

GARAGE SALES

Bigger Sales, More Profits

As the temperatures climb, so does the urge to clear out winter's cobwebs and refresh your space. With all that spring cleaning may come the urge to hold a yard sale and make an extra buck while cleaning out clutter.

The good news is that you're not alone. Many of your friends and neighbors have the same idea. Why not combine efforts and hold one big sale instead of several small sales?

There are a few ways to do this. You can all gather at one person's house — preferably one close to a main thoroughfare or easy to find — and hold the sale there, or you can set up a neighborhood sale, where everyone sets up in their own yard but interested buyers can peruse several sales all in the same stop.

Both plans have pros and cons, and there's really no wrong way to hold a big sale, so long as there are clean and clear ground rules before you get started.

PRICING

Work out ahead of time pricing on certain items and how



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each sale will account for its merchandise and sales. For one sale on one site, consider using different colored price tags for each family or seller. A central cashier can keep track of sales and how much each family is owed at the end of the day.

Another idea is to agree ahead of time to donate the proceeds to a charitable orga-

nization. That way, no one has to sort out sales; it's all going to the same place.

If you're holding separate sales in the same area, it's a good idea to coordinate with other sellers on a general pricing scheme. That will prevent sales from being too competitive. You should also know what everyone else may be offering so that you can refer

interested shoppers from your sale to others and vice versa.

TIMING

This may be the most difficult part of planning a multi-family sale — getting everyone to settle on a date. Look for a weekend day where there aren't any other large, conflicting events in your town that may draw shoppers away.

Likewise, if there's a big event that's bringing people into town, such as a fair or festival, try to coordinate your sale with it to entice out-of-towners to spend their entertainment dollars with you.

Otherwise, look for a day where several members of each family can be around to lend a hand. Work out shifts for people to man the cashier table, clean up merchandise displays as things sale, help shoppers load up purchases and more.

PRE- AND POST-SALE

Well before the appointed day of the sale, plan out how to set up and take down your garage sale.

This includes a plan for any leftovers. Decide who is going to help set up, who is going to help take photos and advertise and who will dispose of any unwanted items after the sale.

If you're planning on dropping items off at a local charitable organization donation store, make sure the store will be open and able to accept your items.

Some stores won't take things such as rugs or stuffed animals; make sure you have a plan for those things as well. Some stuffed animals and old bedding can go to animal shelters; some homeless shelters may take furniture or clothing other donation shops may shun.

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SELLER TIPS

The Price Must Be Right

The more households you can get together to sell, the merrier. Make sure everyone advertises to their own social networks and with local news outlets. Include in the ad that it's a multifamily or neighborhood sale so that sellers will know to come prepared to browse. You can also let the kids set up refreshment stands to entice shoppers to stay longer.

AD SPACE