

“Home Cents[©]” Help Tips

How to Host a Successful Yard Sale

If your annual spring cleaning ritual has produced a mountain of unused and unwanted items, you may want to think twice before you simply toss them out. How about a yard sale to turn some of that “junk” into someone else’s “treasure?”

Each weekend in spring and summer you’ll find yard sales popping up in neighbourhoods everywhere. And, where there are yard sales, there are yard sale “junkies.” For many people, scouring yard sales for a bargain on a Saturday morning is an art. Why not take advantage of that fact to make some cash off your cast-offs and have fun while you’re at it.

The Ontario Real Estate Association and your local REALTOR[®] offer the following tips to host a successful yard sale:

First, settle on a date and time for your sale. Weekends are virtually universal for yard sales, and most run from 8 or 9 a.m. until 4 or 5 p.m. You’ll also need to set a rain date, usually the next day if your sale is on a Saturday, or the following weekend if your date is Sunday.

Most sellers advertise by posting signs on lamp posts and hydro poles. This is a more effective way of letting people know you’re open for business than you might suspect. Veteran buyers (see below for more) will scout a neighbourhood during the week looking for telltale flyers. Many of your customers will use this method.

Have someone present at all times. Theft is unlikely, but many sellers have learned the hard way that it does happen. Placing valuable items closer to your sales desk is a good idea.

Running out of change is also a problem that plagues many sales. As most of your transactions will involve small amounts, it never hurts to have \$50 or more in small bills and loonies and twonies at hand. Buyers will often stop at a bank machine before they come, so expect to get a lot of tens and twenties early in the day.

Think like a yard sale buyer

The ability to deliver the kind of goods and service that buyers want is perhaps the most important factor in the success of your sale. There are a number of items that are always in high demand: art, antiques (even distressed pieces), furniture, appliances, electronic equipment, tools, and lately, computer games and accessories. If you have goods in any of these categories, mention them in your flyer or ad.

Compliments of the Ontario Real Estate Association

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