

Supplies Needed

- Stickers to price items; and a calculator to total up purchases (or give them one price for “the lot”). Purchase stickers from office supply section of drugstores.
- Empty boxes, grocery bags and newspaper to package and wrap breakable items you sell. Staple bags shut after purchase to help secure the item from falling out of a bag in the customer’s car.
- Tarps, blankets, sheets to display merchandise over stored boxes not for sale.
- Tape measure. Customers may need to know the exact dimensions of an item (especially furniture).
- Electrical outlet. Customers may want to test appliances and electronics to see that they do work. Provide testing area near driveway sale area (not inside garage or building). Tape down extension cords to prevent them from becoming a tripping hazard.



Advertising

- The month of the sale, the Stilwell Community Organization will advertise in newspapers, garage sale websites, on flyers at local stores, post office and school as well as online at www.stilwellcommunity.org and on our FACEBOOK page.
- The community garage sale is advertised through the Stilwell Elementary School, through an annual mailing to over 3,000 homes, on the organization’s website and annual PTO calendar for the Elementary School.
- The week before the sale a map of garage sale locations and a list of items for sale will be published on the organization’s website and distributed to the Stilwell Post Office and Stilwell Station.
- Wednesday morning before the sale, an email to participants of the map in a PDF format will occur to allow participants to make maps available at their sale. If they do not have the ability to make copies, additional copies can be picked up at the Stilwell Post Office or Stilwell Station.

Using Garage Sale Signs

- Display your “Garage Sale” sign near the edge of your yard or on the front lawn; or attach the sign to your parked car or cardboard box. Please do not nail signs to trees.
- Please remove all signs you place when your sale is over.
- The Stilwell Community will display signs throughout the community the week prior to the Sale to alert community members of the sale.
- Avoid using street or utility poles to attach signage as staples or nails not properly removed can be a hazard to utility workers.



When It's Over



- Goodwill will have a semi-trailer at Stilwell Station to receive your unsold and unwanted items on Saturday after the garage sale.
- Let us know how well you did! Return the evaluation form that will be sent to you by email.
- Count your profits or enjoy uncluttered spaces and feel great about conserving natural resources by turning your trash into someone else’s treasure.

Special thanks to the City of Mountain View Public Works for content contributions for this brochure.

Community Wide Garage Sale

“How To” Tips

Stilwell Community

GARAGE SALE

Friday, April 27, 2012
Saturday, April 28, 2012

7:00am – 3:00 pm

Congratulations! By holding a garage sale, you help your community divert waste from the landfill by “reusing” items made from our natural resources. Please reuse this guide for other garage sales or pass it along to a friend.



What to Sell

- Sell items that were “gently used” and still have value.
- Antiques – regardless of their state of repair or condition.
- Memorabilia and nostalgia items sell well. Display prominently.
- Furniture: dressers, bookcases and tables are very popular.
- Appliances, electronics, tools, and garden equipment labeled “working” or “needs repair.”
- Clothing (clean, folded on tables or hung), Group sizes.
- Books, music, videos, CDs, old software and manuals.
- Baby clothes, baby items, toys, games, dolls and kid stuff.
 - Costume jewelry (at a separate, attended table if valuable).
 - Incomplete silverware, glassware, or china sets – customers are looking to fill in their patterns or use items for craft projects and wall decorations.
 - Plants, sports equipment, camping gear, and pet items.
 - Let it go. Sure you paid lots of money for this item, but are you using it?



Setting Up Your Sale

- Start planning about two weekends ahead of time. Use the opportunity to clean out your garage, closets, and attic.
- Clean and shine sale items. Soap, water and a little elbow grease can really improve the appearance and value of your items.
- Consider holding a multi-family or block sale with neighbors, friends or family.
- Set up your “store”. Display items in an orderly fashion, grouping by function (garden, kitchen) or by price (paperback books \$1/bag.)
- Set items on tables or on a blanket, sheet, or tarp on the ground. Be creative.
- Place furniture, lawnmowers, or other “hot” items near the sidewalk to draw attention and get folks to stop and visit.
- Stage furniture with a lamp or plant.
- Place small, valuable items further away from sidewalk near the jewelry table or “cashier”.
- Set up a “free” area near sidewalk – add items throughout the day as needed.
- Display your “Garage Sale” sign near the sidewalk or on the front lawn; or attach the sign to your parked car or cardboard box. Please do not nail signs to trees.
- Give kids a chance to have their own table, and the responsibility for pricing and selling their merchandise (with proper supervision).
- Smile, be courteous, and deal fairly with your customers.
- Get out that radio! Listening to music makes shopping and selling more relaxing. Keep the volume low and tuned to easy-listening stations.



Remember your goal is to get rid of Stuff!!

Shop Keeping Tips

- Be ready to sell as advertised (7am-3pm). If you need to be “open” another time, be sure to reflect that when you register so the maps can note that.
- If possible, assign one person to answer questions or adjust pricing and another for cashier duty.
- Block off areas that you don’t want customers to enter by roping off areas or using sheets to block garage shelving or bicycles.
- Put up a “Not for Sale” sign on items you don’t want to sell such as the chair or table you use for the sale.
 - Keep your money secure. Wear a fanny pack or money belt, keeping it in front of your body and zipped. When counting out change, do not expose the contents to customers.
 - The same is true for cash boxes. Keep the lid down when counting money or screen it from view of customers by staking books or boxes around it. It should always be attended.
 - Have coins and dollar bills on hand for change. Most customers carry \$5, \$10 and \$20 bills. Don’t be



pressured to accept large bills or checks unless you know the shopper personally.

Pricing Your Merchandise

The most difficult problem for sellers is pricing items because they remember how much it cost new. Be realistic, but if you have expensive items in excellent condition, consider either a consignment shop or charity. Be prepared to share half the profits with consignment; and call the charity before you donate, as they often don’t accept hard-to-sell items.

- Price to Sell. Your garage sale will be successful when all items are sold. Wouldn’t you rather see an item go to a good home than thrown in the trash or dumped on a thrift store? Use newspaper sales ads to help you price housewares and tools.
- Put price tags on items or make a price list sheet. Customers may assume that items without tags will cost more than you planned to charge!
- Multi-Family or group sales. Use an inventory sheet to track other seller’s items. Put the seller’s initials on price tags or use color-coded stickers to identify sellers.
- Your customers are bargain hunters, so price items appropriately. Remember, “Price to sell” because the goal is to get rid of stuff! If the price is firm, say so, politely.
 - Better yet, ask them to pick out a few other items for a group discount.
 - Re-arrange items as items sell, or reduce prices on things that are not selling. Customers are discouraged if it looks like everything is picked over.
 - Advertise “cash only” prominently if that is your preference.
 - Don’t be discouraged if your sale gets off to a slow start. In a community wide garage sale, customers will come throughout the day, sometimes in a steady stream or in surges.

