

GARAGE SALES

Garage Sale Versus Estate Sale

You've seen the signs, and here's the difference. Garage sales are usually smaller and put on by the seller themselves.

An estate sale is hosted by a company that holds estate sales on behalf of others. Keep reading for more on each kind of sale.

GARAGE SALES: IT'S ALL UP TO YOU

You're a staff of one (or a few more if you can recruit any family members or friends to help). Start off your sale by advertising in the local paper and on social media. The paper will cost some, but it may have a kit to help you get your sale off the ground with signage and more. Plus, sellers know to look in the paper for sales and look for those ads specifically.

It's also up to you to sort, arrange, price and sell the items. Have your items clean and clearly marked with prices and all the pieces you need to operate them. If it's a game, it should have all the cards and pieces included. If you don't have them, note it on the tag along with the price. Arrange items by type. Hang up clothes



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so they can be easily seen and inspected. If you have electronic items, have an extension cord handy so people can plug them in and make sure they work.

ESTATE SALES: SOMEONE ELSE DOES THE WORK

With an estate sale, you're hiring a professional to come in and sell your things for you.

Estate sales tend to be larger than garage sales and tend to occur when there's a death in the family, when someone retires or downsizes, when there's a divorce or bankrupt-

cy, or when a family's relocating for a job. The estate sale company will generally take a cut of the sale's proceeds as their pay, either as a set percentage or a sliding scale.

Here are some questions to ask when hiring an estate sale company from the National Estate Sales Association.

- How many people visit their website?
- What is the size of their email list?
- Do they have a dedicated, knowledgeable pricing team?
- Do they accept credit cards?
- Will they hire moving staff to protect the home?

Some estate sale companies will offer extra services, like carting away unsold goods and cleaning up. Bear that in mind when reading estimates, too.

Most estate sale companies will come look at the home in person. They're looking for the size of the work, like how much sorting and staging they'll have to do, and the value of items. According to NESA, the steps in an estate sale are organizing the contents of the home, displaying items for sale, valuing the items, marketing and advertising the sale, holding the sale, and cleaning up.

The more work that needs to be done to get the home ready, the more the company is likely to charge.

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BUYER'S TIP

Estate Sales: Where to Look

Look for estate sales in the local newspaper, just like a garage sale, but also on specialty estate sale websites, estate company email lists and through signage.

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