



# resale

## RULES

### Tips for successful secondhand shopping

by Debbie Roes



Resale shopping is a great way for families to find high-quality, stylish clothes from name brands at much more affordable prices than at standard retail stores. You also can find functional and beautiful household items in such establishments, many of which have never even been used. However, you need to be aware of the pitfalls inherent in buying things secondhand in order to make this type of shopping work for you. Included below are some helpful tips to keep in mind the next time you visit a thrift or consignment store.

#### SHOP WITH A LIST

This tip definitely applies to all shopping, not just resale buying. Consider a parallel — grocery shopping. How many times have you entered a grocery store without a list and ended up leaving with bags full of impulse buys? Well, the same is true for clothing and home goods shopping and the stakes are generally higher. The trendy pieces you snap up often end up unused and your “good deals” can become money down the toilet, as it were.

#### REVIEW YOUR INVENTORY BEFORE SHOPPING

Since “final sale” is the general rule in secondhand shops, if you happen to purchase a virtual duplicate of an item you already own, you’re stuck with it. So before you set out on your next resale “treasure hunt,” take a few moments to review your closets and household inventory and jot down what you’d like to buy. Be as specific as possible when constructing your list. The more you set the stage for what you’re hoping to buy, the less likely you’ll be to purchase items

that will hang in your family’s closets unworn or collect dust on a shelf somewhere.

#### ASK POWERFUL QUESTIONS

Asking yourself whether you want to wear or use something right away helps to gauge whether you actually love the item or if you’re just considering buying it because it’s a “good deal.” This brings me to another powerful question to pose to yourself: “Would I buy this at regular price?” One of the reasons for shopping resale is the opportunity to buy quality pieces at low prices, but remember... It’s only a good deal if you actually use it!

#### SIZES VARY - TRY ON EVERYTHING!

When shopping for secondhand clothing, examine your prospective buys as closely as possible. Sizes vary widely in general and you never can be sure how a “pre-loved” garment was cared for. Hot washing machines and dryers can shrink clothes a full size or more. I recommended trying on a variety of sizes. Vanity sizing and launder



ing variations make it difficult to determine which size will fit best, so don't hesitate to try on a garment that's marked at a size (or even two) smaller or larger than your regular size. When there is no size tag, the resale store personnel have to guess at the size, and their guesses may be off.

If you're shopping for your kids, they should ideally be with you to try things on. Alternatively, you can take along a few pieces that currently fit them for comparison's sake or jot down key measurements and use a tape measure to make an educated guess as to what will fit.

### CLOTHING SWAPS AND SPECIAL EVENTS

In addition to resale stores, there are other ways to acquire quality secondhand items. Many schools and charity organizations host special events for families. A clothing swap also can be a fun occasion to enjoy with family and friends, whether you are the host or just an attendee. Swap parties often are free to attend or entail just a nominal fee, usually to cover event costs or to benefit a local cause.

In addition to organized resale functions, Why not host one yourself? Partner with a few fellow parents with similarly aged children, gather your castoffs together, and swap away. You can even get your kids involved. Ask each child to go through their closet and select five to 10 items that are no longer being worn to exchange for "new" pieces they'll be excited to wear. This is a great thing to do for back to school or at the start of a new season. At the end, each family member will have some exciting "new to them" clothes to wear — free of charge.

### DON'T SETTLE!

When resale shopping or at a swap event, if you decide you'd like to acquire a particular item, be sure to check it over to

make sure the material is intact and there aren't any potentially stubborn stains anywhere. While some flaws can certainly be mended, you'll have to decide if the time and money required to make such fixes will be worth it to you.

I have one final tip to offer: never settle! I've often suggested that everything you buy — or keep — should be at least an 8 on a scale of one to 10. Resale buys are no exception! You should still love the things you purchase at thrift and consignment stores. Who cares if something only costs \$5? You shouldn't buy it if it's just "okay." If you find yourself thinking, "This will do," walk away!

*Debbie Roes is a freelance writer and editor, and the author of "UnShopping: Recovery Solutions from an Ex-Shopaholic" and "End Closet Chaos: Wardrobe Solutions from an Ex-Shopaholic."*



Kick off your resale shopping! Go to [NortheastOhioParent.com](http://NortheastOhioParent.com) for a list of area resale events and resale, consignment and thrift stores!



Serving Summit, Portage, Medina, Ashland & Richland Counties



Community



Donations



Retail Stores



Job Training



DONATE STUFF.  
CREATE JOBS.



Outlet Store  
Goodwill



Recycle

**When you shop and donate to Goodwill, you are helping people in our community find jobs.**

**Offering in the area:**

- Retail Stores and Donation Centers
- Outlet Store in Akron
- Boutiques in Akron and Kent
- Home Pickup Service
- Vehicle Donations
- Dell Reconnect Computer Equipment Recycling

For more information, visit [www.goodwillakron.org](http://www.goodwillakron.org) or call 1-800-989-8428.



### Our Favorite Brands:

levi strauss, abercrombie & fitch, aeropostale, american eagle, bke, charlotte russe, forever 21, gap, guess, h&m, hollister, miss me, nike, north face, pink by vs, reebok, steve madden, true religion & many more!

**MENTOR**  
7689 Mentor Ave  
440-602-9790

**North Olmsted**  
4608 Great Northern  
440-801-9088

**HOURS**  
Mon-Sat 10am-8pm  
Sun 12pm-6pm

[Platoscloset.com](http://Platoscloset.com)





WE BUY & SELL  
GENTLY WORN  
TEEN FASHIONS

Facebook, Instagram, Twitter icons

Discover, Visa, American Express logos



## CLOTHES MENTOR

RESALE DONE RIGHT



**STRONGSVILLE**  
15143 Pearl Rd.  
440-238-8300

**NORTH OLMSTED**  
25373 Lorain Rd.  
440-617-6013

**MAYFIELD HTS.**  
6145 Mayfield Rd.  
440-646-9640

**HOURS**  
Mon-Sat: 10 am - 8 pm  
Sun: 12 pm - 6 pm

[Clothesmentor.com](http://Clothesmentor.com)



get *More* for your Closet



A store for ALL women - sizes 0-16, 1x, 2x, 3x & Maternity.  
We buy and sell brand name, gently used, in-style fashions EVERYDAY