

FREE

Sustainable Shopping Guide

A guide to Second Hand Shopping in the Illawarra.



Inside find

- A handy Directory of Op Shops and Second Hand Stores in the Illawarra

- Hints and tips on finding retro, vintage and pre-loved treasures at op shops, garage sales, and auctions in the Illawarra region.

- Ideas for swap parties and other fun and creative ways to find second hand goods.



sustainable illawarra

www.sustainableillawarra.com.au



This project has been assisted by the New South Wales Government through its NSW Environmental Trust.

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www.sustainableillawarra.com.au or by calling 4227 7435.

The Sustainable Illawarra Project would like to thank Dena Leighton and Alison Mellor for compiling this booklet and Ania Gareeva for providing the freehand sketches.

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Sustainable Shopping Guide

Choosing second hand clothing and goods is an important way to reduce waste and save valuable resources which go into making new goods.

This booklet shows that shopping for personal satisfaction, low cost and environmental concerns can all be possible. We'll move outside the square of conventional retail shopping and look for ways to acquire good quality, previously used goods – the ultimate form of reducing, re-using and recycling.

In our consumer driven economy, millions of items are acquired, and then become unwanted before the end of their functioning or useful life. This means many second-hand goods are in need of a new home.

The price asked for such 'preloved' items is often a fraction of their original retail cost, which will greatly help your household budget.

It's a 'Win Win' situation because the environment will also benefit, as you help to cut down the number of new items needing to be manufactured, so there is less waste and pollution; the amount of landfill is lessened; and there is reduction in the fossil fuel needed for transport and merchandising.

So, let's go shopping the sustainable way and see purchasing goods second hand as an adventure, and an opportunity to discover new and exciting solutions.



Illawarra Op Shops and Second Hand Stores Directory

The Illawarra has a great number of op shops and second-hand goods stores, many of which are run by organisations dedicated to community services.

To help you find second-hand treasures, the below list was created in July 2009 from various public directories. It is for general information only, and listing here in no way constitutes an endorsement of any particular store. Many outlets run by community organisations also accept donations of quality second-hand goods; however be sure to check with the stores for their procedures for donating goods.

| ALBION PARK RAIL | HOURS | YOUR NOTES |
|--|--|-------------------|
| Salvos Store 169 Tongarra Rd Albion Park ph: (02) 4257 1300 | Weekdays 8.30am – 4.30pm Sat 9am – 1pm | |
| CORRIMAL | HOURS | YOUR NOTES |
| Vinnies Store 67 Railway St Corrimal ph: (02) 4283 5033 | Weekdays 9am-4pm Sat 9am-12pm | |
| Little Red Junk Shop 148 Princes Hwy Corrimal ph: 0429 157 519 | Weekdays 10am – 3pm Sat 11am – 3pm | |
| DAPTO | HOURS | YOUR NOTES |
| Anglican Opportunity Shop Shop 10 Dandaloo | Weekdays 10am – 4pm Sat 9.30am – 1.30pm | |

| | | |
|---|--|-------------------|
| Shopping Centre Dapto ph: (02) 4261 4435 | | |
| Salvos Store 78 – 80 Prince Edward Dr Dapto ph: (02) 4262 8102 | Weekdays 8.30am – 4.30pm Sat 9am – 1pm | |
| Around Again 6 Marshall St Dapto ph: (02) 4262 1620 | Weekdays 9am – 5pm Sat 9am – 2pm | |
| Illawarra RSPCA Animal Welfare Support Shop Opposite the Dapto Hotel Complex, Princes Hwy Dapto ph: (02) 4260 8896 | Weekdays 9.30am – 3.30pm Sat closed | |
| Dapto Uniting Care Op Shop Back of Dapto Hotel/Pub, Building 107 Princes Hwy, Dapto ph: (02) 4261 7795 | Weekdays 9am – 4pm Sat 9am – 12 noon | |
| Vinnies Store 61 Princes Hwy Dapto ph: (02) 4262 8941 | Weekdays 9am – 4pm Sat 9.30am – 12.00 noon | |
| Mission Australia Big Heart Op Shop 2 Marshall St Dapto ph: (02) 4261 8530 | Weekdays 9am – 4.30pm Sat 9.00am – 2:00pm | |
| FAIRY MEADOW | HOURS | YOUR NOTES |
| Salvos Store 1/79 Princess Highway Fairy Meadow | Weekdays 8.30am - 4.30pm Sat 9am - 2pm | |

| | | |
|---|--|-------------------|
| ph: (02) 4228 0267 | | |
| HELENSBURGH | HOURS | YOUR NOTES |
| Salvos Store Shop 1, 123-127 Parkes Street, Helensburgh ph: (02) 4294 9059 | Weekdays 9am - 4.45pm Sat 9am - 3.45pm | |
| KEMBLA GRANGE | HOURS | YOUR NOTES |
| Revolve Centre Whytes Gully (before the entrance to the Waste Management Facility) ph: 0431 397 774 | Weekdays 7:30am – 4:30pm Sat and Sun 8am – 4pm | |
| KIAMA | HOURS | YOUR NOTES |
| Vinnies Store 80 Terralong St Kiama ph: (02) 4232 2656 | Weekdays 9.30am – 4pm Sat 9.30am – 4pm Sun 9.30am – 4pm | |
| The Lifeline Shop Shop 22 Centrepont (above Ice Creamery), Terralong St Kiama ph: (02) 4232 1496 | Weekdays 9am – 4.30pm Sat 9.30am – 12:30pm | |
| Born Again Bargains (fundraiser for William Campbell College Foster Care Agency) Shop 5, Gainsborough Shop Centre, 41 Meehan Drive Kiama Downs ph: (02) 4237 7577 | Weekdays 9am – 5pm Sat 9.30 – 12pm | |
| Kiama Presbyterian Church Op Shop 1 Shoalhaven St, Kiama ph: (02) 4232 3778 | Tues – Fri 10am – 3pm Every 4 th Sat Daily in school holidays | |

| NORTH WOLLONGONG | HOURS | YOUR NOTES |
|---|---|-------------------|
| Vinnies Warehouse 110 Montague St North Wollongong ph: (02) 4229 7919 | Weekdays 8:30am-3:30pm Sat 9am-12pm | |
| Mission Australia Big Heart Factory Seconds Warehouse 71 Montague St. North Wollongong ph: (02) 4228 7508 | Monday - Friday 9.00 to 4.30, Saturday 9.00 to 3.00, Sunday 10.00 to 3.00 | |
| OAK FLATS | HOURS | YOUR NOTES |
| Vinnies Store 41 Central Ave Oak Flats ph: (02) 4256 6266 | Weekdays 8am-4pm Sat 9am-11:30am | |
| SHELLHARBOUR | HOURS | YOUR NOTES |
| Salvos Store Shop 44 Stocklands Shellharbour ph: (02) 4297 4399 | Weekdays 9am to 5pm Sat 9am to 1pm | |
| THIRROUL | HOURS | YOUR NOTES |
| Scrags On The Beach Shop 3/2a Raymond Rd Thirroul ph: (02) 4268 5887 | Open 7 days. Hours vary, phone to confirm | |
| UNANDERRA | HOURS | YOUR NOTES |
| Vinnies Store 131 Princes Hwy Unanderra ph: (02) 4271 7381 | Weekdays 9am – 4pm Sat 9am – 1pm | |
| The Lifeline Shop 135 Princes Hwy Unanderra | Weekdays 9am – 4pm Sat 9am – 12pm | |

| | | |
|---|--|-------------------|
| ph: (02) 4271 5336 | | |
| Salvos Store 9 Nudjia St Unanderra ph: (02) 4272 7528 | Weekdays 8.30pm – 4.30pm Sat 9am – 1pm | |
| Lifeline Bookshop 145 Princes Hwy, Unanderra ph: (02) 4272 8485 | Weekdays 9am – 4pm Sat 9am – 1pm | |
| WARILLA | HOURS | YOUR NOTES |
| Mission Australia Big Heart Op Shop 1 Woolworths Avenue Warilla ph: (02) 4297 8055 | Weekdays 9am - 4.30pm Sat 9am – 2pm | |
| Salvos Store 238 Shellharbour Rd Warilla ph: (02) 4296 1798 | Weekdays 8.30am – 4.30pm Sat 9am – 1pm | |
| Rare Find Secondhand Furniture Traders Shop 2 Woolworths Ave (Crn Veronica St) Warilla ph: (02) 4297 5744 | Weekdays 9am – 5pm Sat 9am – 2pm | |
| WARRAWONG | HOURS | YOUR NOTES |
| Salvos Store Shop 5-9, Westfield Shopping Centre, 45 Cowper Street Warrawong ph: (02) 4274 5609 | Weekdays 9am to 5pm Sat 9am to 1pm | |
| Vinnies Store 250 Cowper St Warrawong | Weekdays 9am-4pm Sat 9am-1pm | |

| | | |
|--|--|-------------------|
| ph: (02) 4274 0642 | | |
| The Smith Family Store 200 Cowper St Warrawong ph: (02) 4274 4712 | Weekdays 9am to 4.30pm Sat 10am to 1pm | |
| GPWMA (Ghana Parables World Ministries Australia) Inc Op Shop 17 Greene Street Warrawong ph: (02) 4276 4716 | Weekdays 8am – 4pm Sat 8am – 2pm | |
| WOLLONGONG | HOURS | YOUR NOTES |
| Mission Australia Big Heart Op Shop 3 Auburn St Wollongong ph: (02) 4225 1137 | Weekdays 9am – 4.30pm Sat 9.00am – 2:00pm | |
| Salvos Store 48 Kenny St Wollongong ph: (02) 4228 5644 | Weekdays 8.30am – 4.30pm Sat 9am – 1pm | |
| The Smith Family Store 283 - 285 Keira St Wollongong ph: (02) 4227 6936 | Weekdays 9am to 4.30pm Sat 10am to 1pm | |
| The Lifeline Shop 19 Auburn St Wollongong ph: (02) 4228 0403 | Weekdays 9am - 4.30pm Sat 9.30am - 12.30pm | |
| Vinnies Store 366 Crown St Wollongong ph: (02) 4228 9875 | Weekdays 9am – 4pm Sat 9am – 12pm | |
| Anglicare Shop | Weekdays 9am – 5pm (approx) | |

| | | |
|--|---|-------------------|
| 69 Burelli St Wollongong ph: (02) 4227 3850 | Sat 9am – 2pm (approx) | |
| St Andrews Opportunity Shop 274 Crown St Wollongong ph: (02) 4229 4637 | Weekdays 9:30am – 4pm Sat 9:30am – 1pm | |
| Australian Red Cross Shop New and Recycled Clothing 54-60 Burelli St Wollongong ph: (02) 4225 2813 | Weekdays 9.30am – 4.30pm Sat 9.30am – 1pm | |
| Dèja Vogue Recycled Designer Fashion Shop 20 Globe La Wollongong ph: (02) 4225 9796 | Weekdays 10am – 5pm Sat 10am – 3.30pm | |
| Something For Doris (some vintage clothing) 84b Kembla St Wollongong ph: (02) 4227 1353 | Weekdays 9:30am – 5:30pm (until 7pm on Thursdays) Sat 9:30am – 4pm | |
| WOONONA | HOURS | YOUR NOTES |
| Vinnies Store 3/374 Princes Hwy Woonona ph: (02) 4284 0416 | Weekdays 9am-4pm Sat 9am-12pm | |



Hints and Tips for Op Shopping

If you try to op shop the same way you do retail shopping you may be in for a frustrating time. Adopt a different approach and you'll save heaps of money, have fun and help the environment. A shopping list you take to the mall might be quite specific, but what works best for op shopping is more of a treasure hunt mentality – a philosophy which says: "Today I'll find a wonderful bargain, something I can use many, many times and which will add to the quality of my life and save me lots of money." Approach with a sense of adventure and one day you'll 'strike it lucky'. It's a good idea to hunt on a regular basis as the stock turns over more often than in retail stores.

It helps if you anticipate your needs well in advance. Future planning helps you keep an ongoing list of items needed and spreads the amount of time you will be able to search for them. Items on your wish list may not turn up until your fifth or sixth visit.

Once in the store, learn to 'graze'. Wander about, looking, examining, choosing or rejecting. Don't buy just for the sake of buying. Be prepared to walk out empty handed. The most expensive purchases in your home are those that you hide away and never use.

What prices will you expect to pay? Well, as low as 75 – 80% below retail value. Consider these examples:

| | <u>Retail</u> | <u>Op Shop</u> |
|-----------------------|---------------|----------------|
| Women's top | \$40 | \$7 |
| Business suit | \$150 | \$25 |
| Table lamp with shade | \$75 | \$10 |

So, you're in for some great buys, without spending a fortune!

Don't limit yourself to one particular store. Shop around. Try Op Shops in affluent neighbourhoods. There's a better chance of quality goods and they won't be any dearer.

Have you heard about Op Shop bus trips? They are similar to the Factory shopping excursions, except that only thrift stores are visited. Watch for such trips organised by Keira Tours in the Illawarra (ph 4283 2919). Or why not organise your own op shop tour with friends or a community group using the op shop directory in this booklet? Some stores even provide a cuppa and biscuits along the way!

Op Shopping for Clothes

- Take with you sizes and measurements for all family members. When you are looking for a skirt for yourself is the very time you'll spot a pair of pants that might fit your partner or children.
- Start your search by running your eye along the racks, looking for good quality materials. Pass over the shiny synthetics and garish colours – though they are great for costume parties! You'll get better value from basic designs and colours.
- Watch out for garments with problems. Though most shops weed these out, you'll still occasionally spot broken zips, missing buttons, torn hems, stains or patches of fading. Consider whether you could fix the problem, or how much it would cost to have it fixed by a tailor.
- Check woollen garments for matting or moths.

- Try garments on, just as you would when buying retail. If you take the Op Shop garments home and they don't fit, you are far less likely to return them for a refund or exchange.
- Children's clothes are excellent value. Youngsters develop so quickly that they tend to outgrow rather than outwear their garments. Mothers often comment "Op Shop children's clothes are much better quality than I could ever hope to buy retail."
- Buy children's clothes ahead of need. If you do this in an organised way, you'll be able to 'shop at home' when a growth spurt occurs. Gather several same size boxes with lids. Mark clearly with age, size, sex etc and store the pre-purchased garments accordingly.
- Women will find an abundance of black skirts, jackets and tops. These classic garments can easily be dressed up with colourful accessories to help expand your existing wardrobe. And you'll be in good company. Sophia Loren started her film star career with only black garments in her wardrobe. She said this was the only way she could afford to look well dressed and elegant.
- Men's styles don't change drastically and great quality suits and jackets can easily be found. Shirts, too, are real bargains. If formal wear threatens to break your budget, check Op Shops for long dresses and men's evening wear. So often, these garments are worn on one special occasion and then donated. Quality tends to be excellent.

Special buys to watch for

- **China/Dinner Wear** - Op shop china is often a mixture of oddments – leftovers from broken sets. Try not to see these as discards but as items which have the potential to fit into your existing dinner set, or can be used to create a funky, new, diverse dinner set! Many items can be drawn together by colour coordination. You might choose blue and white or green and cream, and create a unique set with different pieces but similar colours. Classic colours such as white are easier to find.
- **Glassware** - Decide on two or three basic sizes and shapes to create your own unique set. It's unlikely you'll be able to find multiples on one visit but if you check each time, you'll soon collect all you need and a few spares for breakages.
- **Baubles, bangles and beads** - Treasure trove indeed! And a great source, not only of accessories for yourself but for beautiful presents. Costume jewellery seldom 'wears out'. More often, its owner tires of it and much is donated in almost mint condition.
- **Books** - Many of us love buying books but may not be able to afford retail prices. Fortunately, a range of great books is available in Op Shops, everything from novels to poetry, student study guides, cookery books, how-to manuals and even magazines, sheet music and knitting patterns. Choose a few paperbacks for a long journey, find books for the children and a couple of recipe

books. No need to feel guilty at departing with an armful! And when you've finished reading them, you can always donate them back to the op shop to be enjoyed again by someone else.

- **Fitness Equipment** - So often fitness apparatus is bought on a high wave of fitness resolutions and enthusiastically at first – then less often – and then not at all! Eventually, much of this equipment finds its way to the Op Shops and can be bought incredibly cheaply. The best quality items sell far below 25% of retail value and if you aren't bothered about a new appearance, there's real bargains to be found.



Hints and Tips for Garage Sales

Garage sales are one of the most exciting ways to shop - a real treasure hunt, with lots of thrills and surprises. You see the inviting sign *Garage Sale Today – Heaps of Bargains*. It is irresistible. You enjoy looking through the piles of goods. You don't know what you will find but seldom leave without at least one purchase, and that's one less item that ends up in landfill.

If you want to use this form of shopping to drastically cut your spending, an occasional visit may be fun but won't yield large savings. In the garage sale world, the merchandise is unpredictable. With a regular and organised approach, however, you'll be able to buy goods, in excellent condition, for as low as 90% below retail. To get the most out of treasure hunting at garage sales, consider:

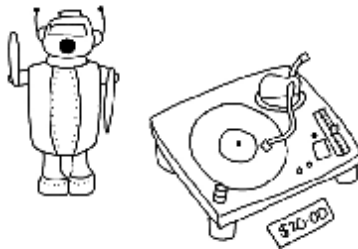
- Garage shopping regularly - say one or two days a month, visiting a number of sales each day. The more you visit, the more you are likely to find items which you need, at bargain prices.
- The location of the sale is important as different suburbs may offer different kinds of goods and price levels. In new suburban developments you often find children's items like toys, strollers and games. In more up-market neighbourhoods you may find high quality goods like brand name clothes or almost new electrical goods. Older neighbourhoods may yield interesting, near antique items, good quality vintage clothes, fine china and silver, solid furniture and garden equipment.
- Springtime and early summer are the peak seasons with warmer weather having encouraged garage and shed clear-outs and winter clothes sorting. If there is a university or college nearby, the end of the academic year is a good time, as students returning home often sell off furniture and computer equipment.
- Learn to read the advertisements well. You want sales that have the kind of goods you are seeking, with a variety of items and at reasonable prices. The ads are not going to tell you this directly but read between the lines. Larger adverts have cost

the seller more, so they probably have a lot of goods to sell. If you are seeking a particular item, there may be a phone number, so you can always call and check. Identify adverts for 'perpetual' garage sales. These will keep recurring in the paper and are run by semi-professionals. Prices are higher and less negotiable.

- Before you set off, arm yourself with a snack and a water bottle. You don't want to waste time and money buying food to sustain you, especially in a suburb you don't know. Have your shopping list made out. Take details of family clothing sizes and measurements of your main rooms. It won't be a bargain if you buy clothes that don't fit or a bookcase that overhangs a doorway. Have a variety of coins and small notes. If the sale is busy, this can save you time when paying. A tape measure, notebook and pen are also handy. Put a couple of old blankets in the car, to pack breakables and you're ready to go.
- Avid buyers and dealers turn up very early to sales, often an hour or so before the advertised opening time, so unless you are an early bird, you may miss out on a few bargains. At this early hour, however, most sellers are not ready to negotiate. As the day goes on, they become more concerned to move goods out and prices become more flexible – and things are sometimes even offered for free!
- Follow garage sale etiquette guidelines. Yes, there really is a generally accepted code of behaviour amongst regular garage sale frequenters. Remember, you are visiting someone's home. Normal social behaviour is expected. Try to avoid asking to use the toilet, as this often means going inside the house, which

can be inconvenient for the seller and also causes a security problem. Speak politely to the sellers. Don't throw stuff on the floor if not happy with the price and if you do find a fantastic bargain, don't gloat. If the price of a certain item is still too high for you, leave your phone number just in case. Also leave your number if you found a lot of clothes suitable for your children. Chances are they will hold another sale in the future and may be willing to let you know or even offer a preview.

- Haggling is expected, and you need to have your guidelines in place before starting negotiations. Remember, some prices may be as high as 80% of retail, but these will be the exceptions. Most pricing will be considerably lower, down to 10-40% of retail, especially for goods they particularly want to sell, such as large furniture or if they are selling due to leaving the district. If you're buying several items, make an offer for all. In negotiations, it often helps to hold some cash in your hand to encourage the seller to make the sale.
- If you don't see what you are looking for, always ask. You'd be amazed at the items which may be produced, that sellers simply had not thought to put it in the sale!



Hints and Tips for Auctions

Buying goods at auction sales can yield good bargains – but this form of purchasing is not for the faint-hearted! The auction situation creates a mood of drama and pressure, as the bidding climbs higher and higher. It's easy to become caught in the excitement of the moment and pay above your price range, so consider:

- Attending the preview, where the goods for sale will be exhibited. This gives you an opportunity to note any goods which are of special interest to you and make up your mind on your top price. Don't decide on your price during the bidding frenzy - you'll have no anchor to hold you back from spur of the moment bids.
- Check how the auction will be conducted. Do you need a bidding number? How do you pay for goods purchased? Will credit cards or personal cheques be accepted? Some auctions tack on 10% buyer's premium to the price you've bid. Check on this.
- Once the bidding starts, stay concentrated. Watch the auctioneer and hold your number up clearly. If dropping out of bidding and the auctioneer catches your eye, shake your head emphatically. Most people bid in even money, but if uneven amounts are accepted, this can often be the way to have the item knocked down to you. So, if the existing bid is \$500, offer \$515, rather than \$510. Some auctions have sealed bids for certain items.
- If you're unsure whether to continue bidding, it's best to stop. Most beginners have more regrets at buying than at dropping out of the bidding.

- Auctions are a good source of furniture, especially from the 1940's to 1960's, that is, solid timber from the pre-particle board era. There is also a good supply of art works, rugs and ornamentals. Just remember, you will often be bidding against the dealers, who know exactly what an item is worth. They need to add on 40-50% mark-up, in order to make a decent profit. So if you buy close to their dropping out price, in effect, you've purchased the item wholesale.

Hints and Tips for Purchasing On-line

Cyber space opens up another whole world of second-hand shopping, with E-bay being the most popular second-hand selling site. Helpful tips for making the most out of buying second hand on E-bay are:

- Be sure to read the fine print, check the dimensions etc, and be 100% sure the item advertised is what you are after. Also be aware that many items sold on E-bay are new, not second-hand.
- It's safer to buy from reliable sellers. Check the sellers feedback rating (if it's not close to 100%, you may wish to re-consider), and check how many items they have sold (you may wish to reconsider if they are a first time seller).
- Compare the asking price with other on-line stores
- Consider 'watching' the sale of similar items, to see how much they end up selling for

- Check the postage rates – sometimes bargain items have extravagant postage prices
- Set yourself a price limit and stick to it!

Another great on-line site to explore is Freecycle Network at www.freecycle.org. It's a not-for-profit, grassroots, worldwide movement of people giving and receiving things for free in their local area. Becoming a member of your local Freecycle Network, allows you to post items to give away, and view free items you'd like to give a new home! Freecycle Illawarra has over 1,000 members – you can join in at http://groups.yahoo.com/group/freecycle_illawarra.

Second Hand Shopping Events

Swap Parties

Swap parties open up a new world of fun and practicality – whilst keeping unwanted items out of landfill and reducing demand for resource-intensive new stuff. Friends, colleagues, neighbors or community groups simply get together to exchange quality unwanted goods for free!

Swap events can be easy to organise and you can make up the rules yourself. It can be as simple as inviting 10 friends over, and asking them to bring 5 items they'd like to swap. Or they can be more organised, focusing on a specific items such as women's clothing, and involve allocating tokens for items on arrival, and then letting people redeem their tokens for items as they leave. A coin toss may be a good way to resolve who receives an item that more than one person wants!

Keep your eye out for community swap events as well, which may be organised by local Councils or community groups such as preschools. Or why not organise a swap event with a community group you're part of – they could even be organised as a fundraiser, with a small charge for participants.

Second Hand Saturdays

Kiama Council organises a giant community garage sale, known as a 'Second Hand Saturday' twice a year, prior to the biannual Council household clean ups. At these events, Kiama residents can register a site to sell, trade, or giveaway their second-hand items from the boot of their car or trailer – and anyone can come along to grab a bargain!

The Second Hand Saturday events are held at "School Flat", Black Beach, Terralong Street, Kiama from 8am – 12 noon. Upcoming Second Hand Saturdays will be held on:

- Saturday 20 February 2010
- Saturday 3 July 2010
- Saturday 5 March 2011

Kiama municipality residents can register a site up to 6 weeks prior to the scheduled events by calling 4232 0400. For further details about Kiama Council's Second Hand Saturday events visit www.kiama.nsw.gov.au or call 4232 0553.