



A FREE GUIDE FOR HOMEOWNERS, DOWNSIZERS AND EXECUTORS

The Contents Value Guide.

What a house full of contents is actually worth in the Southern Highlands, what fetches real money, what does not anymore, and the room by room checklist.

Almost every family is wrong about what the contents are worth, in both directions. The shed usually outsells the lounge room. This guide is the straight version of that conversation.

THE HONEST ANSWER

Almost everyone is wrong about what it is worth. In both directions.

When we walk through a Southern Highlands home that has not been cleared in twenty or thirty years, the family asks the same question: what is all this actually worth? The items families expect to be valuable often are not. The items they were about to put in a skip often are.

This guide is the straight version of the conversation we have on every walk through. It will disappoint you about one room and surprise you about another.

**\$150 to
\$400**

What a solid mahogany dining table that cost \$4,000 in 1988 typically fetches today

5x

The difference the right selling channel can make on a genuine antique or collection

**\$3,000 to
\$12,000**

Sellable contents in a typical long held three or four bedroom Highlands home

The hard truth about brown furniture

The dining suite that cost a fortune in 1988. The china cabinet. The wall unit. The market for what the trade calls brown furniture has fallen a long way over twenty years. Younger buyers furnish differently, homes are styled lighter and there is far more of it for sale than there are people who want it. Some pieces are hard to give away. That is the disappointing half of the conversation. The rest of this guide is the other half.



WHERE THE VALUE HIDES

The shed, not the lounge room.

Tools hold value astonishingly well. Quality hand tools, power tools, welders and compressors sell fast and sell well. Ride on mowers, trailers and small machinery are often the most valuable items on the property. A shed that looks like chaos to the family regularly outsells the entire house of furniture.

Genuinely old, genuinely rare

Real antiques, as opposed to old furniture, art worth researching, jewellery, watches, coins and collections built over decades belong in an auction room, not on a lawn. The difference between the right selling channel and the wrong one can be a multiple of five or more.

The items nobody suspects

Vinyl records, boxed vintage toys, old advertising signs, cameras, fishing gear, the right vintage of sewing machine and mid century anything. A single item from these categories can pay for a large part of a clearance.

The number is almost never zero, and it is almost never what the family guessed.

THE CHECKLIST

Walk your house with this list.

Tick anything present in the home. Each tick is a category that deserves to be valued before anything is thrown away or given away.

Shed, garage and outdoors

- ☐ Power tools, air tools, welders, compressors, bench equipment
- ☐ Quality hand tools, especially older Australian, English or German makers
- ☐ Ride on mower, trailer, generator, pressure washer, small machinery
- ☐ Fishing, camping, sporting and recreational gear
- ☐ Vintage signs, tins, petrol and farm memorabilia

Living areas and bedrooms

- ☐ Genuine antiques: pre war cabinetry, cedar, oak, marquetry, original condition
- ☐ Mid century furniture: teak, Parker, Chiswell and Danish style pieces
- ☐ Artworks with signatures, prints with editions, older frames
- ☐ Hand knotted rugs, clocks, lamps and mirrors of age
- ☐ Vinyl records, hi fi equipment, cameras, projectors

The small and precious

- ☐ Jewellery, watches, coins, banknotes, stamps, medals and militaria
- ☐ Sterling silver, not silver plate: check for hallmarks
- ☐ Boxed or early toys, dolls, model trains, games
- ☐ China and crystal of known makers: Doulton, Moorcroft, Waterford, Shelley
- ☐ Sewing machines, typewriters, tins and kitchenalia of the right vintage

Expect little for

Ordinary brown furniture, silver plate, mass produced china, encyclopedias and most books, pianos (sadly), exercise equipment more than a few years old and almost anything from a chain store within the last two decades. These are donation candidates, and donating them well is its own small good. The op shops in Bowral, Mittagong and Moss Vale take good furniture and homewares.

WHAT TO DO NEXT

The mistake that costs the most.

It is not underpricing the antiques. It is the skip bin booked in week one. When the clock is ticking toward a settlement or a listing, exhausted families pay someone to take everything away, and the value leaves in the truck with it.

The second most expensive mistake is the opposite one: trying to sell everything personally, item by item, while packing up a life. Most people manage a dozen listings before the deadline wins.

The fix for both is the same. Sort first, sell through the right channels and only then clear what remains. You can do that yourself with time and patience, or we can do the whole thing for you.

Step	What happens	Why the order matters
1. Sort	Walk every room, shed and storage area with the checklist. Set aside anything that ticks a box.	Nothing of value goes in a skip by accident.
2. Sell	Fine pieces and collections to auction partners. Tools, machinery and everyday items through trusted local and online channels.	The right channel for each item, not one channel for everything.
3. Give	Family collect what was promised. Useful items go to local charities.	Items go where they will be used, which is what families say matters most afterwards.
4. Clear	Skips and disposal for what remains, booked last.	The skip arrives after the value has left, not before.

This guide offers general information about typical resale values observed in the Southern Highlands and is not a formal valuation. Individual items should be professionally assessed before sale.



HOW OUR CONTENTS SALE WORKS

One agreement. The whole house.

No upfront fee

We earn a commission only on what actually sells, and nothing on what does not. Our incentive is the same as yours.

An itemised statement

Every item, where it sold and what it fetched, with your payment. Executors can hand it straight to the family or the solicitor.

One agreement

Selling, donating, skips and clearing under one signed page. One dedicated point of contact from the first call to the empty house.

Handled with discretion

Deceased estates, downsizing moves, post settlement handovers and settled separations. Nothing on the lawn, nothing on social media without your say so.

Where your items actually go

There is no single market for a house full of contents. The right channel for a welder is the wrong channel for a Moorcroft vase. We route each item to where it fetches the most, and your statement shows which channel sold it. Skips come last, for what remains. Auction partners and skips invoice at their listed prices and we take no share.

Channel	What goes there	Why
Auction houses and specialist buyers	Genuine antiques, signed art, jewellery, watches, coins, medals, collections and fine pieces.	A room full of people who know what it is. The difference can be a multiple of five or more.
eBay and online marketplaces	Tools, machinery, cameras, hi fi, records, vintage toys, memorabilia and anything collectors search for by name.	Buyers across Australia, not just the Highlands. The right vintage sewing machine finds the one person looking for it.
Direct to local buyers	Furniture that still sells, mowers, trailers, garden equipment and bulky items that do not travel well.	Sold and collected locally within days. No freight, no packing, no waiting.
Local charities	Good useable furniture, homewares, books and clothing that will not sell.	Items go where they will be used, which families tell us matters most afterwards.

NEXT STEPS

Two free ways to find out where your property stands.

Downsize Detail runs estate and contents sales for Southern Highlands families: an honest read on what a home holds, then the selling, the donating and the clearing, with no upfront fee. Start with whichever of these suits you.

FREE · 2 MINUTES · NO OBLIGATION

Get your free property scorecard and personalised report.

Sixteen quick questions about your home and your timeline. You get a score across the five areas that decide what a Highlands home sells for, plus a personalised report on what to fix first.

Go to downsizedetail.com.au and take the Sell For More Scorecard.

FREE · 15 MINUTES · PERSONALISED

Book a free 15 minute personalised video call.

Talk through your property with Downsize Detail and hear what it needs, in what order and roughly what it involves. No forms, no pressure. If it is not for you, you still leave with a plan.

Go to downsizedetail.com.au and book your free 15 minute video call.

Prefer to talk now? Call Downsize Detail on **0434 395 387**.

Bowral, Mittagong, Moss Vale, Robertson and the Southern Highlands.

