

# Tips for Sellers

## for the Auction of Spinning and Weaving Equipment

Keep in mind that there will be roughly 200 lots that need to be sold in 180 minutes. Here are some things you can do to help keep the auction running smoothly and enable your item to command its best price during its brief moment in the spotlight.

- 1. Pre-register online.** Fill out the [online form](#) to include your item(s) in the online catalog. In addition to promoting your item on the MSWF website, registering will streamline the consignment process.

An added incentive for pre-registering: If you pre-register **before April 15**, you will receive free Festival admission for Saturday! (Check-in at the white Volunteer Check-In and Will Call tent just outside the main entrance.) So keep an eye on the website: We expect the consignor form to go live by March 15, 2026.

Save your confirmation email: You can reuse what you wrote for the *title* and *description* of your lot. Read on.

- 2. Label it.** Attach a label, such as a half-sheet of typing paper or a 4 x 6" index card to your item. Write or print in large type (18-20 pt)--big enough that buyers and auctioneers can read it without needing eyeglasses. Let buyers know what your item is—which is probably the title you wrote on the consignment form. For example:

“36 inch 12 dent stainless steel reed” or  
“Main bed carriage for Brother KH230 Knitting Machine” or  
“Toika ‘Ulla’ Spinning Wheel with accessories”

You may also want to include a couple of bullet points on your label to call out one or two important features. For example, if you know the provenance of great-grandma’s spinning wheel, put a “Documented Provenance” bullet point on the label. If your modern spinning wheel was made by Rick Reeves, or your loom was owned by Anni Albers, call that out on the label. This sort of information can stimulate spirited bidding.

Additional information—such as the detailed provenance of great-grandma’s spinning wheel, a full list of included accessories, instructions, or a website with additional information—can also be attached to the item so that buyers can learn more about it during the auction preview and buy-it-now.

Fiber supplies (yarn, roving, fabric); books, magazines, and patterns; and household items are accepted **ONLY** if they are part of a well-thought-out fiber-equipment package. For example: A loom with a practice warp on it may be accompanied by a supply of weft, a manual, and a few weaving books. A spinning wheel may be accompanied by some roving and books. And while a huge stainless-steel pot, a blender, a camp stove, a drying rack,

mesh bags, measuring cups and spoons, a zipper bag of onion skins, two pre-mordanted skeins, and six books on dyeing would all be rejected individually, they might be accepted together as components of a "dyeing package."

Please note that the Auction Committee reserves the right to reject any item for any reason. For example: A large box of miscellaneous yarn will be rejected even if you label it as a "freeform crochet kit" (even if you include an afghan hook), and we're probably also not going to buy the story about the garbage bag stuffed with odds and ends of fleece and roving being a "beginning felting kit."

The Auction Committee may also at its discretion group a seller's items into larger lots. For example, the first set of 3 or 4 matching bobbins will be grouped with the spinning wheel.

3. **Clean it up.** Please take a few minutes to wipe off dust and dirt. Cleaning wooden tools with a mild soap like Murphy's Oil Soap will make them shine.
4. **Bundle them up.** Bundling items into one lot makes a more attractive package. Keep the bobbins, matching lazy kate, and other accessories with the spinning wheel; keep the reeds and shuttles with the loom. If you have lots of interesting miscellaneous items, sort them into treasure boxes for different crafts: spinning, weaving, knitting, quilting. There is not a lot of time in the auction, so to be fair to other sellers, buyers, and the viewing public, if you don't group your items appropriately, the auction staff reserves the right to do so.
5. **Set it up.** Consider putting a short demo warp on card and inkle looms or partially-woven squares on pin looms and include some weft or instructions on how to complete the sample project. Help potential buyers see what they can create. In the past, set-up looms or "kits" have commanded substantially higher prices.
6. **Drop it off early.** We have been forced to concede that it is no longer possible to take consignments while the festival is in progress. Consignments will be accepted on **Friday from 9 to 5 only**.

Lots are auctioned in pre-assigned numerical order. Items that arrive earlier at the auction tent will receive lower numbers than ones that arrive later. (The Auction Committee reserves the right to move items a little bit forward or back in the queue to keep the auction interesting and varied, so lots may not be numbered in strict order of receipt.) Historically, items that appear earlier in the auction have commanded better prices than ones that appear later.

Please contact the auction committee at [auction.mswf@gmail.com](mailto:auction.mswf@gmail.com) if you need to make special arrangements for dropping off your consignments. We cannot guarantee that we will be able to accommodate requests to accept consignments outside of the specified hours, but we are willing to brainstorm with you to think through the situation and see if there is anything that you or we can do to make it work.

7. **Price it.** Sellers can opt to mark their items with a “**buy-it-now price.**” This is the price at which you will happily sell your item and forego the uncertainty of an auction. Although an item may sell for *more* than you expect when it is auctioned, it may also sell for *less* than you hope—sometimes much less.

A buy-it-now price is **not** the same as a **reserve price.** A reserve price is the absolute minimum you will accept for an item you are having auctioned; you are content to pay a fee (10% of the reserve price) and take your item home if it does not sell.

## Additional Information for Sellers

- We *strongly* recommend filling out the online consignment form from the comfort of your own home or your local library, rather than waiting until the day you drop off your items, or you may find yourself waiting in line to use *our* computer to fill out your forms, searching for an auction-committee member who can take dictation to help enter your information, or hanging around filling out the form on your phone.
  - Tip: If you’ve set your phone or other device to auto-fill forms, all your seller information can be loaded automatically.
- Uploading a photo requires a Google account (which is free).
  - We apologize, but we’re a volunteer-run not-for-profit on a tight budget, and so are limited in the tools we can use. If you have expertise to lend to make this year’s registration better, please volunteer!
- If you change your mind about consigning an item to the auction, just let us know, and we’ll remove it from the catalog.
- The fee for a reserve-price auction is payable when you pick up your unsold lot after the auction. This fee applies *only* if the lot did not meet the reserve price you set. All items sold at the auction (or during the buy-it-now period) are subject to a 20% commission.