



AMYOTROPHIC LATERAL SCLEROSIS SOCIETY OF ONTARIO
SOCIÉTÉ ONTARIENNE DE LA SCLÉROSE LATÉRALE AMYOTROPHIQUE

GARAGE SALES

GENERAL DESCRIPTION:

Almost anyone can organize a garage sale because it requires little in the way of specialized expertise or equipment. The procedure is simple: the Chapter solicits donations from members and friends, as well as from private garage sales. Chapters may organize and staff the event themselves, or enlist the support of a sponsor. The event itself is very relaxed and casual; customers and volunteers simply negotiate until they arrive at a mutually agreeable price. Funds are also raised through donation boxes, ALS pin sales, hats or any ALS logo'd materials, and the sale of refreshments. For a festive touch, include face painting, kids' games, or police dog demonstrations.

RESOURCES REQUIRED:

- A facility (see "Tips for Success")
- Storage for sale items (e.g. moving containers)
- Volunteer coordinators (number to depend on the size of your community)
- Security staff (if your sale runs over two days)
- As many volunteers as possible to set up and staff the sale
- Volunteer supervisors to oversee operation of the sale
- One or two individuals in charge of handling cash and making deposits
- Vehicles and drivers
- A mobile trailer (for your office) **At larger events especially
- An air tent (for shade)
- Tables and chairs
- Wooden tables for display of sale items
- Plastic sheets (in case of rain)
- Cooler and ice (for selling drinks)
- Aprons, sun screen and hats
- An electrical outlet or generator (for testing electrical items)
- ALS banners, posters, and flyers
- Cash boxes and floats
- Boxes, shopping bags, and garbage bags
- Brightly colored stickers
- Supplies for making signs at sale
- Refreshments
- Liability and theft insurance

PRE-EVENT ACTIVITIES:

- Set weekend date
- Secure facilities for sale and storage; if possible, store sale items in moving containers at sale location
- Contact local authorities & secure necessary permits
- Print posters & flyers advertising sale
- Divide your city into zones
- Assign a coordinator to each zone
- Draft a letter for distribution to local garage sales requesting that they donate the items they don't sell, to your sale. Include contact information so they may call you if interested.
- Distribute letter to local garage sales
- Issue PSA requesting item donations
- Follow up by phone on PSAs
- Collect items at designated drop-off points; pick up larger items; transport to designated storage facilities
- Advertise sale in local newspaper
- Distribute posters and flyers
- Remind the media by phone about event
- Notify police of event – they may be able to patrol the area at night

EVENT ACTIVITIES:

- Begin setting up the night before the sale
- Organize merchandise in “departments”
- Set up refreshment table
- Volunteers work in four-hour shifts
- Volunteers wander about the sale offering their assistance as needed; they can be identified by their Chapter shirts and ALS volunteer buttons.
- Items are sold as-is, prices to be negotiated by customer and volunteers
- Have someone to look after “big ticket” items who knows their value
- Electrical outlet or generator on hand to test appliances
- Have special offers toward the end of the sale (e.g. “fill your box for \$2.00”)
- Affix sticker to sold merchandise as proof of purchase

POST-EVENT ACTIVITIES:

- Sort leftover merchandise
- Pack and save saleable items
- Give remainder to local Goodwill or Salvation Army
- Sell books to used book store
- Leftover items to garbage
- Save leftover supplies (grocery bags, etc.) for next year

POST-EVENT ACTIVITIES CON'T:

- Clean up facility
- Return storage container/s and other borrowed items
- Retrieve damage deposit from facility (if applicable)
- Finalize accounting

TIPS FOR SUCCESS:

- The right facility is critical to the success of your sale. The ideal facility is a shopping centre with a large store to attract traffic, ample parking, and a busy intersection.
- Allow at least two months for collecting items for your sale.
- Make sure you have adequate storage for sale items. In addition to your volunteers' basements and garages, rent or borrow some moving containers and, if possible, store them at the location of your sale. If they cannot be stored at your sale location, be sure that the mover can deliver them the day before the event.
- When selecting Zone Coordinators, be sure they have the means to pick up large items.
- All items, especially electrical appliances, should be in reasonably good condition. Accept damaged items graciously, but garbage them when you get home. Do not pick up large items if they are in poor condition.
- Be creative with your PSA. For example, you may be able to entice local radio stations into providing you with extra "on-location" coverage. Always follow up with a friendly phone call.
- People may show up the night before your sale to check over the merchandise. Decide in advance whether or not you will make "early bird" sales.
- You can make extra money by selling buttons and stickers, and by taking donations.
- Consider securing a corporate sponsor for your sale. Local businesses may be interested in this event as a promotional tool, or to enhance employee morale. Sponsors may assist by encouraging their employees to participate, sponsoring newspaper advertisements, providing staff to pick up donated items and to help out at the sale, donating storage, providing a facility for the sale, organizing peripheral events, or serving refreshments.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION:

The ALS Society of Ontario, 265 Yorkland Boulevard, Suite 300, North York, Ontario
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