

1
UNOPENED BOXES
Start Here

2
INTAKE TABLE
Check
Condition
Quick S

4
RESEARCH ONLY
When in Doubt,
Look It Up

5
PHOTO STATION
Clean Background
Good Light
Measure
Take Photos

6
ONLINE-READY
Photos Done
Details Written
Priced & Listed

3
SORTING / TRIAGE
Keep / Sell Online
Bundle / Local Sale
Donate / Discard
Research

7
LOCAL SALE / BUNDLE
Group Similar Items
Price as Bundle
Move to Porch

8
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Damage
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Estate Sale Visual Setup Guide

A practical customer playbook for turning boxes, clutter, furniture, and overwhelm into a clear one-box-at-a-time workflow.

CUSTOMER EDITION

PHOTO-BASED GUIDE

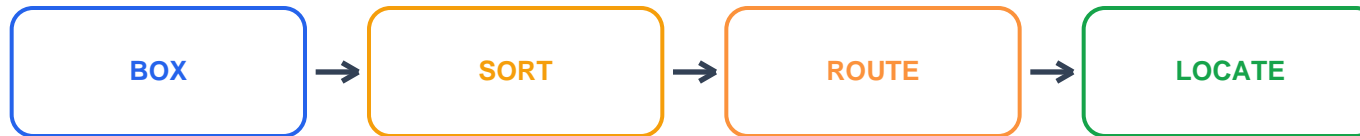
WAY FLOW

Photorealistic setup examples are used as teaching visuals.



You do not need to organize everything first.

The entire system is built to reduce overwhelm. Create one controlled process, then let that process slowly eat the chaos.



The rule: every item gets one clear next destination before you touch the next item.

1 1. One box at a time

Opening six boxes creates six piles.
Open one box, process it, then move to the next one.

2 2. No maybe piles

Maybe piles are delayed chaos. If uncertain, route the item to a dedicated Research bin.

3 3. Confirm location

Before the next item, know exactly where the current item lives: bin, shelf, table, or pickup zone.

Use this guide as a setup manual, helper-training tool, and customer handout. Pick the tier that matches the space available today - not the space you wish you had.

Three setup levels for three real-world spaces

The ideal room is useful, but the crowded garage and micro setup are often the more realistic starting points.

1 Tier 1 - Ideal Setup

Use when: you have a mostly clear garage, workshop, basement, or dedicated room.

Best for: multi-day sales, multiple helpers, and serious online listing.

2 Tier 2 - Crowded Garage

Use when: the garage is full but you can clear a walking lane and one table.

Best for: most families, yard sales, and weekend sorting.

3 Tier 3 - Emergency Micro

Use when: you only have a corner, small table, or storage-room pocket.

Best for: apartments, storage units, or overwhelmed starts.

Tier	Space needed	Core setup	Main benefit
1 - Ideal	Full room / clear garage	Dedicated tables, shelves, photo station	Fastest and easiest for helpers
2 - Crowded	One lane + one table	Processing island + portable bins	Realistic when the garage is packed
3 - Micro	One corner	Small table + labeled bins	Removes the excuse to wait

Guidance: choose the tier that lets you start within 15 minutes. Upgrade later if the space improves.



Photorealistic concept example: a fully dedicated processing room.

Tier 1 is the full production-line version.

- Best when you can dedicate most of a garage or room.
- Each job has its own physical zone.
- Helpers can understand the workflow without asking questions.
- Photo station and online-ready shelving stay separate.

Customer promise

This setup makes the next step obvious. It reduces double-handling, lost items, and mystery piles.

Best operating rule

Small items move through the tables. Large furniture is tagged in place and moved only once.



Overhead concept example: clear one-way flow with dedicated stations.

Build it in this order

- Place unopened boxes near the entry.
- Set intake table before the main table.
- Put sorting / triage in the center.
- Put research shelf away from the main flow.
- Place photo station after sorting.
- Put online-ready shelving near photo station.
- Keep local sale, donate, and discard clearly separate.

Tier 1 works because every zone is visible.

Use clear signs, floor tape, and shelves to keep people from inventing new piles.

Unopened Boxes

Stack and number boxes before opening.

Intake Table

Open one box and keep box ID attached.

Sorting / Triage

Main decision table. Every item routes out.

Research Only

Unclear value, maker marks, authenticity, era.

Photo Station

Photos, measurements, condition details.

Online-Ready

Photoed, labeled, measured, location confirmed.

Local Sale / Bundle

Low-value or bulky items grouped locally.

Donate / Discard

Final exits. Do not re-sort trash.

When to choose Tier 1: choose this setup when you expect multiple processing days, several helpers, online listings, furniture pickup, and local sale staging. It requires the most space but creates the least confusion.



Photorealistic concept example: a crowded but workable garage lane.

Tier 2 is the realistic family-garage setup.

- Do not clear the whole garage first.
- Create one table-based processing pocket.
- Keep one walking lane open at all times.
- Use portable bins instead of dedicated zones.
- Finished items move to stacked totes or shelves.

The emotional win

Users can start even when the garage still looks messy. The system creates progress without demanding perfection.

Minimum rule

One folding table, five bins, and one walking lane are enough to begin.



Overhead concept example: the processing lane is more important than the full room.

Build it in this order

- Mark a walking lane first.
- Put one folding table beside the lane.
- Place routing bins under or in front of table.
- Mark finished online and finished local sale storage.
- Keep unopened boxes outside the walking lane.
- Tag furniture where it already sits.
- Do not open another box until the current box is routed.



A realistic processing pocket carved into a full garage.

Minimum viable processing lane

Tier 2 works when users stop trying to clean the entire garage and instead build one small island of control. The garage can still be full. The table and routing bins must stay clean.



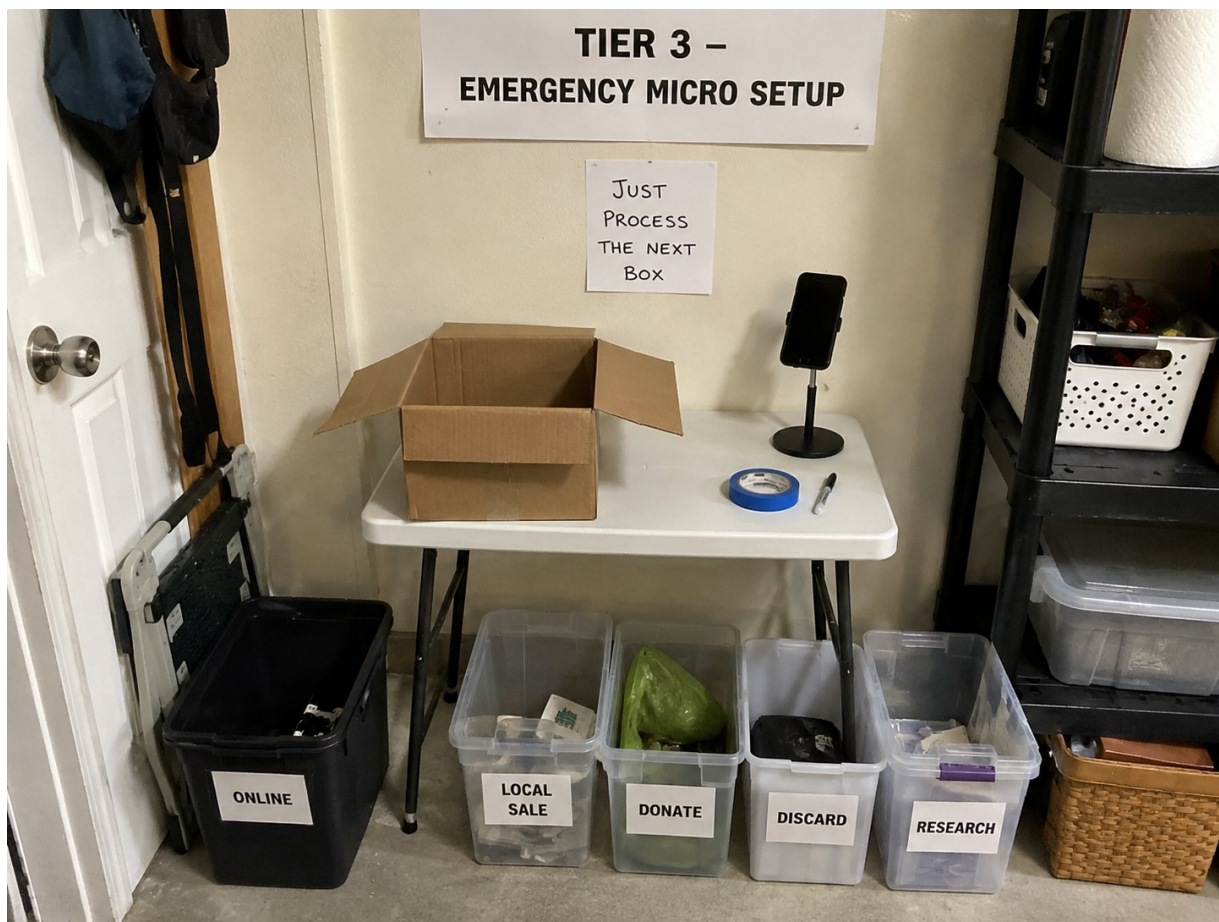
Do this

- Clear lane.
- Set table.
- Label bins.
- Pull one box.
- Route all items.

Do not do this

- Open 5 boxes.
- Make maybe piles.
- Move furniture twice.
- Block the lane.
- Mix finished items.

Customer wording: You do not need a perfect room. You need one repeatable movement pattern.



Photorealistic concept example: the smallest useful setup.

Tier 3 exists for the overwhelmed user.

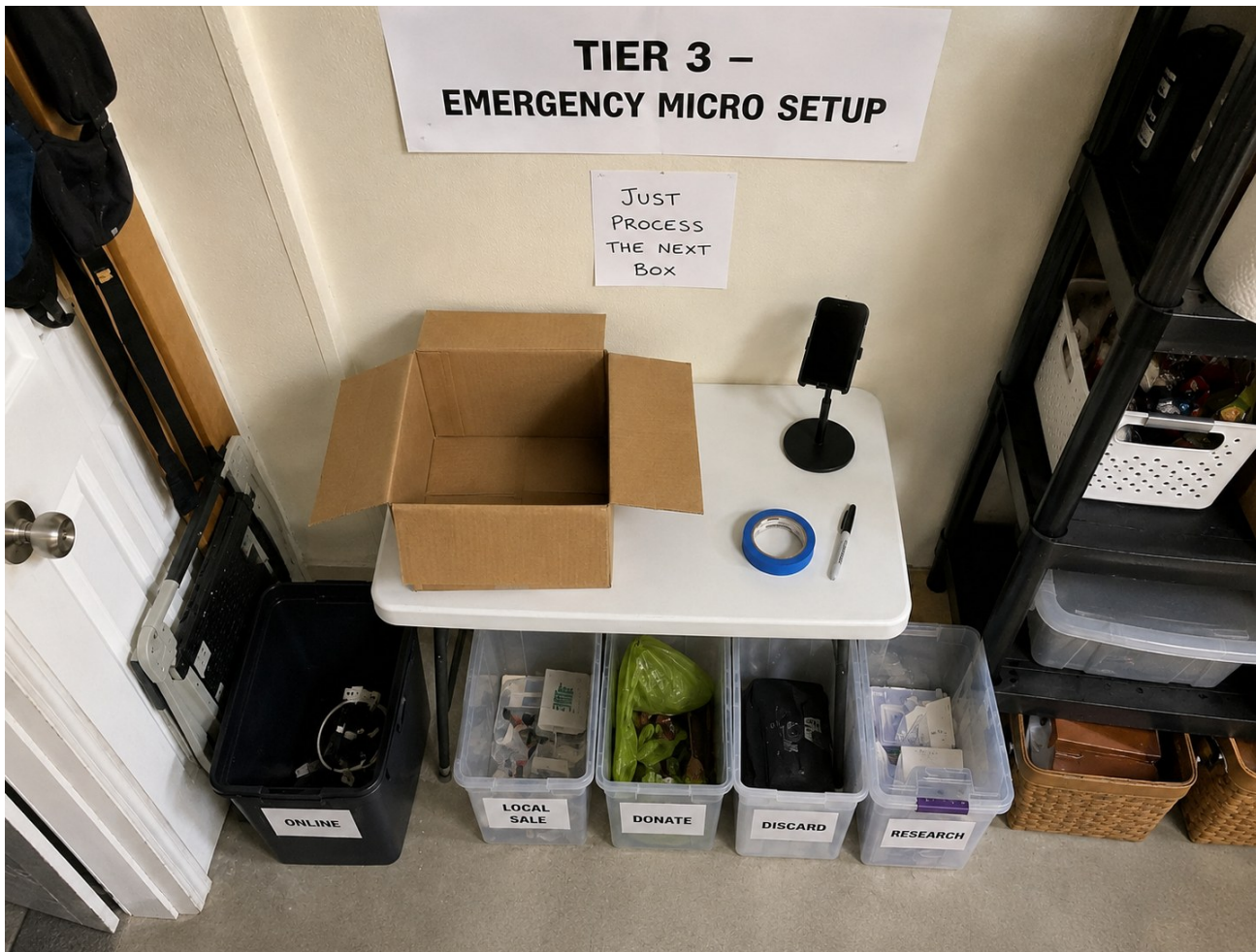
- Use a corner, hallway, utility room, or storage-unit edge.
- One small table or board is enough.
- Small bins or bags replace full zones.
- Phone stand can double as photo station.
- The goal is not speed - the goal is starting.

Core message

Just process the next box. That is the entire win for a micro setup.

Best for

Apartments, storage units, older users, emotional cleanouts, or when the garage is completely packed.



Overhead concept example: the micro station shows all destinations at once.

Build it in this order

- Pick one small corner.
- Place one surface: folding table, board, or tote lid.
- Put one open box on the surface.
- Set phone stand for quick photos.
- Place five labeled bins or bags.
- Process small items only.
- Handle furniture separately with tags.

This setup is not smaller because it is worse.

It is smaller because the user needs a version that can start immediately.

What to process here

- Small household goods
- Books and media
- Kitchen items
- Small decor
- Jewelry/accessories
- Paperwork that needs review

What not to process here

- Furniture
- Large appliances
- Heavy tool chests
- Bulky fragile lamps
- Anything blocking safety exits

What it must include

- Open box spot
- Routing bins
- Tape and marker
- Phone/camera
- A written next-box rule

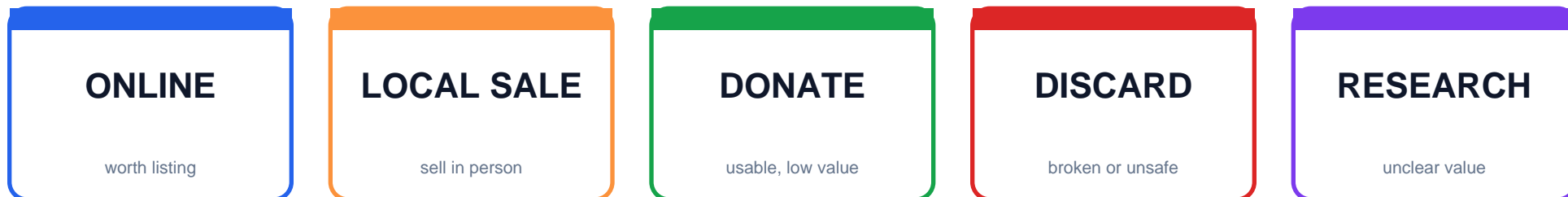
Micro workflow:



Important: Do not let the micro setup become storage. At the end of each session, remove filled donate/discard bags and move finished online/local sale items to their assigned location.

Every item needs a named destination.

These five routing bins are the heart of Tier 2 and Tier 3. They also work inside Tier 1.



Fast decision tree

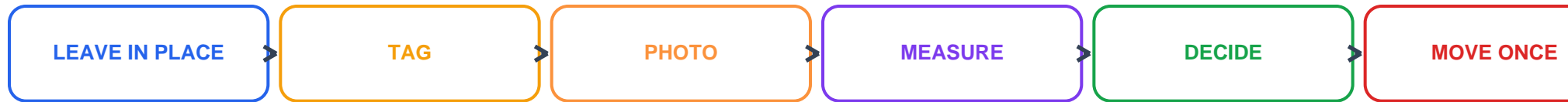
- **Broken, unsafe, incomplete, moldy, or expired?** Route to: DISCARD
- **Usable but low-value or common?** Route to: LOCAL SALE or DONATE
- **Could sell online above the minimum threshold?** Route to: PHOTO + ONLINE
- **Unclear brand, era, maker, rarity, or authenticity?** Route to: RESEARCH

The anti-chaos rule

If an item does not have a destination, it is not processed yet. Do not let it sit on the table while you open another box.

Furniture does not go through the table workflow.

Large items should be tagged, photographed, measured, and decided where they already sit. Move them only when they have a destination.



Furniture rule

Do not move a dresser, couch, cabinet, or desk just because it is in the way. First tag it, photo it, measure it, and assign a destination.

Move only when

- Buyer is picking up
- Donation pickup is scheduled
- Disposal is scheduled
- It blocks the walking lane
- It creates a safety problem

Common mistake

Moving furniture from pile to pile wastes energy and space. Treat furniture as its own inventory class.

Customer wording: Small items move through the station. Furniture stays parked and gets tagged in place.

Use visible tags instead of moving furniture.

Painter's tape, sticky notes, or printed tags are enough. The goal is that anyone can walk through the space and understand the status.

Tag color	Meaning	Action
Green	Sell online / marketplace	Photo, measure, list, keep accessible
Orange	Local sale	Stage only if space allows; otherwise tag in place
Yellow	Research	Look up maker, era, material, or comparable prices
Blue	Keep / family review	Do not sell until owner approves
Gray	Donate	Schedule pickup or load-out
Red	Dispose / haul away	Remove when safe or schedule junk pickup

Furniture quick record

Furniture ID

F-001

Item

Wood dresser

Location

Back wall of garage

Decision

Sell locally

Price

\$75

Measurements

48 W x 20 D x 34 H

Condition

Scratches on top; drawer 2 sticks

Photos taken

Yes

Needs help moving

Yes

Photos are part of routing, not an afterthought.

If an item might be listed online, capture enough visual proof before it disappears into a shelf or tote.

Minimum photos

- Main front view
- Back or alternate side
- Label / maker mark / tag
- Condition issue
- Measurement or scale if useful

Furniture photos

- Front, side, and back
- Open drawers or cabinets
- Close-ups of damage
- Maker mark if visible
- One photo showing scale

Listing notes

- Item ID
- Bin or shelf location
- Measurements
- Condition
- Brand / model
- Unverified claims flagged

High-friction mistakes to avoid

- Do not list furniture without measurements.
- Do not claim "antique," "rare," "authentic," or "designer" unless verified.
- Do not move an online item to storage without recording its location.
- Do not photograph items on cluttered backgrounds when a simple backdrop is available.



Do the work in passes.

Trying to sort, research, photograph, price, and list every item at the same time slows the whole operation down.

1 Pass 1 - Triage and Route

- Open one box
- Remove obvious trash
- Route every item
- Set aside research items
- Stage local sale items
- Do not deep research yet

2 Pass 2 - Research and Prep

- Check brand, maker, era, model
- Clean lightly
- Find missing parts
- Measure items
- Take stronger photos
- Approve online candidates

3 Pass 3 - Draft and Review

- Create listing drafts
- Add photos and measurements
- Add condition notes
- Flag uncertain claims
- Review before publishing
- Confirm physical location

Session close-down: empty discard, box donation items, move finished online items to their shelf/tote, clear the sorting surface, and write the next starting box number.

15 min

setup + clear table

45 min

one focused box run

15 min

close-down + reset

Start with the smallest kit that gets the work moving.

The best supply list is the one users can actually assemble before they lose momentum.

Supply	Tier 1 - Ideal	Tier 2 - Crowded	Tier 3 - Micro
Work surface	2-4 folding tables	1 folding table	Small table, board, or tote lid
Routing	Dedicated zones + bins	5 portable bins	5 small bins or bags
Storage	Shelving for online-ready	Stacked finished totes	One finished tote or shelf spot
Photos	Backdrop + lights + tripod	Phone stand + simple backdrop	Phone stand + clean tabletop
Labels	Printer labels + tape	Painter's tape + paper labels	Tape + marker labels
Furniture	Furniture wall / pickup zone	Tag in place	Tag separately, do not process here
Must-have rule	Dedicated one-way flow	Walking lane stays clear	Just process the next box

Recommendation: for most customers, sell Tier 2 as the default. Tier 1 is aspirational; Tier 3 is the emergency start.

Process one sample box end-to-end.

This reveals layout problems before the entire garage is opened up.

Test box steps

- Label the box.
- Open it at intake or the sorting station.
- Remove obvious trash.
- Route every item to a named destination.
- Photograph one online candidate.
- Move that item to online-ready.
- Put at least one item into local sale if appropriate.
- Confirm every item has a physical location.
- Clear the table before opening the next box.

After the test, ask

- Was any zone too far away?
- Did items pile up anywhere?
- Was the walking lane blocked?
- Did the photo area work?
- Did helpers understand the routing choices?
- Did any maybe pile appear?
- Were furniture items tagged instead of moved?
- Can the next box start cleanly?

Pass condition: the test is successful when the table is clear, every item has a location, and the next box can start without cleaning up the previous one.

Use visible signs before the system gets complicated.

Even handwritten labels work. The point is that every destination is visible from the table.

UNOPENED BOXES

Start here

INTAKE TABLE

Open one box

SORTING / TRIAGE

Every item routes out

RESEARCH ONLY

Unclear value

PHOTO STATION

Photo + measure

ONLINE-READY

Ready for review

LOCAL SALE

Bundle or table

DONATE

Usable, low value

DISCARD

Broken or unsafe

FURNITURE: TAG IN PLACE

Move once

PICKUP READY

Buyer or donation

WALKING LANE

Keep clear

The simple operating script

Tape this page near the sorting table so helpers do not need constant direction.

1. Start

Pull one box into the processing area.
Do not open another box yet.

2. Sort

Pick up one item at a time. Decide its
next destination.

3. Route

Move item into Online, Local Sale,
Donate, Discard, or Research.

4. Record

For online or furniture items, capture
photo, measurement, condition, and
location.

5. Reset

When the box is done, clear the table
and move filled bins to their final place.

6. Repeat

Only then pull the next box. Progress
comes from repeating the same small
system.

**Final phrase to remember: One box. One item. One
decision. One destination.**

Make the next step obvious.

The best setup is not the prettiest setup. It is the one that helps a real person process the next box without creating another pile.

Do not clear the whole garage first.

Create one processing lane.

Furniture stays tagged in place.

No maybe piles.

Based on the estate sale setup playbook: intake table, sorting/triage, research, photo station, online-ready, local sale, donate, discard, and one-box-at-a-time processing.

Photorealistic images are conceptual examples for customer education.