

HOW TO CHOOSE AN ESTATE SALE COMPANY

Choosing an estate sale company is a decision made with careful consideration and knowledge. Here is a guide from Carol Madden of EstateSalesNews.com to common questions about choosing an estate sale company. These helpful tips are based upon her 25 years' experience as an estate liquidator. **Print them out for your easy reference!**

Where do I find estate sale companies?

There are several ways to find estate sale companies. Online, there are four leading websites that list estate sale companies and their sales. They are EstateSales.NET, EstateSales.org, Estatesale.com and Estatesale.company. You can also ask your attorney, local realtor and/or friends about their experiences with companies with which they might have had estate sale dealings in the past.

What do I look for in an estate sale company?

Choosing an estate sale company is a process – here is a list of tips to follow.

- CHOOSE at least several estate sale companies** (if possible) to contact that work in your area.

- CHECK the internet for any reviews** on the companies you will be calling.

- CALL the estate companies:** Ask them about their business experience, staff, and services they provide. Be sure to ask if they are insured and, in some states, licensed. You may also want to ask them about visiting their next sale and tell them you would like to speak with past clients. *Print out and use our handy interview page at the end of this document to record your findings for each company.*

- SCHEDULE appointments for face-to-face interviews** only with companies you felt provided you with satisfactory answers during the phone interviews. Be sure to schedule the in-person interviews several hours apart or even on different days so they don't overlap.

SHOW the estate liquidator through the property. Point out any items that will not be included in the sale, and if you have any items where price is a concern, discuss it with them at that time.

ASK them about their crowd control policy, pricing (how they research prices), credit card acceptance and any associated credit card fees, security, staffing, staging the property (when they would want to start and how long it would take), and what their current schedule of sales is. Additionally, ask how many days they would conduct your estate sale, whether they allow anyone (staff or otherwise) to buy before the sale starts (presale), whether they will be required to collect sales tax, obtain any necessary permits, and place advertising (where and when).

INQUIRE as to commission or fee. What they charge is not as important as hiring a reputable, experienced estate sale company that will work to achieve the best results possible in current market conditions in your area and make the process as stress-free as possible.

FIND OUT from the estate sale company how and when you will be paid and whether or not they provide clean out services (what do they charge) or do they have a company that will (again ask about the fee).

TAKE NOTES AND DON'T MAKE A DECISION UNTIL YOU HAVE MET AND TALKED TO ALL THE LIQUIDATORS WITH WHOM YOU HAVE APPOINTMENTS.

Take time to review their answers to your questions and any notes you made about the estate liquidator (attitude, appearance, demeanor, apparent knowledge and any recommendations).

More helpful reading at EstateSalesNews.com:

- [What is an estate sale?](#)
- [Where do I find estate sale companies?](#)
- [What to look for in an estate sale company?](#)

Company Name: _____

Company Address: _____

Phone: _____ **Contact Person:** _____

Appointment date & time: _____

Phone Interview Checklist & Notes:

Services provided _____

Business experience _____

Staffing _____

Licensed/Insured? _____ Provide references? Yes No

Face-to-Face Interview Checklist & Notes:

Crowd control policy _____

Pricing (how researched?) _____

Credit cards & associated fees _____

Security _____

Staffing _____

Staging (start date & how long?) _____

Current schedule of sales _____

Length of estate sale in days _____

Presale policy _____

Sales tax collection _____

Permits _____

Advertising (where, when) _____

Clean out services _____

Fees and/or commission _____