

## **Frequently Asked Auction Questions:**

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**Q: How do I find auctions in my area?** Find auctions in your area through local ads and shopper publications. You can also find auctions through the auctioneer's website or by searching online for auction companies. Localize your search using sites like auctionzip.com or The Oklahoma Auctioneer's Association membership list at okauctioneers.org. Of course, for the Ball Auction Service auctions, you can find all of our auctions online at: [www.ballauctionservice.com](http://www.ballauctionservice.com). You can also follow us via Facebook.com/BallAuction or @BallAuctions via Twitter.

### **Q: Should I tell the auctioneer that I am new or will that work against me?**

Firstly, attend an auction conducted by a reputable company. If the company is conducting a high volume of auctions and has been around for a long time doing business in the same trade area, you know they must be treating people right or they wouldn't have survived. With that said, yes you should identify yourself to the auctioneers and/or ring men as being new to the process so the staff will help you through the process and make sure you are following along well and bidding on the right items. If you can't trust the auctioneer with this info, go to a different auction.

**Q: Can I ask questions before the auction?** YES! Please do. Ask questions in advance by calling or emailing the auction company with your questions, or by attending the preview (if there is one), or by arriving early – well in advance of the sale – to ask your questions directly to the auction staff.

**Q: Why must I show my driver's license to register?** This is for your protection – you wouldn't want just anyone to be able to step up and register as you – right? That could happen if the auction company didn't require bidders to present identification.

**Q: I can't make it to the auction? Is there a way I can still bid?** YES! At Ball Auction Service, we understand that you can't always be at the sale and have several options for you depending on the sale and the items. The first option is to leave an absentee bid with us (see absentee bid definition in our auction glossary). In some cases, on larger items (vehicles, tractors, etc), we can call you during the sale when we get to the item of interest and accept your live bids over the phone. Some of our auctions feature live Internet bidding, which would allow you to bid live via the website during the sale. If a sale features Internet bidding, details and a link to the bidding site will be listed within the sale information on our website. Generally speaking, an absentee bidder's buyer's premium will apply. This ranges from 5%-10% depending on the sale; so be sure to ask in advance.

**Q: I need to leave the sale early, but you haven't made it to the item I want yet... what can I do?** In most cases, we are not going to move an item in the sale order to accommodate a bidder. This is because someone else may have come

earlier in the day and made a decision on when to return based on the item's location in the sale order. Also, because we really do put a LOT of thought into the sale order and there is a method to our madness. With that said, we still want to accommodate you; so write your high bid amount and an item description (along with a description of where the item is located in the sale order) on the back of your bidder card and present it to the clerk (she's the one pushing the computer around following the auctioneers) before you leave. Let her know you have to leave and would like to "leave a bid." She will bid on the item on your behalf as if you were standing there up to your high bid amount.

**Q: What's the best way to find a deal at the auction?** There are several techniques, but here's what we've found to be the 4 best opportunities.

(1) The first items sold. A lot of people are going to sit back and see what happens, so there are fewer bidders on the first few items. Sometimes people watch the first few minutes of a sale to "take it's pulse" and see how bidding will go to determine if they will stay. Frenzied bidding from confident bidders will likely scare a few away (though that's really not a good gauge for how the sale will go).

(2) The last few items sold. If it's a long sale, you can get good deals at the end of the day simply by outlasting your competitors. Additionally, sometimes the owner/seller will have an "Oh yeah! You were supposed to sell the stuff in this building too" moment and uncover some merchandise that other bidders didn't even know would be sold.

(3) Box lots: Some auction-goers think that if it was worth anything we would've pulled it out of the box and put in on a tablecloth in the row. That's not necessarily true. Sometimes we run out of time, daylight or table space. Sometimes, we know that bidders won't be able to hang in for an 8 hour auction so we need to have fewer lots to sell through merchandise faster; and sometimes, the seller unearths new stuff in the last moments of set-up and we have to sell those things as box lots. It's amazing what's been found in the bottom of some of the boxes we've sold!

(4) Items that don't match the type of auction - for instance an antique dining set selling at a "farm" sale. A tractor selling at an auction that features mostly antiques; or tools selling in amongst glassware. How do you find these? Check the Miscellaneous category of the auction info listing online or the auction flier for those things that just don't fit in with the other items. Those "out of place" items will generally have less competition when it comes to bidding for them.

John wants to add a 5<sup>th</sup> way - "COME TO A LOT OF AUCTIONS, there are deals to be had every week!"

### **TIPS FROM AUCTION VETERANS - "THE PROS"**

Arrive early to thoroughly inspect merchandise and register for a bidder's card upon arrival so you will be present during the auctioneer's announcements. Announcements made on sale day will trump any advertised terms. Long-time auction goer Rhonda Olsen (owner of Country Home Antiques in downtown

Watonga) adds the following: "Don't ever forget to get a number even if you don't plan to bid. It does not make you obligate or cost you to get a number."

Olsen also has some specific advice for ladies, "Ladies, go like the men – hands free! Maybe bring paper and pencil. Wear clothing with pockets for essentials, don't drag around a big purse."

Auction merchandise sells "as-is" and most auctioneers will remind you of this from time to time and will try to point out damage or chips, but they can't find it all! You are responsible for checking out the condition of items in advance AND determining if you want it in THAT condition.

Bring useful items: a pen, a measuring tape, boxes and packing material, tie-down straps and bungee cords if you are buying big items and a friend to help you load heavy items. Auction staff generally isn't able to assist with loading heavy items. Plan to be successful and bring the right vehicle to tote your winnings home!

Don't wait until the last minute to bid – a live auction isn't like an online auction where you can sneak in during the final seconds to buy the item. Frequently, if you wait for the "last call" to bid for the first time, your bid will be missed. Also, many auctioneers do not offer a "last call" they simply sell out when the bidding has stopped. Especially if the bidding has been taking place between two people and one bows out.

Olsen has some additional advice about auction staff and bidding:

"Don't be intimidated by the auctioneer or his ring leaders. They like you because you came to the auction and they really like you if you bid or say yes! If it is your first time and you are afraid to bid or you cannot understand them, let the ring leaders know. They will help you.

Pay attention to what is going on if you are interested in bidding and listen, listen, listen. Keep focused on the auction. Don't visit with people if you are bidding. Some auctioneers go faster than others. If they know you are interested in bidding, they will help you along.

If you want to quit bidding, just tell them "No" or shake your head no. Some ring leaders will work you and try to get you to bid. If you do not want to bid, stay firm and tell them "no." You do not have to explain why or say anything but "no" and don't feel bad about it. They really don't care why you are saying "no." Relax and have fun trying to win those bids on what you really want."

Auctions are fun, relax and have a good time – this is a much better way to shop than

pushing a cart up and down the items at a discount store; and it is much more entertaining than running up and down the highways hitting garage sales and consignment shops!

### **A MYTHBUSTER...**

We hear people all the time say “I didn’t come to the sale because I knew there would be a bunch of dealers there and so I wouldn’t get anything bought.” Hearing this makes me chuckle, I just don’t get it.

If I was a buyer I would LOOK for an auction where there would be only dealers and no collectors. As an auction service, seeing only dealers in the audience would be enough to make our hearts sink. Don’t get me wrong, we love our antique dealers, the pickers, and the “junk guys” – but they have to buy items cheap enough to RESELL (to the people that missed the auction, haha).

Olsen (remember, she is a dealer) confirms this, “Remember, there are basically two kind of buyers at the auction. (1) Dealers that are buying to resell and (2) those that are collecting for themselves. Just remember, dealers cannot bid as high as collectors can. Don't be scared to bid against them. The best way to bid is to just hold your number up. Have a price in mind of how much you are willing to pay for the item(s) and go for it. You will not get what you want unless you are willing to pay the price! Don't look around at others or who is bidding against you. Keep your eyes and mind focused on the auctioneer.”

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