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YOUR MONEY NOW

## Out with the old ... [f Like](#)

The end of the year is a great time to de-clutter and get back a little cash, perhaps a tax deduction, and a more organized start to 2012.



consignment sale of upscale women's wear, is setting up her holiday sale. Consignment sales offer women a chance to clean out their closets and make some cash. Al Diaz / Miami Herald Staff

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BY JULIE LANDRY LAVIOLETTE  
SPECIAL TO THE MIAMI HERALD

After having three kids in three years, Juliana Ruiz of Pembroke Pines felt like her home was piling up with outgrown toys, clothing and shoes. But Ruiz found a way to turn the unwanted items into cash, by re-selling them on the consignment circuit.

"Clearing out the clutter was essential, and I wanted to make some of the money back," she said. "In this economy, this was a way to contribute to the household income."

Money experts say the end of year is a great time to do a little housekeeping, not only to de-clutter and discard unwanted household items, but to sift through un-needed financial records accumulating in dusty files. Your reward? A little extra pocket money, perhaps a tax deduction and a more organized start to 2012.

Here are some tips on how to get out with the old before the new year:

### CASH FOR YOUR CLUTTER

First, clear out your closets and make some money.

Selling used items on Craigslist or eBay will typically earn you the most per item, but has the highest security risk, because you're letting strangers into your home. Consignment sellers will net you 50 to 75 percent of the selling price, but it may take longer to sell your goods. Garage sales remain a popular way to sell your possessions, but they are time-intensive and typically attract resellers and buyers looking to score items in bulk, sometimes for pennies on the dollar.

Ruiz, the Pembroke Pines mom, tried Craigslist, eBay and garage sales before starting her own consignment businesses. Lollipopsh

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**Let go of emotions:** 'It may be beautiful, but it's your used junk,' says Julie Tenenbaum of Baby Posh Garage. 'Nobody wants to pay a lot for it.' Pompano Beach mom Malia Fenby looks at the wear and tear on her son's old toys before pricing and posting them on Craigslist. 'I think about what I would pay for an item,' she says.

**Think volume:** 'Forget about trying to get a lot of dollars for one item and think volume,' Tenenbaum says. 'I have consigners who get \$250 a month for their stuff. You have to think of moving mass quantities.' Maria Supik, a Cooper City mom who unloads her goods at garage sales, saves time on pricing by grouping items in boxes by price. 'You might sell things for a buck or two,' she says. 'You're not making a lot of money; you're just getting rid of your stuff.'

**Think supply and demand:** A designer Bugaboo stroller that sells for \$1,000 new might fetch \$599 in a consignment store, while a \$399 mass-marketed Graco stroller could sell for \$40 used. 'There's no real formula,' Tenenbaum says. 'It's about supply and demand.'

**Look at the market:** Google the item you want to sell and the word 'used' to pull up what similar items are going for on eBay and Amazon, says Juliana Ruiz of Lollipopsh and Poshicle. 'They may factor shipping into their price, so you have to take a close look,' she says. 'But you can use it as a gauge.'

Julie Landry Laviolette

(www.Lollipopsh.com) brings together moms three times a year to sell their new and gently-used children's items. Poshicle (www.Poshicle.com) gathers women to sell their unwanted upscale apparel and accessories. Its holiday sale is Dec. 10 and 11 in Coral Springs.

"Women purchase so many items, including some impulse buys that are never used," Ruiz said. "You have all these great items in your closet, and you can get cash for them."

Pompano Beach mom Malia Fenby clears out her 4-year-old son's old toys by posting them on Craigslist. "It's easier for me, and it's a lot faster, because I'm a single mom, I work and go to school," she said. "I can get rid of things in a couple of days, and I don't have to drive anywhere — they'll pick it up."

Fenby said her buyers are usually women, and she talks to them on the phone before inviting them to her home. "If I feel uncomfortable in any way, I will meet them somewhere else," she said.

Maria Supik, a Cooper City mom of two, sells her items through community bazaars, and at garage

sales. "Craigslist is not great for all the little items," she said. "I have so many things, and with a garage sale, you can put it all out there."

Supik, a Miami-Dade firefighter, donates whatever is left over to a charity. "I just don't want to throw it out," she said. "I just want to get it out so someone can use it."

## HIGHER RE-SALES

For children's items, big ticket toys and equipment such as swings, playpens and high chairs sell best, Ruiz said. In women's wear, handbags and upscale clothing free of tears, stains and fading have the most value, she said.

Julie Tenenbaum, owner of Baby Posh Garage, (www.babyposhgarage.com) an Aventura consignment shop for maternity and children's items, said the secret to getting top value is selling current items.

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