



## Successful Estate Sale Checklist:

This checklist was created to give you the knowledge and confidence you need to choose an estate sale company that will fit your unique situation and needs. From preparing for the consultation to the signing of the contract, let this list be a guide to finding the best company for you!

### Pre-Consultation Prep:

- Don't throw anything away.** Everything in the home, from clothing to fine jewelry, has the potential to sell in an estate sale. Anything can be donated or tossed after the sale has ended if needed. Why not give it a chance to sell first?
- Go through the home thoroughly.** Be sure to look everywhere in the home! Under beds, behind doors, in the attic and everywhere in between. You don't want to miss anything that could be important to you. Decide what you want to keep and make sure you ask relatives or interested parties if they would like to look through as well.
- Remove the items you are keeping from the home.** If you are unable to do so before the consultation, tag all of the items (we suggest using post-it notes) and group them as much as possible. In order to create an accurate proposal, the items that are for sale need to be as obvious as possible.

**HELPFUL HINT :** During this phase having friends and family around to help can relieve stress. Don't feel as if you have to do everything alone.

- Decide on a deadline.** When would you realistically like to be done with the process? Having a timeline in mind is important to be able to match availability during the company interview.

**HELPFUL HINT :** during the summer months, estate sale companies may require a 4 - 6 week lead time. Also note that homes can sell in a matter of days and once they do sell, the occupant may be required to be completely off of the property (meaning empty house) in 30 - 45 days.

- Post estate sale services or the sale leftovers.** You can expect 5% to 25% of your items to remain in the home after the estate sale. Plan how you would like this handled and how much involvement you would like to have in the post sale process.

#### Questions to consider:

- Do you want to box the left over items on your own or would you prefer someone do that for you?
- Does the home need to be completely cleared out?
- Do you have friends and family to help you with clearing the home after the sale?
- Does the liquidator offer post-sale options?

---

## Searching for the Right Company:

- Read the Reviews.** Google “Estate Sale companies in my area” and browse through the various companies. When you have found a company that catches your eye make sure to read through their reviews on the following sites:

- Google
- Yelp
- Angie’s List
- Facebook

**HELPFUL HINT :** Read the company response to the review as well. This will give you insight into how the company handles both positive and negative feedback.

- Visit the website.** Is the information on their website clear? Do you resonate with their messaging?
- Check Social Media.** After reading reviews, visit the company’s social media accounts such as Facebook and Instagram to see how active the company is and if you like the message they are sending.
- Visit one of their sales.** Before you call them, consider visiting one of their sales as a “secret shopper” to see EXACTLY how they operate. Are you greeted at the door? Are items showcased properly or in piles on available surfaces? Do they have staff stationed throughout the home for security or just in the cashout room? Are valuables such as jewelry behind glass?
- Schedule a free consultation.** Reach out to the companies that passed your test to schedule your consultation. They should always be free, and if not, ask them what the charge is for. Do not hire anyone you are not comfortable with or feel like you cannot trust.

**Company 1:**     **Poof Estate Services**    **248-955-3082**    \_\_\_\_\_

**Company 2:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Company 3:** \_\_\_\_\_

- Pay attention to companies with stores.** Often times, a store or shop can be a conflict of interest, but not always. If a company tells you they have a store, consignment shop, or anything of the sort, find out what that means for you.

### Ask these questions:

- Since you have a store, what happens with my leftover items?
- If the items that don’t sell end up at your store, what is the commission split once they sell there?

- How can I be assured you will not over-price my items during the estate sale?
- Do you have a contract for me to sign for the items that may end up at your store? How do you inventory those items and how do you discount at your store?
- Can I change my mind about consignment or the items going to your shop? I might want them donated instead.

**HELPFUL HINT :** Never do consignment or hire a company who takes leftover items to a store or consignment shop after the estate sale is over without a contractual agreement between you and that store.

---

## The Consultation:

- Consultation with the companies.** The consultation will include a walkthrough of the home, a sit-down interview, contract review and a services percentage agreement.

### HELPFUL HINTS:

- The consultation should be free.
  - Ensure they walk through the entire home and see everything you have for sale.
  - Items that are not for sale are clearly tagged and you have let them know they will not be sold at the estate sale.
  - Point out any collections like jewelry, art, designer goods, coins, and collectibles you are aware of.
  - Be prepared for them to photograph the property. Photos can be used to help create a plan for setting up the sale.
  - Don't be alarmed if they touch things, look under cushions, open cabinets or closets, etc.
- Ask if they are Bonded and Insured.** If a company is bonded and insured this means that they are covered in the event of any damage to the property, customer accidents, and theft of personal property.
  - Review the contract.** Never sign anything you have not read in full or do not understand. Be aware of costs outlined in the contract like credit card fees, carpet covering, cleaning fees, organizing fees, clean out costs, advertising deposits, fixed fees, and labor costs.

---

## Choose a company:

Hooray! You have completed the checklist and now you have found the perfect company to host your sale! Give them a call, look over the contract one more time, and sign away! Make sure the decision feels right, you deserve a great experience!



**Use the checklist on us!**

**Call to schedule your free consultation (248) 955-3082**