow of people in the home, regulating the sale to avoid any breakage. They can also track the goods that are sold and make sure that check out and loading go as smoothly as they can. Liquidators also know how to deter shoplifting and keep the area safe.

### AFTER THE SALE

Sometimes, you can contract with your estate sale professional to help with clean-up after the sale. They'll handle loading and donating items left over from the sale and may even be available for property clean-out services to prepare the home for sale. If you notice any damage done to the home during the sale, contact the estate sale professional immediately so they can rectify the situation.

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### BUYER’S TIP

#### Arrive Early

At estate sales, the early bird gets the worm. These sales, unlike garage sales, typically showcase all of the goods, all of the time. So the earlier you get there, the wider selection of items you get to see. To be the first to know about estate sales in your area, research the companies around you and join their mailing list to be notified of upcoming sales.

# AD SPACE