

Step by Step Guide to Buying at Auction

If you're new to auctions, there's nothing to fear. This step by step guide will show you just how easy it is to find, scout and participate in a live auction in you.

1. Find an auction

Use our auction locator to find an auction nearby. You can even search for a specific type of auction, if you're just looking for antiques, dolls etc.

2. Preview the auction

Many auctions let you preview what is going on the auction block a few days—or even weeks—in advance. Once you've located the auction you want to attend, call the auctioneer or auction house to see if they will have a preview date.

3. Arrive early

On the day of the auction, try and get there early enough to register and get a good seat. It is not only important for you to be able to see the auctioneer, but for the auctioneer to be able to see you.

4. Inspect

Carefully inspect any items you're interested in. Are they damaged? Do you see other people looking at the same items? How much competition does it look like you're up against?

5. Set a price

What are you willing to bid? You should have a number in mind, so you don't go way over your budget in the heat of the moment. Don't forget to include your total costs, like repairs, decorations, fees, and delivery charges. Use the bidder's package you were given—if you were given one—at registration.

6. Bid

Have fun! Carefully follow the auction and get a feel for who you're bidding against. And remember, the maximum bid you're willing to make is just that; a maximum. Don't jump to that number unless it's necessary. You might very well get the item you want for much less.



7. Pay

If you win, find the Bookkeeper or Clerk and take care of your bill. You can also arrange for delivery at this time.

8. Enjoy

You just had fun and got a great deal. Now enjoy your new item(s)!

Source: National Auctioneer's Association