

# Secrets of a Successful Garage Sale

Holding a garage sale is a great way to clear out the clutter in your home and make a few dollars. When done right, holding a sale can be a profitable and pleasant way to spend a summer afternoon. Below are some tips to help you to become a successful garage sale entrepreneur.

## Before the sale

- Take an inventory of what you have to sell. Do you have enough items to justify having a sale?
- Decide whether you want to hold your sale alone or hold it in conjunction with family members or neighbors. Remember the more people you have participating, the more successful your sale is likely to be. The larger selection attracts more buyers and you can share the work and expense of holding a sale.
- Decide when to hold your sale. Saturday is the most popular day for a sale, though many people choose to continue the sale for the entire weekend. Be sure to allow yourself enough time to properly prepare for the sale. Plan an alternate "rain date" in case inclement weather interferes with your sale.

## Preparing for your sale

- Collect your "merchandise" in one area. Sort it by type (clothing, toys, tools etc.).
- Clean any items that are soiled or dusty. The better your items look, the more likely they are to sell at a better price.
- Test any electrical items.
- Gather the supplies and tables etc. you will need (See attached checklist).
- Most people underestimate the number of bags, boxes and wrapping material they will need. Gather as many of these items as possible.

## **Pricing your items**

- If possible visit other sales in your area. This will give you an idea of the going rate for similar items.
- If you suspect some items may be antiques or collectibles consult price guides at the local library or research them online.
- Remember the original price of the item has little bearing on the resale price. A recliner that originally cost \$500 may only be worth \$25 or \$50 on the used market.
- Build some flexibility into your pricing to allow for "haggling". Many buyers expect you to negotiate with them and many people consider this part of the fun of garage sale shopping.
- Know the minimum price you will accept for each item. You may wish to drop your prices later in the day.
- Price every item. Many people will not ask the price of an item even if they are interested in it. With larger items it is a good idea to provide additional information ("Works Good" "Only Worn Twice" etc.) along with the price.
- Volume Pricing (Example: 25 cents each or 5 for a dollar) will stimulate the sale of more items.

## **Bringing people to your sale**

- Let as many people know about your sale as possible. It is a simple equation-the more people who attend your sale the more likely you are to sell all of your items.
- Use your network; personally invite your friends and family to your sale.
- Post signs in your neighborhood a week prior to your sale. (You should check local ordinances regarding posting signs before doing this). Keep a list of where the signs are placed to facilitate removing them after the sale.
- Place classified ads for your sale. The Pennysaver is very effective in promoting your sale because as a direct mail publication it reaches every home in your immediate area. Remember to check publication deadlines so that you allow enough time to get your ad published.
- In your ads, give lots of details, list major items ("Table Saw", "Lots of Kids Clothes" etc.) and give clear directions from major landmarks or highways. The more descriptive you are in your advertising, the more people you will attract to your sale.

## **On the day of the sale**

- Plan to be set up at least ½ hour prior to your opening time.
- Spread out your merchandise so that it is easy to see all that you have to sell.
- If you have the capability to deliver large items such as furniture, mark them with a "Local Delivery Available" sign.
- Set up a cash and wrap area. A canvas carpenter's apron is a convenient and secure place to keep bills and coins for making change.
- When people arrive at your sale, greet them and ask them if they are looking for anything specific.
- If you see someone with an armful of merchandise, ask if you can hold it for them at the checkout area. Once their arms are full they are much less likely to buy additional items.
- When an item is purchased immediately mark it "sold".
- Be sure to thank your customers for visiting your sale and for purchasing your items.

## **The fine art of "haggling"**

- Remember most customers expect some flexibility in your pricing.
- Do not lose sight that one of your goals is to dispose of the items on sale. Even if you do not sell an item for as much as you had intended, it is still out of your way.
- When a customer makes an offer, make a counter offer that falls in between their offer and your asking price.
- When making the counter offer also make a value statement praising the attributes of the item in question. "They don't make them like this anymore" or "these are becoming quite collectible" etc.
- If you feel you can get more for the item than the customer is willing to pay, ask them to fill in an "Offer Card" (Available in this kit) so that you call them if you do not get a better offer for the item.
- Most sales are made in the early hours of your sale. Later in the day you may wish to reduce your prices on the remaining items.

## **Multi-family sales**

- Prior to the sale determine each family's responsibilities (advertising, providing tables etc.).
- Decide where the sale will be held.
- Create a coding system so that everyone knows whose item is being sold. This can be done by color coding or placing initials on the price stickers.
- Maintain a log of sales for each family (See attached form).
- Be sure everyone who will be selling knows the minimum acceptable price on every item.

## **After the sale**

- If you have unsold merchandise, consider placing a classified ad to sell the remaining items.
- If you wish to donate unsold items to charity, remember most organizations do not accept merchandise with price stickers attached. Remove all prices before packing. Most donations are tax deductible so ask for a receipt.
- Remove all signage and advertising.
- Tally your sales sheets and divide up the earnings among the sellers.
- Sit back, relax in your uncluttered home and count your new pocket money.

## **The most important thing to remember**

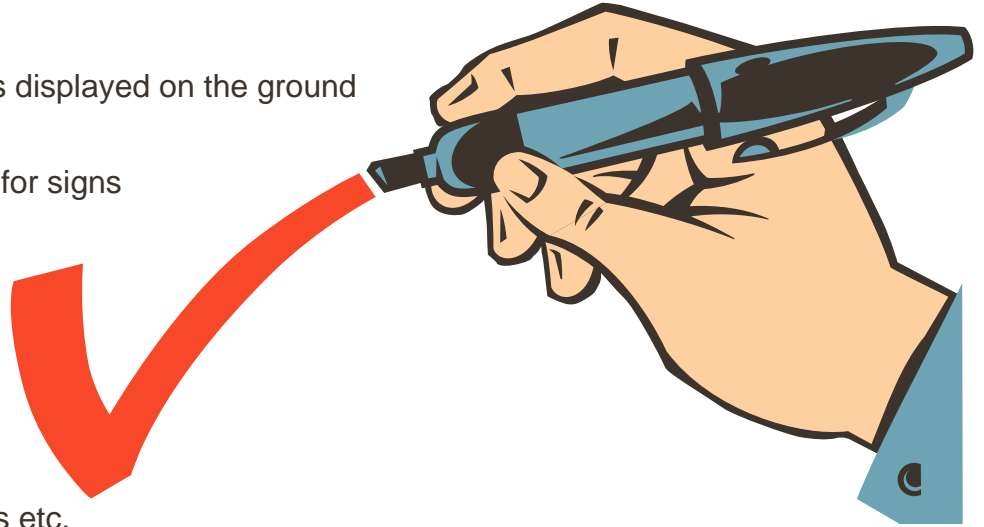
- **HAVE FUN!** A warm summer day, friends and family, meeting new people, and making a few extra dollars, it just doesn't get any better than that.



## GARAGE SALE SETUP CHECKLIST

### DISPLAY

- Tables
- Chairs
- Plastic or blankets for items displayed on the ground
- Plastic for rain protection
- Cardboard or poster board for signs
- Price stickers
- Markers
- Tape
- Trash receptacle
- Extension cords
- Clothes hangers
- Batteries to test toys, radios etc.
- Safety pins for clothing price tags
- Clothesline or garment rack (for clothing display)



### CHECK-OUT

- Cash box or money belt
- Change
- Sales record
- Pens
- "Pay Here" sign
- Bags & Boxes
- Newspaper for wrapping
- Tape
- Sold signs
- Offer cards
- Magnifying glass (for closer inspection of goods)
- Cloth measuring tape & tape measure
- Paper towels

### PERSONAL ITEMS

- Wide brimmed hat
- Sun block
- Sweater
- Small cooler for drinks/snacks
- Cell phone

# GARAGE SALE!

*When:*

*Where:*

*What's there:*

# GARAGE SALE

RIGHT  
HERE!

**MAKE** <sup>us</sup>  
*an OFFER...*

*We LOVE to HAGGLE!*



**Pennysaver**<sup>TM</sup>





# GARAGE SALE

*Pay*  
**HERE**



GARAGE  
SALE

Park  
HERE



GARAGE  
SALE

Park  
HERE



GARAGE  
SALE

NO  
Parking



GARAGE  
SALE

*Please*

NO  
Smoking



# Offer Card

I'd like to make an offer of: \_\_\_\_\_

for this item: \_\_\_\_\_

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

# SOLD!

Payment must be made in full.

Item will be picked up: \_\_\_\_\_

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

# Offer Card

I'd like to make an offer of: \_\_\_\_\_

for this item: \_\_\_\_\_

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

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Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

# SOLD!

Payment must be made in full.

Item will be picked up: \_\_\_\_\_

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Make an  
**OFFER**

Sorry,  
**SOLD!**

Make an  
**OFFER**

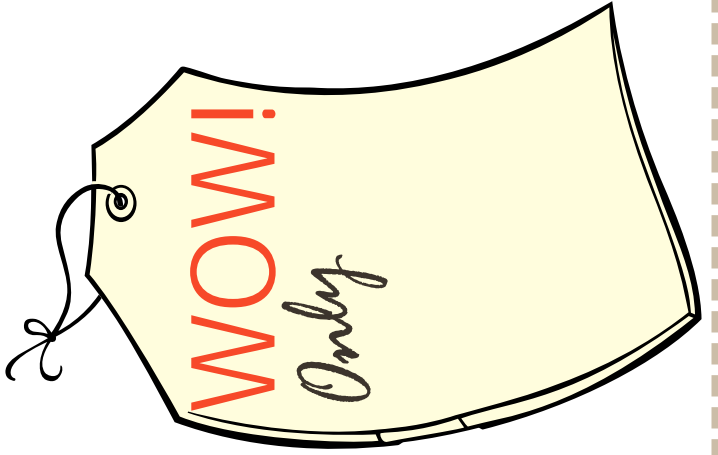
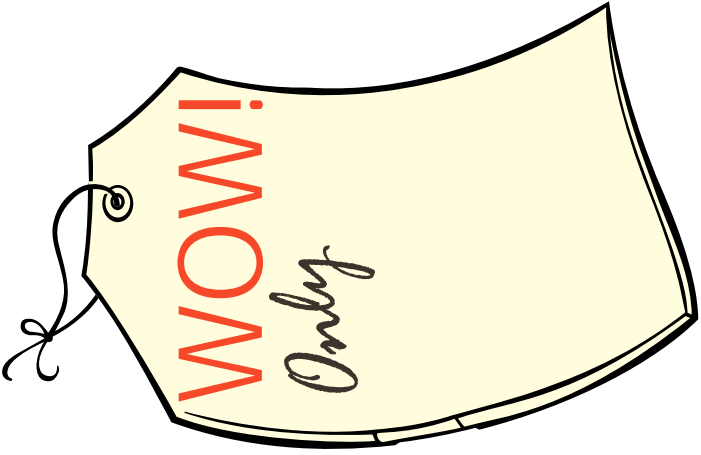
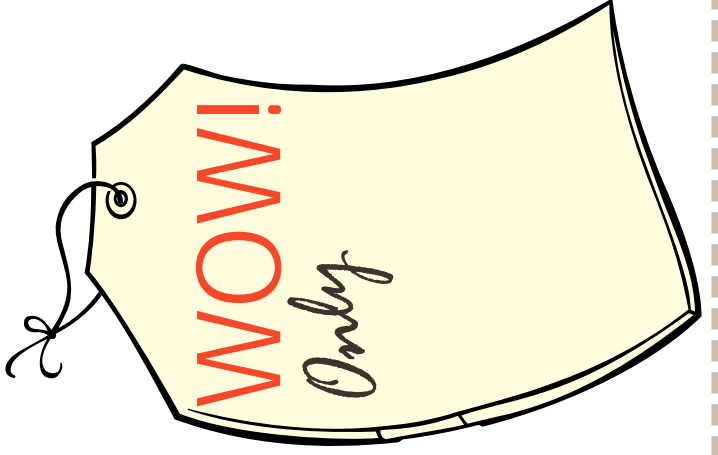
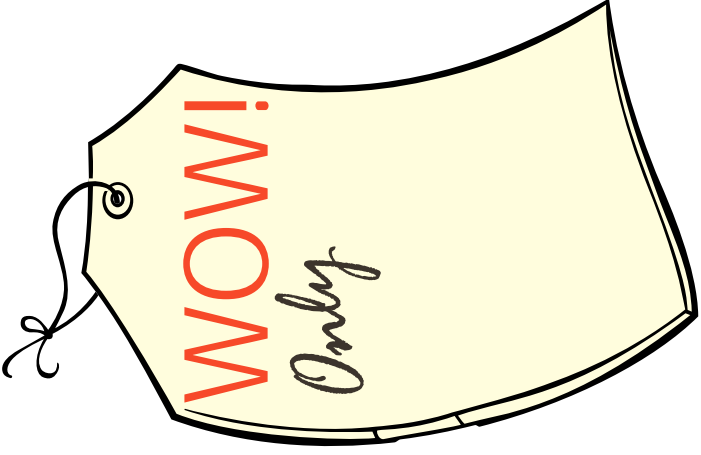
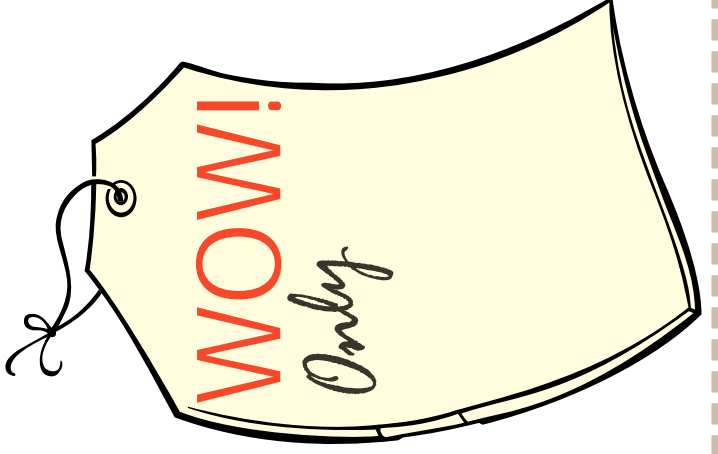
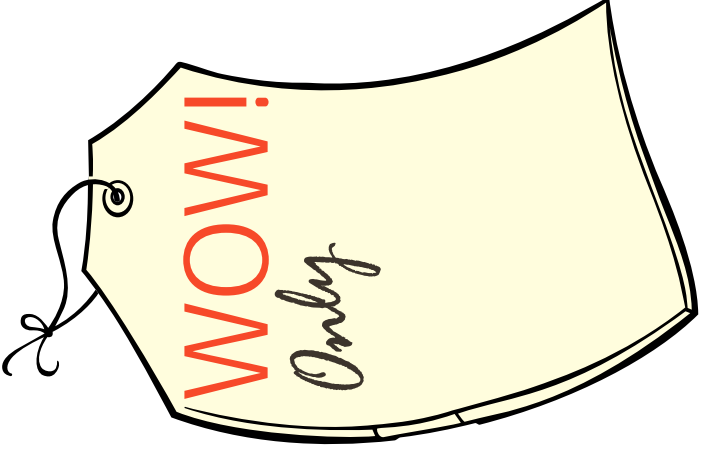
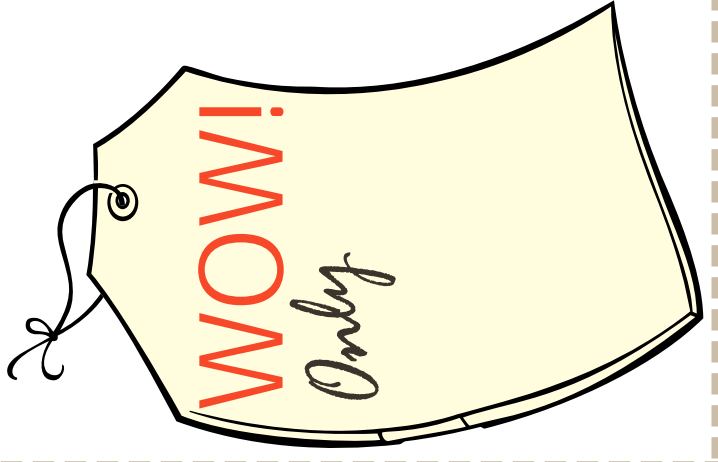
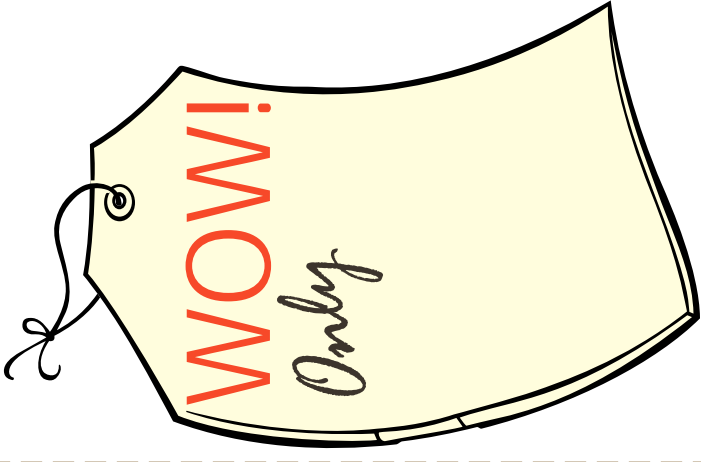
Sorry,  
**SOLD!**

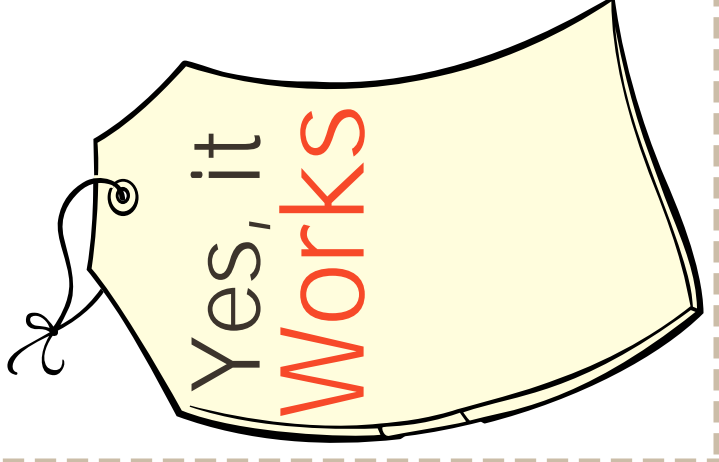
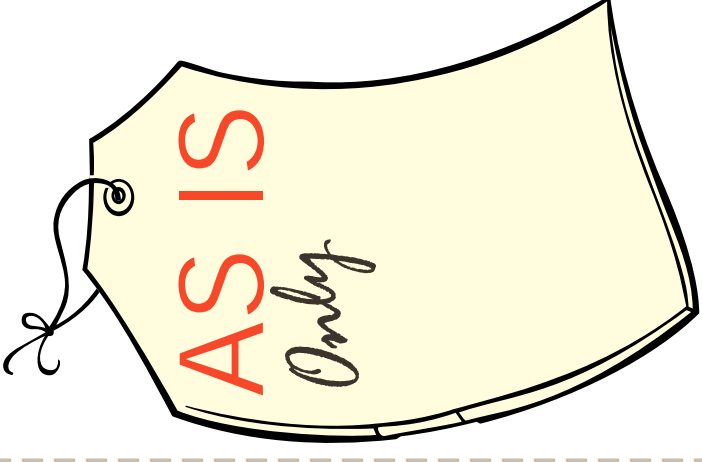
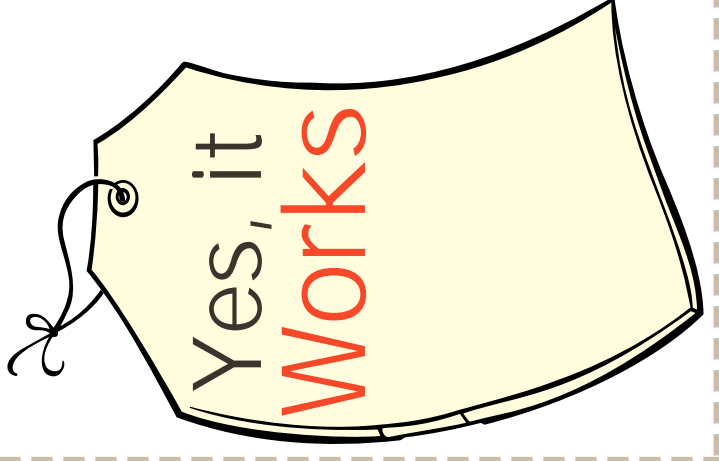
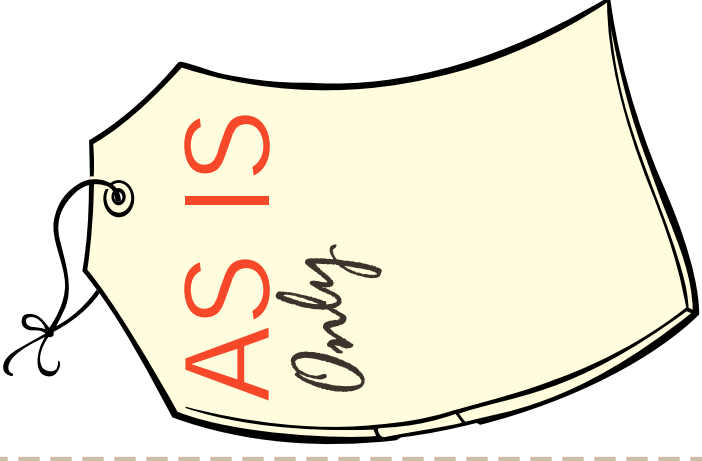
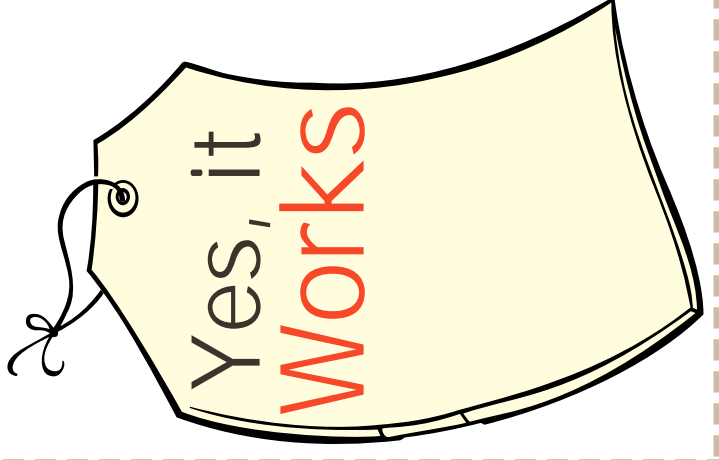
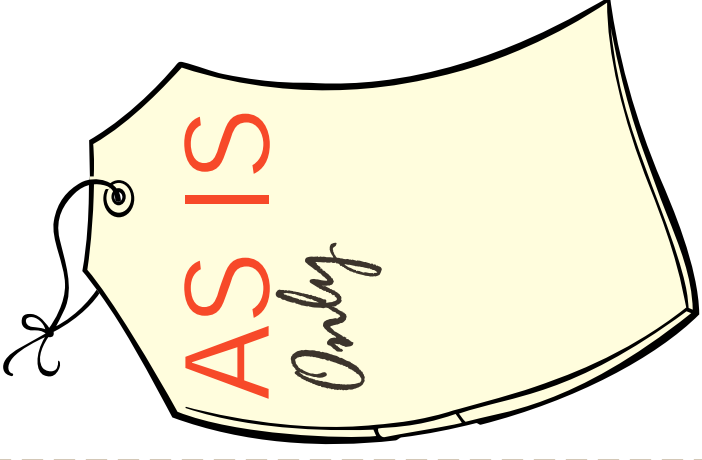
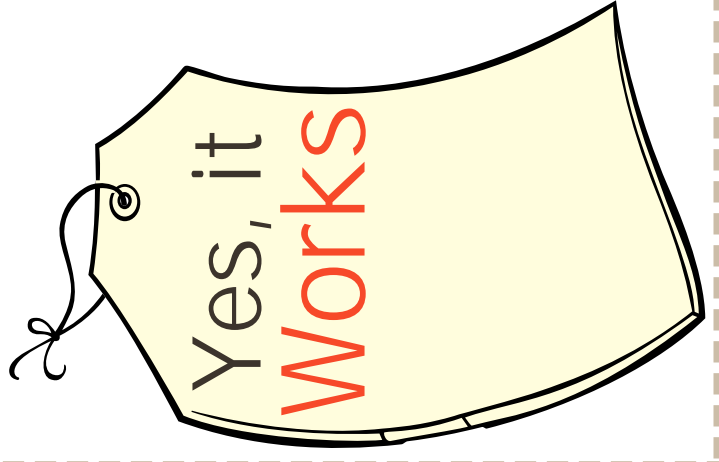
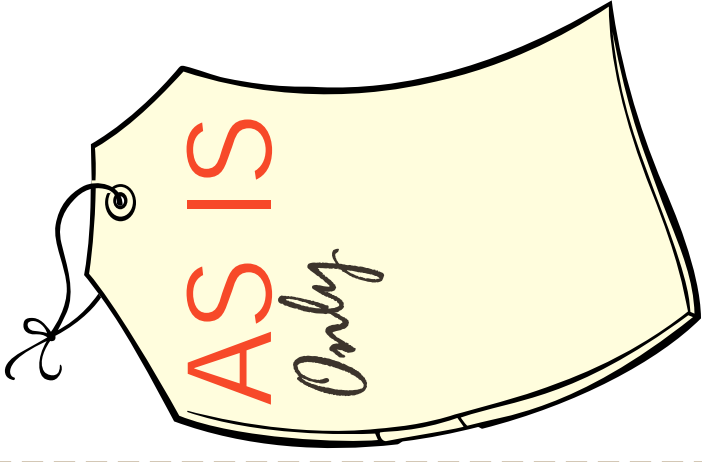
Make an  
**OFFER**

Sorry,  
**SOLD!**

Make an  
**OFFER**

Sorry,  
**SOLD!**





# ***Pennysaver***<sup>TM</sup>



## GARAGE SALE SALES LOG

<i>Item</i>	<i>Price</i>	<i>Running Total</i>
1		
2		
3		
4		
5		
6		
7		
8		
9		
10		
11		
12		
13		
14		
15		
16		
17		
18		
19		
20		
21		
22		
23		
24		
25		
NOTES:		



# ***Pennysaver***<sup>TM</sup>



## MULTI-FAMILY SALES RECORD

<i>Seller</i>	<i>Seller</i>	<i>Seller</i>	<i>Seller</i>
1	1	1	1
2	2	2	2
3	3	3	3
4	4	4	4
5	5	5	5
6	6	6	6
7	7	7	7
8	8	8	8
9	9	9	9
10	10	10	10
11	11	11	11
12	12	12	12
13	13	13	13
14	14	14	14
15	15	15	15
16	16	16	16
17	17	17	17
18	18	18	18
19	19	19	19
20	20	20	20
21	21	21	21
22	22	22	22
23	23	23	23
24	24	24	24
25	25	25	25
<b><i>Total</i></b>	<b><i>Total</i></b>	<b><i>Total</i></b>	<b><i>Total</i></b>