

THE GRANDFATHER TOOLKIT

Garage Sale & Estate Sale Shopping Checklist

SeniorBlackoutGuide.com | Franklyns Bay LLC | Crystal River, FL

HOW TO USE THIS SHEET	HOW TO SPOT THE REAL DEAL
Bring this to every garage sale, estate sale, and pawn shop. Check off each tool as you own it. Once a box is checked, skip that tool and move on. The goal: own every tool on this list. Do not buy what you already have. Two checkboxes per tool: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> = I own it <input type="checkbox"/> = I need it	Weight. Good tools are heavier than you expect. Cheap tools are light. Brand name. Stamped into the metal, not a sticker. If you see Craftsman, Estwing, Klein, Channellock, Snap-on, SK, Proto, or Irwin — buy it. Finish. Chrome vanadium steel is bright and even. Cheap steel is dull or bluish. Fit. Good wrench on a bolt: snug, no rocking. Good pliers: smooth pivot, no grinding.

GRIPPING & HOLDING

TOOL	BRANDS TO BUY	LOOK FOR	AVOID
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Own it <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Need it Irwin Vise-Grips — Locking Pliers (5", 7", 10", needle-nose)	IRWIN / VISE-GRIP only. Do not buy off-brand.	Jaw screw turns smoothly. Locking mechanism clicks in and releases cleanly. All four sizes: 5", 7", 10", needle-nose.	<i>Any brand that is not Irwin. Jaw screw stripped or frozen.</i>
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Own it <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Need it Channellock Pliers — Set (6", 9", 12")	CHANNELLOCK (Meadville PA). Also: Knipex.	Groove slides smoothly with no grinding. Jaws parallel when closed. "Channellock" stamped on handle.	<i>No-name import pliers. Groove that sticks, skips, or has slop.</i>
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Own it <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Need it Klein Tools Needle-Nose Pliers — 8"	KLEIN TOOLS (Lincolnshire IL since 1857). Also: Knipex.	Jaws meet evenly, no gap. Pivot joint tight with no side play. "Made in USA" stamped. Built-in wire cutter at base.	<i>Jaws that don't close evenly or are bent. Any grinding in the pivot.</i>
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Own it <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Need it Klein Tools Wire Cutters — 7" medium	KLEIN TOOLS (Lincolnshire IL). Also: Knipex, Channellock.	Cutting edges meet cleanly with zero gap when closed. Pivot tight. "Made in USA" stamped.	<i>Any gap between blades when closed. Nicked or chipped cutting edges.</i>
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Own it <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Need it Spring Clamps — steel, mixed set (1", 1.5", 2")	Irwin, Bessey, Pony. Steel body with rubber jaw tips.	Steel body (not plastic). Rubber tips present and intact. Spring action strong and even on both handles.	<i>All-plastic body. Weak or uneven spring. Missing rubber tips.</i>
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Own it <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Need it C-Clamps — 1", 2", 4" (buy in pairs)	Jorgensen, Wilton, Stanley, Pony. Cast iron or drop-forged only.	Frame heavy and rigid — does not flex under hand pressure. Screw threads clean and smooth. Pad swivels freely.	<i>Lightweight thin frame that flexes. Rough or stripped screw threads.</i>

DRIVING & FASTENING

TOOL	BRANDS TO BUY	LOOK FOR	AVOID
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<p>■ Own it ■ Need it</p>	<p>Craftsman Combination Wrench Set — SAE + Metric</p>	<p>CRAFTSMAN (lifetime guarantee, no receipt). Also: Snap-on, SK, Proto, GearWrench, Mac.</p>	<p>"Craftsman" stamped on handle. "Chrome Vanadium" marked. Box end corners sharp. Open end jaws parallel, not spread.</p>	<p>No brand name. Dull bluish finish. Box end corners already rounded. Open end jaws splayed out.</p>
<p>■ Own it ■ Need it</p>	<p>Socket Set — 3/8" Drive, SAE + Metric, with Ratchet & Breaker Bar</p>	<p>Craftsman, SK, Snap-on, Proto, GearWrench. All lifetime guarantee.</p>	<p>Ratchet clicks cleanly, no slipping in either direction. Socket drive corners sharp. Extensions fit tight. Breaker bar solid.</p>	<p>Ratchet that slips, skips, or feels rough. Socket drive corners already rounded.</p>
<p>■ Own it ■ Need it</p>	<p>Ratchet Screwdriver Set — S2 Steel Bits, Flexible Shaft</p>	<p>Vessel, Wera, Klein, Stanley.</p>	<p>Ratchet clicks cleanly both directions. "S2" marked on bits. Flex shaft bends smoothly without kinking.</p>	<p>Cheap chrome-vanadium bits (not S2). Ratchet with any slipping or wobble in the mechanism.</p>
<p>■ Own it ■ Need it</p>	<p>Full Screwdriver Set — Phillips & Flat, Cushion Grip</p>	<p>Klein, Craftsman, Wiha, Wera, Stanley.</p>	<p>Cushion grip handles intact, not cracked. Bit tips sharp with no rounding or chipping. "Chrome Vanadium" or "CrV" marked.</p>	<p>Hard plastic handles with no cushion layer. Any tip that is rounded, chipped, twisted, or mushroomed.</p>

CORDED POWER TOOLS

	TOOL	BRANDS TO BUY	LOOK FOR	AVOID
<p>■ Own it ■ Need it</p>	<p>Corded Drill/Driver — 1/2" chuck, 7A+, variable speed, reversible</p>	<p>Dewalt, Makita, Porter-Cable, Skil, Black+Decker.</p>	<p>PLUG IN AND TEST: runs smooth forward AND reverse. No grinding or rough sound. Chuck opens/closes evenly. Trigger varies speed.</p>	<p>Any grinding noise in either direction. Chuck that wobbles or sticks. Trigger that does not vary speed.</p>
<p>■ Own it ■ Need it</p>	<p>Corded Impact Driver — 1/4" hex chuck, variable speed, F/R</p>	<p>Dewalt, Makita, Porter-Cable, Bosch, Milwaukee.</p>	<p>PLUG IN AND TEST: impact sound even and consistent. Runs clean both directions. Hex chuck accepts and releases bits smoothly.</p>	<p>Chattering or irregular impact sound. Any direction that feels rough, slow, or intermittent.</p>
<p>■ Own it ■ Need it</p>	<p>Heat Gun — variable temperature, 1500W+</p>	<p>Wagner, Dewalt, Milwaukee, Porter-Cable.</p>	<p>PLUG IN AND TEST: fan runs immediately, heats up in 30 seconds. Both heat settings work. No burning plastic smell.</p>	<p>Only one heat setting. Burning smell when running. Physically damaged nozzle or housing.</p>

STRIKING

	TOOL	BRANDS TO BUY	LOOK FOR	AVOID
<p>■ Own it ■ Need it</p>	<p>Estwing 16oz Claw Hammer — Made in Belleville, IL</p>	<p>ESTWING only for one-piece steel (Belleville IL since 1923).</p>	<p>"Estwing" and "Made in USA" stamped on head. One piece steel head-to-handle. Face: minor pitting OK. Claw tips sharp. Leather grip worn is fine.</p>	<p>Loose head (any movement). Chipped face edge. Claw tips rounded or bent. Any handle-to-head joint.</p>
<p>■ Own it ■ Need it</p>	<p>Estwing Pry Bar — 18" Flat</p>	<p>ESTWING (Belleville IL). Also: Stanley FatMax Wonder Bar.</p>	<p>Tip thin and sharp, not mushroomed or bent. Nail notch clean and open. One-piece forged with no welds or joints.</p>	<p>Mushroomed or bent working tip. Any visible weld or joint. Deep nicks along the prying edge.</p>

MEASURING & MARKING

	TOOL	BRANDS TO BUY	LOOK FOR	AVOID
■ Own it ■ Need it	Tape Measure — 25 ft, auto-lock, 1" blade	Stanley FatMax, Milwaukee, DeWalt, Lufkin.	Blade extends and locks firmly. Hook not bent or loose. Markings clear and readable. Blade retracts smoothly.	<i>Blade that kinks at the first foot. Lock that does not hold. Bent or sloppy hook.</i>
■ Own it ■ Need it	Bubble Level Set — 8", 16", 36"	Empire, Johnson, Stanley, Stabila.	Vials clear, not cloudy. Bubble moves freely and settles promptly. Calibration check: place flat, note bubble, flip end-for-end — same position = accurate.	<i>Cloudy or cracked vials. Bubble that sticks or drifts slowly. Any warping of the body.</i>
■ Own it ■ Need it	Swanson Speed Square — 7"	SWANSON only (Frankfort IL since 1925). Accept no substitute.	"Swanson" marked. All edges straight. Degree markings readable. No bent corners or dings.	<i>Any brand that is not Swanson. Any bent edge or damaged corner.</i>

ADHESIVES & CONSUMABLES

	TOOL	BRANDS TO BUY	LOOK FOR	AVOID
■ Own it ■ Need it	JB Weld SteelStik + KwikWood Epoxy Sticks	JB WELD only (since 1969).	Sealed packaging preferred. Sticks firm throughout — not already hardened inside wrapper.	<i>Any stick that is fully hard throughout the entire length — it has cured and is useless.</i>
■ Own it ■ Need it	Electrical Tape — 3M Scotch 33+ or 88	3M SCOTCH only (33+ or 88).	3M logo and model number visible on roll. Tape unrolls smoothly and stretches without tearing.	<i>Off-brand vinyl tape. Tape already hardened, brittle, or dried out on the roll.</i>

THREE RULES — MEMORIZE THESE

1. If you see the name, buy it. Craftsman, Snap-on, Estwing, Klein, Channellock, Irwin, SK, Proto, Vise-Grip. Whatever they have at whatever price they're asking. It is almost always fair. **2. The guarantee follows the tool, not the buyer.** A \$3 Craftsman wrench at a garage sale is fully covered. Take it to any Ace Hardware or Lowe's. They replace it free. No receipt. No questions. **3. Test before you buy.** Plug in power tools. Operate every mechanism. Put a wrench on a bolt. Close pliers and check the jaw fit. If it passes the test, it is worth buying.