

### **How is it that items end up in the thrift store?**

Many items come from household clearances, moves, deaths, or simply the desire to free up space. People bring us things because they want them to be reused. We also receive many donations through our transport and clearance services.

### **Which items are donated most often – and which are sold again the fastest?**

Most commonly donated items:

- Dishes
- Books
- Decorations
- Clothing
- Smaller furniture
- Electrical appliances

Fastest to sell:

- Well-preserved furniture
- Lamps
- High-quality kitchen utensils
- Bicycles
- Seasonal items

Practical, attractive, and modern items usually find new owners very quickly.

### **Is running a thrift store financially worthwhile – or is the focus more on social and sustainable value?**

Financially, a thrift store is only profitable to a limited extent. We cover part of our costs, but we do not operate for profit.

The main focus is clearly on:

- Social integration
- Work and daily-life training for our participants
- Sustainability and waste reduction

Our contribution to society is far more important than financial gain.

### **How do you decide what gets sold, recycled, or disposed of?**

We check every donation based on clear criteria:

1. Condition: clean, functional, complete
2. Demand: Is it sellable? Does it fit our range?
3. Safety: e.g., electrical appliances are tested
4. Space: Large furniture must fit our available area

What we cannot sell but can be materially recycled will be recycled. Only heavily damaged or unhygienic items are disposed of.

### **How does a thrift store contribute to sustainability and waste reduction?**

We extend the lifespan of items and prevent good goods from ending up in the trash. Every item that continues to be used saves resources, energy, and waste.

Additionally, we promote social sustainability through our work integration program.

### **What differences do you notice between older and younger customers in their approach to second-hand shopping?**

Older people often buy for practical reasons: “Why buy new when used works just as well?”

Younger people come more for reasons like:

- Sustainability
- Vintage style
- Smaller budgets
- Enjoyment of browsing and upcycling

Overall, enthusiasm for second-hand is growing significantly among younger people.

### **Have there been any special or very valuable finds?**

Yes, several!

We have received rare collectibles, high-quality designer pieces, and very old antiques. One particularly memorable event was a clearance in which we received 850 dolls. It was a special job both logistically and emotionally.

### **How has your everyday work changed due to online second-hand platforms?**

Second-hand has become much more commonplace thanks to online platforms. While some people sell valuable pieces online first, many quickly realize how much effort that requires – and prefer to bring the items to us.

Competition has increased, but so has awareness for reuse.

### **What challenges are there in a thrift store – and what brings the most joy?**

Challenges:

- Lack of space for large donations
- Fluctuating quality of donated items
- Labor-intensive clearances
- Sudden, large quantities of goods
- Integration work with people who have different language levels and abilities

Joy:

- Seeing the development of our participants
- Discovering special “treasures”
- The friendly, lively atmosphere
- Happy customers
- The sustainable contribution we make every day

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## **Customer Questions**

### **Why do you shop at the thrift store?**

“Because I find good, affordable, and unique items here. I like the atmosphere, and it feels right to reuse something instead of buying new.”

### **What are you looking for today, or what do you prefer to buy second-hand?**

“Today I’m looking for a lamp and maybe some dishes. My favorite things to buy second-hand are furniture, books, and household items – the quality is often better than new.”

**Have you ever found something special here?**

“Yes, I once found a beautiful wooden shelf that fits perfectly in my apartment. I also found two high-quality jackets for my children.”



**How important is sustainability to you when shopping?**

“Very important. I try to throw away less and use things longer. Second-hand is a good and simple way to do that.”

**Would you recommend shopping at the thrift store to others? Why?**

“Definitely. You can find good things at fair prices while doing something for the environment. And browsing here is cozy and fun.”

