

HOW TO TURN YOUR SPARE TIME INTO CASH

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INTRODUCTION

Do you have a garage filled with unused furniture, household goods, broken appliances or outgrown toys and clothes? Maybe your neighbor does, or your relatives do.

The return to recycling old and used objects is more popular than ever. There are swap meets and flea markets all over the country where people buy and sell objects - AT A GREAT PROFIT!

Maybe you know how to repair simple motor-driven tools, or can refurbish battered furniture. You can turn that skill into money.

Are you clever and somewhat artistic? The market for handmade crafts is higher than it ever was. Maybe you'd like to make quilts, or candles, or decoupage plaques become hard cash. Rummage sales are great ways to change unused items into money. And it's easy. You need no overhead, very little time and effort, and make pure profit.

Perhaps you have church bazaars, school fairs, or crafts shows that occur seasonally in your area. Fall and Spring festivals are great places to sell everything from handmade dolls to recycled lawn mowers.

Are you ready to turn stored potential into real money? Just review some of these tips and you'll find you can make more money than you could ever imagine from seemingly worthless objects.

Starting right now, you could gather and produce enough to sell next weekend to make over \$750.00. And who couldn't use that?

WHAT WILL SELL?

ANYTHING WILL SELL!

You can acquire furniture and fixtures from basements and garages; you can scout for throwaways; or you can offer to take away what people don't need.

Household goods, appliances, cameras, bicycles, tools, baked goods - you can sell any useful object. You can sell surplus goods, irregulars, or nostalgia items. Antiques, of course, are always marketable.

Homemade woodcrafts, leather goods, photographs, postcards, stamps and coins all sell quickly and at a good profit. Think about what you have around the house. You probably have a whole truckload of things you'd like to get rid of. Why throw them away? Turn them into cash for the things you'd really like.

What can you make? If you think about it, you know how to create things that can sell.

What about making jewelry, wooden boxes, or working with shells? Walk through a crafts fair and see what's selling. And those prices have built in profit. With a little ingenuity, you can make anything sell.

GET INVOLVED

Selling used goods and handmade objects can be a great family business. Swap meets and craft shows are friendly, communal efforts, where everybody is making profit from leisure.

Younger and older members of the family can help refinish, clean up or fix objects to increase their value. And, almost anyone can run a small stall. What better way to make money than out in the fresh air and sunshine?

Generally, rummage or garage sales are not long-term endeavors. They're for getting rid of unused, stored, or old items not of value to the owners. But they have great value to other people - you'd be surprised.

Swap meets or flea markets usually are long-running enterprises, often only on weekends.

They are on special empty lots, in parking lots, or in stadiums. They are professionally organized

and supervised by a small group or individual, and require a fee to participate.

Craft shows are generally seasonal, and craft presenters travel long distances to set up in the fairs. But they are excellent places to sell high quality art and crafts at good prices. And don't forget the fast-selling items for a couple of dollars.

AT A SWAP MEET

Start with going to a swap meet, find out what sells and at what prices. You can find them advertised in the newspapers. Check the yellow pages or ask at a local store that sells used goods.

If you're going to buy something in particular, be sure to bring a tape measure or rope if you need to tie something to the top of your car. Check retail prices for what you're looking for so you'll have an idea of what the objects are worth. And never give the price asked. Always offer less.

Take a look at the type of people that are at the meet. Talk to booth sellers and find out how much they sell. If others make a profit, you can too. What things sell best?

THE ART OF BUYING

The most important aspect of buying and selling anything is the price. **KNOW YOUR PRICES.** You might start with a certain type of goods such as furniture or used appliances. Check

with other stands to see how much things sell for.

Look in the newspapers to see how the new items are priced. You can respond to ads in the newspapers to see how much private parties sell used objects for. Even pawn shops will give you a good estimate on the selling value of things.

The best time to shop at a swap meet is early - just as it opens. If you're the first sale of the day you'll get a better deal. Or, just as the meet is closing is equally good. People are reloading items to take back home; often any reasonable offer might be accepted, especially if it's

for a group of things.

Depending on what you want to buy, you have to know good craftsmanship or whether or not something can be fixed. The key to buying and selling is to buy cheap, and sell at a profit. So

you need to know what can be turned around into profit. A genuine antique must be at least one hundred years old. But period pieces can be very valuable if you know how to recognize them. Get to know what things are worth. You have to be able to tell the difference between value and junk.

Sometimes appliances such as vacuum cleaners, toasters, or small hand tools can be easily fixed, cleaned up and resold at a profit to you. But you have to know if you can fix it. Always bid

low. Often you can pick up something for fifty cents, a dollar, or two dollars, that you can turn around and sell for ten. You should be able to judge the seller. Has that person been a longtime regular at the swap meet? Then you may not get far. Usually, new people who are just unloading old things will be happy to make a few dollars and get rid of those things.

If the seller won't accept your low bid and you're not willing to pay more, go ahead and leave your name and phone number. You'd be surprised how many will call back because they couldn't get the price they wanted.

BUYING IN LOTS

Go to your local manufacturers. They always have scraps, leftovers, and close-outs that you can pick up for a good price - even for free. You may be able to recycle scraps into something else. For example, fabric scraps can be made into quilts or pillows. Leather scraps can be made into clothing, bags and belts.

Sometimes a manufacturer may have produced a bad run of some item that can be sold to you at rock-bottom prices. Irregulars are easy to pick up and sell at a profit.

You may be able to pick up unclaimed items from cleaners. Government surplus, police auctions and liquidation companies are great places to get good items at low prices. Perhaps you can tap into the rental companies that sell after the items are no longer rentable. Or check with

contractors who demolish buildings. You may be able to take out the light fixtures or things left behind.

And never forget the TREASURE OF TRASH. Start with the high-class neighborhoods. Often suburban towns may have a cleanup week in the spring and fall. Or check with the local sanitation

department and look at the things placed at the curb the night before pickup. Then again, there's always the junk yards. A few hours in a good yard will produce lots of fascinating objects that can

be put to good use elsewhere.

RECYCLING

Buying something old or used, fixing it, and selling it is the heart of recycling. Making something useful from a broken discarded object is not only profitable, but it is an extremely worthwhile thing to do.

There are dozens of things that have a high resale value and are the major recyclers.

Sewing machines, typewriters, cameras, televisions, bicycles and tools are great things to recycle.

You may be able to pick up broken objects at a rummage sale, in a neighborhood's attic, or in your own garage. You could even pay a low price for the object at a swap meet. With the right know-how, you can turn that item into profit.

Anything with a simple motor or electric mechanism can be easily repaired if you know a bit about

appliances and electric objects. Often only a simple part is broken or missing. You can find replacement parts by getting in touch with the manufacturer or local hardware stores. Some people choose one type of item, such as cameras or sewing machines and deal only in that item.

Young people are interested in repairing bicycles, wagons, or toys.

Hand and power tools are great objects to recycle. They're always needed and are easy to fix and repair. Perhaps something needs a new handle, or prongs need to be bent back. Maybe you

can find a replacement head or spring. You may need to take off rust, oil the gears, or polish the

surface.

What's the best way to make a broken or old object look new? A coat of paint does wonders for almost anything. Be sure to clean it up first, and paint it only in conservative colors.

Bright objects have a limited demand.

Know what the objects are worth. Buy them for a little money, fix them for a few cents, a replacement part, or a coat of paint, and sell them for less than they cost new. You've made a good profit and you're well on your way to making a steady income.

REFINISHING

One of the most popular items sold at swap meets is furniture. Chairs, desks, dressers, TV stands - all have a selling value. But many need to be fixed up to get a good price. The upholstery may be torn, or a coffee table surface may have burns. End table and desks often get water marks and spots.

Take a look at the furniture you have. Determine what it's made of and how it was finished. Sometimes it may not be worth the time and expense to refinish, but often you can turn a used piece into a showroom item.

Remove dirt and wax by cleaning. Wipe the surface with turpentine, mineral spirits or wax remover. This will show you where the real problems lie.

Maybe a chair needs to be reupholstered, or a child's dresser could use some bright decals - there are many ways to fix up old furniture with little effort.

Sometimes you can make patches, bleach out stains, reglue loose joints or cracks. New handles or drawer pulls will spruce up a useful piece of furniture.

If the piece is already painted, you might scratch a spot from underneath to determine if it's hardwood. If you know furniture and are good at restoring, you may remove the paint and refinish. If you're not so versatile with wood, you can repaint.

But don't repaint a piece of wood furniture that has never been painted. You could ruin it.

You'll be better off refinishing it to increase its value. You can determine if the surface was finished with shellac, lacquer or varnish, and you can do spot touch-ups and repairs.

If you refinish, you may need to strip the surface of the coatings already on, and re-stain and varnish the piece.

I'LL TAKE IT AWAY

Did you ever hear somebody say, "I'll pay them to take it away?" Perhaps a member of your family who's tired of the piles in the garage or shed wants to clean up. Or maybe a family is moving and doesn't want to haul everything cross country.

You can cash in on others' castoffs. A good way to let them know you're there, is by placing ads, in the local newspaper or recycling magazine. It can be a blanket statement like, "I'll haul your junk," or "I buy used household goods." Or, you may deal in only one particular item, such as "I buy used cameras".

Leave yourself plenty of room to refuse to take things of little value, or be prepared to quote a hauling and dumping fee. Set up a time to inspect the goods being offered and don't commit yourself until you are sure of their true value. You may need a pickup or a van to transport large objects.

With every load of goods, you'll have some treasures and some worthless stuff. Although almost anything will sell, you can have an agreement with a dump or recycling plant to take what can't be salvaged and profited by.

CREATIVE CRAFTS

One of the most rewarding and profitable ways to make money in your spare time is with crafts. You can often get materials at cut-rate prices and use them to create beautiful handmade objects that everybody wants to buy.

Start with the easiest, inexpensive items first. Take a look at decorating magazines and handicraft books for ideas and find the simple, low-cost instructions that require no expertise and little equipment.

If you have many sources for castoff items, you will want to consider recycling and making new from old. You can cut old bottles to make vases or glasses. Or, you can make lamps from bottles or any object that will fit the electrical switch and cord.

Rug hooking and braiding are good ways to use up lots of fabric scraps and discards.

They're something you can do in your spare time - even in front of the television. For those who are good with woodworking: wooden boxes, cutting boards, stationery racks and spice holders sell fast at the craft shows - and they make wonderful presents.

You might be interested in needlework. Crocheted aprons, appliquéd dolls, needlepoint pillows are always good items. You can make a high profit from handmade quilts or Afghans.

What about plants? House plants in unusual planters are clever items and go quickly if they're reasonably priced. Dried flower arrangements draw attention if they're well done and in nice-looking holders.

And don't forget ceramics. They're ever-popular at crafts shows and can be put into any practical use. Not only can you sell cups and saucers, but vases, pitchers, and bowls go quickly too.

You can make clocks out of any object. Clock kits are not expensive and can be mounted on stone, wood, plastic or fabric. Think of what will sell. Watch the craft fairs and check prices.

How can you make a profit?

There are thousands of objects that you can make at home with very little effort. And these produce a high profit. You can make jewelry, handbags, bookcases or candles. At craft fairs, even paintings, photographs, and original design stationery are popular.

What are you good at doing? Are there crafts you always wanted to get into? Maybe you constantly make small items that you give away at Christmas, like pot holders, or birdhouses, or macramé hangers. And everyone you know has one. Why not take them to market?

Be careful about pricing. Often crafts in the shows are of excellent quality, but they demand an equally high price. If you need to price your items high, carefully consider the wealth

of the buyers.

A good way to make money fast is to create dozens of small, two or three dollar items.

You can set them up on a simple folding card table with the price. Sometimes people will buy a small item on impulse because everything else is too expensive.

Consider the difference between the practical and the pretty. Crafts sell because they can be used, rather than hung on the wall or stored on a shelf. Practical items are easier to sell. Craft fairs are not the only places to display and show your goods. You can set up and sell them at swap meets, church bazaars, or even on street corners.

Go ahead - try it. Make some homemade toys or Christmas stockings or leather bags.

You'll find it enjoyable as well as profitable.

LETTING PEOPLE KNOW

Advertising can be an inexpensive way to sell the objects you've recycled. You might use a

leader ad, which is a short line about an object for sale. For example, "Typewriter, \$75.00.
Private

party, and phone number." If you buy and sell typewriters, this "lead" will produce a call, then you

can find out what the person is looking for. In fact, this ad will bring in many calls, and you can sell several typewriters.

A single headline is better to use than plural. If, for example, you used the word

"typewriters," it gives the impression that you're in business and wouldn't offer a bargain price.

You can photocopy flyers to post on bulletin boards in colleges, churches and factories. Perhaps there is a local organization of, for example, camera enthusiasts. You might find out who's the group leader and send that person a list of what you have to sell.

An economical way to advertise a rummage sale is by having the local newspaper delivery people place a flyer in with the papers. This will bring neighborhood responses. And, of course, you can always put small ads in shop windows, at supermarkets, or even tied to telephone poles.

Consider what you are selling and how you can reach those people who might buy. You may even

be able to use a small display space in a store appropriate to your items. Anything sold would be at a profit to the storekeeper and to you.

HOLDING A RUMMAGE SALE

You've already cleaned out the attic, the basement, the garage and the shed. You've done the same for all the relatives. And, you've asked your friendly neighbors for their things, or if they'd like to participate. Now what?

Choose a good time to hold the sale, and an alternate date in case it rains. Usually, you'll only need to advertise by placing a few signs on telephone poles in the neighborhood with arrows and the address.

Even if you think you have a lot to sell, use only one date. If you don't sell it all, you can change your signs and have the sale to continue the next day, or a day on the following weekend.

Consider the value of the things you have to sell, and how important it is to get rid of them.

Sometimes people who want to move or liquidate their property will sell at almost any price.

Here's a good time to buy. But if you can't get the price you feel the object is worth, don't sell it.

You may get the higher price later, or save it for next year's sale. Although you should always ask

a very low price when you are buying used goods, ask a fair price for selling. But be prepared to lower it.

If you have the sale on your front lawn, create perimeters so people don't wander into your home. Be sure someone is always available to take care of anyone looking at the objects you displayed.

There is an excellent market for everything, but few people will pay for worthless things.

Sometimes an old vase may get a couple of dollars, but often it may be worth only a token quarter. Don't expect to collect much from old memorabilia unless you know it has a good value.

RESELLING

You're ready to give swap meets a try; you have some items of value to sell. You'll need

to find out who is running the meet you want to join, register, and pay a fee to be part of the market.

Get there early - before it opens - to set up at a good spot. Regulars move up to prime locations. Take a look at the spots available. Where are the good places? Keep in mind that you want buyers. Sometimes a front-door center stop brings the largest number of lookers, but be sure

the aisle is wide enough for people to stop and talk with you about what you're selling.

You might want to do something to attract attention. Balloons or crazy hats are noticeable. Performing a crafts demonstration will also draw people towards your space.

Once people are looking don't let them walk by. See if you can help them find something, or at least pay attention so they know you're interested in them. Try a casual approach of mentioning some good points about the objects displayed.

If you know the full value of your objects, don't sell for less. As you build up your knowledge of handling used goods, you'll know that people will pay a fair amount for what they want.

As a novice, don't get taken by the regulars. They'll try to hit you up as soon as you unload your items. If you're unsure, don't take low offers, wait until you get better bids later in the day.

Depending on what you're selling, you can have anything from a folding coffee table to a mobile truck. You may need to just stake an area with poles and ropes. Perhaps you want to raise a canopy to keep the sun out. More professional swap meet dealers have portable booths to display their wares. What image do you want? If you're selling jewelry, you'd like a stand with a black velvet covering, something a little classy to show the value of your items. If you're selling clothes, you may invest in some racks to make it easy for potential buyers to look through the goods.

The real tips in buying and selling used goods at swap meets are learned by attending

them. You may be able to make friends with some people who sell what you'd like to learn about.

Perhaps you might volunteer to work a few weekends so you can learn about the business.

SELLING FROM HOME

As a crafts person, you may carry on a continual business, selling at fairs and on weekends. You can sell objects out of the home.

Any ads you place in the newspaper should look like you're an amateur, or just trying to get rid of a few objects. Bargain hunters shy away from on-going businesses.

However, you might run a small shop out of your garage or off the back enclosed porch.

Some people have kilns and offer ceramics classes from the barn in the back yard. Potential buyers

will like the homey atmosphere and will think they're getting a good price because it comes from the source.

Or, you may do wood crafting from a basement shop, creating beautifully carved or hand wrought items. Seeing a shop might bring more of an impulse to buy. What better feeling is it than

to get something from the person who made it?

However, other things may be best kept in the back, under wraps. For example, maybe you purchased a lot of five dozen lamps, irregulars from the factory. You were able to fix whatever was wrong and made them have no commercial value. If a customer saw the whole stock - dozens of identical lamps, that person would think it was not such a bargain.

Selling from your home can be as solid a business as if you rented a storefront. You'll want to build up steady clientele, and have referrals. If someone wants several items, give that person a

special price. Anyone returning time and again should get a discount. Good business builds better

business.

Use your discretion if you have a repair shop such as typewriters or sewing machines.

Sometimes it is better to display the many choices available; sometimes it's better to just have a

few and then pull out more from the back.

Depending on the person, you might find that being reluctant to sell such a wonderful object will push for a sale. Other people need to be convinced about a good deal. Again, if you know comparative prices for the same items new, you'll have better selling points. It's good business to offer a limited guarantee with mechanical or electrical objects. A thirty-day free repair warranty will often clinch a sale. And if you've already fixed the appliance or hand tool, you would know that it would work.

WHAT'S LEGAL

You are required by law to report all income. But in the business of buying and selling, you have so many deductions you can legally take, that most of your earnings are profit. If you keep all the receipts from the objects you bought, and all the receipts for the items you needed to fix up or repair these objects, you can keep a fair and accurate account of your activities. A professional accountant at year's end will be worthwhile. You'd be surprised at how much you can deduct.

If you become a regular at the swap meets and crafts fairs, you'll need to get a vendors permit and report the state sales tax. You can check with the directors of the meets to find out the requirements for your enterprise.

WHAT'S THE PROFIT

If you've given it a try, you'll see that you can make a sizable profit with selling used goods. If you just run a rummage sale, you don't need to keep accurate records. But if you continue the business of buying and selling, you'll need to keep track so you can tell what you are making.

Keep a record book or sheet that has five columns. In the first column, write down the name of the object. The second column should be the date you brought the item; the third lists the

price you paid. The fourth column is the date you sold it; the fifth column is the price.

The comparative dates will show you how quickly your items are selling. This is helpful to determine which objects sell best. The difference in the prices will give you the amount of profit.

If you figure in the cost of transportation, and the cost of fixing the items, you'll get the amount of

clear profit you've made. Not bad.

How much time are you spending? Keep track of the time you've spent in acquiring this profit. Divide these hours into the amount of profit. That's your hourly rate. How can you increase your hourly rate? The more work you accomplish, the more you'll make. But look for ways to do several things at once - to increase your profit. While you're at a swap meet or crafts fair, you can work on your crafts or be fixing and repairing as you mind the booth.

Especially with handmade items, think of ways you can profitably mass produce, making large quantities simultaneously rather than one at a time. The goal of these enterprises is to make money from the time and energy you put in. And if you plan well, **YOU CAN PROFIT.**

MAKE MONEY NOW

The quickest way to get instant cash is to hold a garage sale and unload all the unused, stored or broken objects in the house. You can hold it next weekend, and, if you're like every other household in America, you can make hundreds of dollars just from castoffs.

Swap meets are the best ways to continue buying and selling items at a good price. To create a good situation for yourself, get to know what happens at the swap meets. Go to all of them in your county, your state, or in the neighboring states. Which ones sell high quality merchandise?

Talk to people who sell at those meets. How long have they been in business? What kind of profits do they make?

It is essential to know prices and the true value of used and refinished objects. How much do new ones cost? What is the market price? The most important knowledge you'll need is how much things are worth. Sell at the highest price the market will hold.

You'd be surprised how little people know about how much things cost. Sometimes they buy things at a swap meet, thinking they got a bargain, only to later read an advertisement to buy a similar item for less. Don't get taken yourself.

Create your own territory. Make contacts for picking things up and selling them. You might have a relationship with stores selling used items. Although you will never get as high a price as you would at a meet, you'd be sure to unload hard to sell items.

At some point you may even consider a retail outlet. Dozens of used furniture stores also work at the swap meets on weekends. And these meets are a good place to find things to stock these stores.