

10 of the best... cushions

By Lynsey Fox



Mad about the boy, £55, Graham and Green



Horrockses fashionista silk, £25, BHS



Oriental bird print, £35, Marks & Spencer



London market, £25.60, Ben de Lisi @ Debenhams



Dog portrait, £45, John Lewis



Japanese print, £25, Habitat



Typewriter, £20, BHS



French wine label, £12, Next



Car print, £19.50, Marks & Spencer



Vintage sign, £8, Matalan

# Cash in on your clutter

SHORT OF MONEY? THERE'S NO PLACE LIKE HOME FOR GENERATING AN UNEXPECTED WINTER WINDFALL



**When money's tight, an extra pound or two goes a long way. So if your cupboards are bulging, your loft is heaving and your garden shed is bursting, you may be sitting on a fortune.**

According to research by Gumtree, we're a nation of hoarders with one in five households collecting enough unwanted items to fill the average bathroom.

But with just a little elbow grease and motivation you could quickly transform a hoard of clothes, DVDs, shoes, toys and electrical goods into a financial reward.

"The majority of UK households underestimate the value of their unwanted items," says declutter expert and The Life Laundry presenter Jamie Breese. "People don't realise how much value is sitting in their cupboards and under their beds. I'd urge everyone to think about turning their clutter into cash."

## How to get started

Give yourself a whole weekend to sort through your clutter. Go from room to room and target the places where you dump things, such as cupboards or under beds.

Gather the clothes you haven't worn in over a year, gadgets and gizmos you'll never use and anything you have too many duplicates of. Then sort them into piles of similar items.

If you're being indecisive, rope in a straight-talking friend and ask yourself if you need each item. If you've had it hidden away for ages, chances are you don't need it.

## Be boot sale savvy

Car boot sales run all over the country at the

weekends and are a perfect way to sell those odds and sods you've had lingering in your loft. Everything will sell if it is cheap enough so be prepared to drop your prices.

Hot sellers include posh cosmetics (even if they're slightly used), perfume bottles (even half full), vinyl singles and LPs, clothing, jewellery and accessories, electronics, antiques, crafts and toys.

Don't be scared to tell overeager buyers who pounce on your car the minute you arrive to come back later or form a queue. This gives you a chance to set up properly without getting in a panic.

Don't forget to present your goods nicely. People are more likely to buy clothes displayed well on a rail than dumped in heaps on the table. Likewise jewellery laid out nicely rather than tangled in a box will catch the eyes of passers-by.

## Clutter flutter

Try [www.musicMagpie.co.uk](http://www.musicMagpie.co.uk) where you can sell all kinds of unwanted items from around the home. A chart album could get you anything from 30p to £3, while a DVD of Harry Potter and the Deathly Hallows: Part 1 is worth £2.25. Call of Duty: Black Ops will earn you around £15.

A pair of quality hair straighteners could bag you £12. Customers can receive instant quotes on the website and iPhone and Android users can download the free app and scan in products to make cash quickly.

## Cash in the attic

As we feel the pinch, more of us are buying second-hand goodies. So it is well worth listing all those bits and bobs from the attic and unwanted furniture on websites such as eBay and

Gumtree. See how much other sellers have listed their items for to help guide you with prices and if you want a quick sale, offer a lower price.

Always be honest about the quality of your goods. If there's a scratch on your bedside table, let potential buyers know - that way you'll avoid dramas after the sale.

## From fabric to finance

Unwanted clothes that are in good condition and have a high-street name or even designer label can easily earn you money online.

Take advantage of eBay's zero insertion fee weekends, making sure you include the size and make in the ad title to spark buyers' interest.

For posher items, try the online market [www.buymywardrobe.com](http://www.buymywardrobe.com) where the right quality frock, bag or pair of shoes from the likes of Karen Millen, Reiss, French Connection, LK Bennett and Monsoon could score you £40 or more.

## Book amnesty

If your home is fast becoming a public library then it is time to get rid of everything you won't read again. Books will sell at a car boot sale if they're cheap enough so try offering three for a pound to get people interested.

Website [zapper.co.uk](http://zapper.co.uk) will also pay on average £1 for selected books. Users simply enter barcodes of their items for instant cash valuations.

Items are then sent to Zapper via Freepost and once received a cheque is dispatched within seven days. Zapper also buys CDs, DVDs and games and will be launching an iPhone app in 2013.

## Gadgets galore

Clean up your old digital camera or laptop and check websites such as [www.cashinyourgadgets.co.uk](http://www.cashinyourgadgets.co.uk) to see what you can get for them.

The most popular products to be cashed in are the BlackBerry 8520 for around £40, the iPhone4 for around £146. An iPad 2 64GB with 3G Wi-Fi could even net you £215.

By Charlotte Ward

Give yourself a weekend to go through everything

## JAMIE BREESE'S TOP TIPS

● **Don't be sentimental:** You shouldn't feel guilty about selling old gifts you don't want.

● **Sell things with the instruction manual:** This will add value, especially on gadgets and kitchen appliances.

● **Sell lower-value items as a job lot:** Rather than selling dozens of items individually, group them together for convenience. For example, kitchen appliances such as toasters, kettles and sandwich makers could sell well together online as it would save someone the trouble of having to bid for all three separately. It also means less hassle for you as you only have to sell once.

● **Sell things in season:** People are likely to be more interested in buying a sunlounger or a barbecue at the start of summer than in the middle of winter.

● **Look for first editions or rare albums:** If you have a book with a dust jacket or a first edition, then it could sell for a lot of money.

● **Consider how old the item is:** A mobile phone that was worth £300 new may only be worth £30 now as technology moves so quickly. As a general rule, the newer the item, the higher the proportion of its original value you can ask for.

● **Have an open mind:** Just because you don't want an item any more, don't assume no one else will be interested in it. One person's cast-off can be another person's treasure.

