

# 4 Garage Sale Shopping Tips to Help You Score Great Deals



It's that time of year again: Time for shorts, sun, and, of course, garage sales. For some people, there is nothing more exciting than driving around the neighborhood and catching sight of a lawn full of multicolored clothing, vintage vinyl, and sparkly trinkets.

I'll admit I'm guilty of being one of these people. Even if there's nothing I can see that I need, I can't resist stopping at a garage sale when I've got some extra cash. And even though most garage sales are full of great deals on items that cost a fraction of what you'd pay elsewhere, there are still multiple ways to save even more.

### Saving Money at Garage Sales

#### 1. Research Online

To be truly successful at scoring great deals at a tag sale, you have to start at home. Before grabbing your wallet and heading out the door, do some "pre-shopping" online.

Several websites exist that are dedicated to helping you find the best deals in your neighborhood. Sellers advertise directly with such sites, which allows you to browse (and sometimes view photos of) their wares.

- **Garage Sales Tracker** allows you to search garage sales, flea markets, and consignment shops in your local area so you can get a general idea of the items being offered for sale. This allows you to determine whether the trip is worth your while. The site also offers an iPhone app which you can use to locate garage sales closest to you.

- **Yard Sale Search** helps you find tag sales in your area for free no matter where you live in the United States. Enter your zip code, and a printable map appears detailing the locations of the sales. Click on the garage sales that most interest you and read over details such as date, time, location, and items for sale.

- **Craigslist** is another great resource to locate a great garage sale before you leave the house. First, locate your city on the website. Beneath the "For Sale" header is a link marked "Garage Sale" on the right-hand column. Click this link and scroll down to view sales in your area.

If signing up for websites and searching the Internet just isn't for you, there are plenty of other places to look offline. For example, most local newspapers are updated every Thursday and Friday before most garage sales take place. Church bulletin boards, supermarkets, and coffee shops also post flyers to draw traffic to their sales.

#### 2. Learn to Negotiate

If you're like me, you hate to haggle. However, negotiation doesn't have to be an unpleasant process. By utilizing a handful of simple tactics, you may be able to score a cheaper price.

- **Look Poor.** Don't show up to a garage sale looking unkempt and disheveled, but don't wear your best clothes and shoes either. Many sellers will not budge on price if you look like you can afford more than what they're asking. Leave the fancy jewelry at home and just keep it casual. Also, make a point to bring small bills so you won't have to feel awkward presenting a \$50 when you just haggled to get the price down to \$5.

- **Form a Relationship.** Don't just mill around – find the seller and strike up a conversation. Ask him or her about the pieces you're interested in, and where and when they were acquired. Forming a humanizing connection can make acquiring a deal easier.

- **Start a Collection.** Instead of inquiring about items piece by piece, start a small collection and ask how much for all of them. Sellers love to move items in bulk, so you may end up getting a great deal by buying multiple items, rather than single pieces.

- **Be Willing to Walk Away.** If the seller is asking \$50 for an item, don't offer \$5. Being unrealistic will just sour the whole deal. Instead, offer a reasonable amount, such as \$30, and negotiate from there. If the seller still won't budge, start putting things back – this may cause him or her to reconsider. If not, walk away.

#### 3. Time Your Shopping

**The Early Bird Gets the Worm.** One of the best times to visit a garage sale is early in the morning, just as the sale starts. Big-ticket items such as TVs, stereos, and furniture will likely be sold within the first couple of hours, so get there early if these are the items you're looking for.

**But the Night Owl Cleans Up.** Late risers don't have to rule out finding great garage sale bargains. Showing up anywhere between 11am and 2pm means finding items reduced in price by 50% or more. Sellers are more likely to bargain as the day wears on, as it's never pleasant to have to pack up and put a bunch of unsold items back into storage. Clothes, books, CDs, and various knickknacks sell best this time of day.

#### 4. Flip Your Purchases for Profit

If you're a savvy garage sale hunter, you can get more bang for your buck by reselling some of the items you score. Stick to reselling items you know people are likely always going to want or need, such as baby clothes, shoes, DVDs, and paperback books. You can easily set up an account on eBay or Craigslist to sell items online. Alternatively, you can have your own garage sale.

Before purchasing more expensive items, such as cell phones or tablet computers, do some serious research beforehand. Investing in high-end electronics requires a considerable amount of money, and making a profit isn't always guaranteed. It may simply be best to avoid electronics and other pricey items if you're not familiar with them.

#### Final Word

Garage sales are filled with many enticing items that catch the eye, but ask yourself the following questions before making any purchase: Do I really need this? Will it go well with my existing décor? Could I give it away as a gift? Does it have resale value? If the item doesn't meet any of these criteria, ask yourself why you still want to make the purchase.

Occasionally, there's nothing wrong with buying something you don't need just for the fun of it. However, the best way to save money and get the most bang for your buck at a garage sale is to know what you need and to be aware of what you don't need.

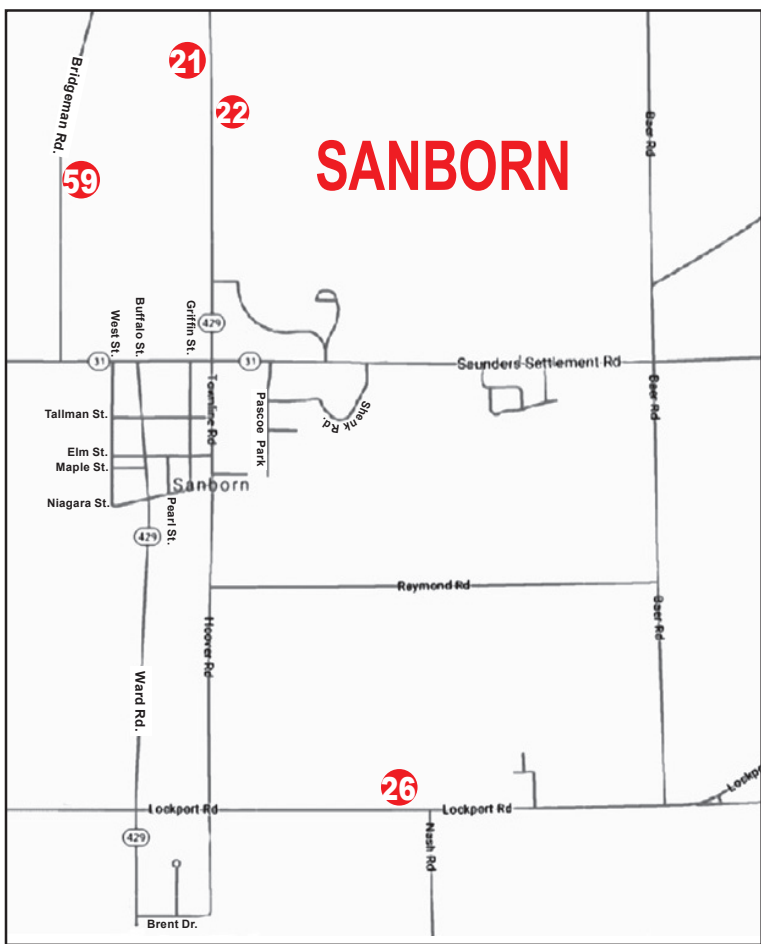


## RANSOMVILLE

**23. 2071 SWANN RD.** – Fri., Sat. & Sun. 9-3. Woodworking tools, Nascar collectibles, housewares, holiday decor, back chair massager, free stuff.

**38. 2523 YOUNGSTOWN WILSON RD.** – Sat. 9-2. Household items, childrens toys/items, collectibles.

**40. 3901 DICKERSONVILLE RD.** – Fri., Sat. & Sun. 9-2. Some furniture, some antiques & a little bit of everything.



## SANBORN

**21. 5314 TOWNLINE RD.** – Fri. & Sat. 9:30-3. Tools, car parts, household goods and more.

**22. 5399 TOWNLINE RD.** – Fri. & Sat. 9-2, Sun. 10-1. Variety, antiques, furniture.

**26. 3173 LOCKPORT RD.** – Fri. & Sat. 8-4. 3 Family Sale. Tools, household items and decor, clothes, toys and girls bike.

**59. 5535 BRIDGEMAN RD.** – Fri., Sat. 9-3. Furniture, household items, wall decor, baby items, clothes, evening gowns, tools and holiday items.

**SEE MORE GARAGE SALES ON PAGE 17**

## HAVE GARAGE SALE LEFTOVERS?

**Consider donating to our Veteran's!**

### FREE DONATION PICKUP

*We accept all gently used clothing, shoes and housewares. Your donations of clothing and household items help us to provide services, assistance and support to ALL U.S. Veterans and their families.*

To schedule your pickup, visit [VVApickup.org](http://VVApickup.org) or call 800-459-VETS(8387). Clearly label your bags and/or boxes "For VVA" and place them in a visible area by 7:00am on date of pickup.

All donations are tax deductible to the extent permitted by law. VVA's tax ID# is 13-2929110