



21 Things to Look For at Yard Sales & Thrift Stores

- Sterling silver flatware -- Even if you can only afford to buy a spoon or a fork at a time, sterling silver is known to have antimicrobial properties. Typically, a single piece of silver, such as a spoon, will run about \$50. Buy from reputable sellers, such as established estate sale agents and thrift stores.
- Survival related reference books -- Books about homesteading, gardening skills, primitive camping, wilderness survival, and Boy Scout manuals, Foxfire books, and issues of Backwoods Home magazines. Field guides are another good find as are any how-to manuals.
- Grain mill – Brands to look for: NutriMill, WhisperMill, Wondermill Junior, Family Grain Mill. If you don't have a grain mill and find one that's a bargain, grab it, no matter the brand. It can always become a backup
- Camping equipment -- Good quality tents, sleeping bags, camp stoves, lanterns, cots, etc.
- Good quality knives -- Look for brand names such as K-Bar, Cold Steel, and Gerber. A Swiss Army Knife is also a good find.
- Homeschooling supplies -- Workbooks, classic literature, flash cards, math manipulatives, textbooks, and school supplies.
- Winter wear -- Look for snow boots, winter gloves, and other pieces of winter wear, and if you have kids, buy this clothing in a size or two larger for future winters.
- Boots -- Work boots, riding boots, gardening boots, mucking boots, military boots, motorcycle boots, cowboy boots, hiking boots, desert boots. Check for quality construction and material as well as wear and tear.
- Tools – Know what you're looking for and seek how sturdy tools from the 1940's through 1980's.
- Battery-operated appliances -- Battery powered fans, appliances, and other tools. Be sure to stock up on the appropriate batteries as well.
- Food dehydrator – Look also for accessories such as additional drying trays, fruit leather trays, jerky making equipment, etc.
- Fishing equipment -- Fishing poles, nets, collections of flies, rods, reels, you name it.
- Emergency supplies – Look for anything survival related: emergency radios, lanterns, backpacks, water filters and purification tablets, paracord, even duct tape.
- Tough kids clothing -- Kids are notoriously tough on clothes, so when you're looking at second hand clothing, go for brands and fabrics that will stand up to serious wear and tear. Buy them in larger sizes, so you'll be ready for growth spurts.
- Canning jars and supplies -- Look for mason jars in all sizes, magnetic lid lifter, funnel, jar tongs, and large pots.
- Manual kitchen and household tools -- Do you have a manual egg beater? A flour sifter? Enough manual can openers? A manual meat grinder? A large mop and mop bucket?
- Cast iron cookware – Skillets in various sizes as well as different sizes of Dutch ovens all come in handy.
- Cookbooks -- Specifically look for cookbooks that provide recipes for outdoor cooking, canning, Dutch oven cooking and recipe books using basic ingredients.
- Good quality gardening tools and supplies

- ❑ First aid and medical supplies -- Boxes of surgical gloves, bandages, butterfly strips, surgical scissors, sterile gauze and entire well-equipped first aid kits are sold at bargain prices.
- ❑ Hunting supplies and firearms -- In some yard/garage sales, you just might get lucky and spot hunting rifles and even handguns for sale. If you see lots of hunting related items, quietly ask the homeowner if he/she also has firearms for sale. There are plenty of other hunting supplies out there, though, including gun cleaning kits and decoys.

List by Lisa Bedford. Original article: "21 Things to Look For Every Time You Go to a Yard Sale or Thrift Store."
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