

SALES - SOUTHERN ARIZONA LOCAL ESTATE SALES

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How To Stage A DIY Estate Sale So You Keep More Money

Staging is important in any type of sale. Buyers are more likely to buy if the item is visually appealing. Some version of staging is done in most real estate sales, or should be, and you will never walk into a retail store that hasn't been thoughtfully staged (but they call it merchandising).

Presentation and flow are important factors in the success of your estate sale. Here are suggestions but it's always good to get a consultation. Professionals have an eye for this.

Start with organization

- Move everything that is not going to be in the sale into another room if possible. You want to present the least number of distractions and keep non saleable items safe. If you can't move things into another room, see if you can separate them into another section of the room so you can clearly tape or rope off that area.
- If you can't lock the door, put a large sign - DO NOT ENTER.
- Remove clutter.
- Remove medications from view, preferably into a locked cabinet or room.
- Remove family pictures including pictures on the wall.
- Remove coins and jewelry, personal papers, firearms and ammunition, materials of a sexual nature, and alcohol.



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- Use a clear eye and comments from friends to determine upfront what is likely to sell and what you should throw out. You will sell more if you declutter and remove things that are not going to sell.
- Put up signs in the various prominent places around the house that indicate the policies of the sale. For instance, payment methods, delivery options, firm pricing, etc.

Create a plan for entry and flow through the house

- Outside, tape an entry walkway so that people will form a line. Hand out numbered tickets.
- You may want to only allow a certain number of people in at a time.
- Decide where the cashier or checkout area will be located.
- Spread your items out to keep the flow going and avoid any layouts that can cause a traffic jam.
- Security and safety are top priority. Clear away any items that are in the middle of the floor or that might be tripped over. Make sure small furniture items, like foot stool, are out of the way.
- You might even want to put arrows, made from red duct tape for instance, to create a flow through the house.

Lay everything out in an obvious manner

- Think about how a retail store arranges things on a table.
- If possible, borrow a few fold-up tables to arrange items in a pleasing manner.
- Shiny things sell better. Polish items, wash the glasses and display with plenty of lighting.
- Organize and group items and keep them together. For instance, if there are Christmas decorations in the closet, and more in the garage, bring them together in one area.
- Selling a fake Christmas tree? Set it up and put the decorations and ornaments in boxes around it.
- Group bedroom items in the bedroom and living room items in the living room.
- Assure that items are properly lighted. Borrow a few floor lamps if necessary.



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- Group clothing together by type or size and creatively display. All clothing should be clean and pressed. If you have vintage clothing, you may want to take them to a vintage consignment store where they are more likely to sell.
- Selling a TV? Turn it on but mute the volume. Keep other appliances plugged in so people can test or see that the item is in working condition.
- Continually re-stage as needed during the sale or at the end of the day. You don't want people to see empty tables or large gaps as they may think that the best things have been sold already.
- If the items are broken, label it as such. Many people will buy old computers, components, and stereo equipment even if they're not working.
- Want to sell a bunch of tools? Organize them.

Make it easy

- Clearly mark prices.
- Put valuable items like jewelry, antiques, or collector's items by the cashier area to make sure there is someone always there.
- Eliminate liability. Don't sell things such as liquor, perishable food items and medications.
- Decide on prices in your inventory checklist. Then put price tags on everything while you're staging.
- Keep a tape measure on hand so people can measure an item.



Safety

- Do not allow people to carry big bags into the house.
- Enlist a few volunteers to stand by doors and greet people while they're watching the flow.
- Clear out the clutter on the floor so that people don't trip and fall.
- Display glassware and other breakable items in view but not where they can get knocked over.