

MERCARI

Clearance Lots

# Buyer Discovery

UXR @Megan

Apr 2024

# TL;DR

## PURPOSE

The goal of this study was to Identify any pain points in the clearance lots browsing experience, to inform the prioritization of post-MVP features, and to understand the importance of various browsing metadata.

## PARTICIPANTS (N = 6 Mercari fashion bundle buyers)

## KEY TAKEAWAYS

- The sooner we can add filters, search, and sort, the better. The variant with filters, search, and sort was highly preferred.
  - This is not only important for ease of use, but also for buyers to understand the value proposition underlying the Clearance experience. Without being able to find items they're interested in and familiar with easily, the magnitude of discounts on the lots may not resonate. Without filters, buyers were unlikely or neutral about shopping Clearance for clothing frequently.
- Buyers liked how they were able to interact with item photos both on the Clearance tab and the lot detail page. In general, they rated the visual design of the Clearance tab as appealing.
- Buyers expected Liked lots to be in My Likes, either mixed in with other liked items or separated out somehow in their own module or tab.
- Custom bids, where buyers could specify a bid amount instead of being limited to a fixed bid increment, were a highly requested feature.
- Future research should examine behavior patterns around how users find lots they're interested in, and should monitor how well Mercari's taxonomy evolves to accommodate any changes in clearance lots product strategy.

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# I. Executive Summary

# Research Overview



## Objectives

Identify any pain points in the clearance lots browsing experience.

Inform prioritization of post-MVP features.

Inform prioritization of browsing metadata.



## Methodology

60 min moderated usability testing with two design prototypes, followed by a ranking activity.

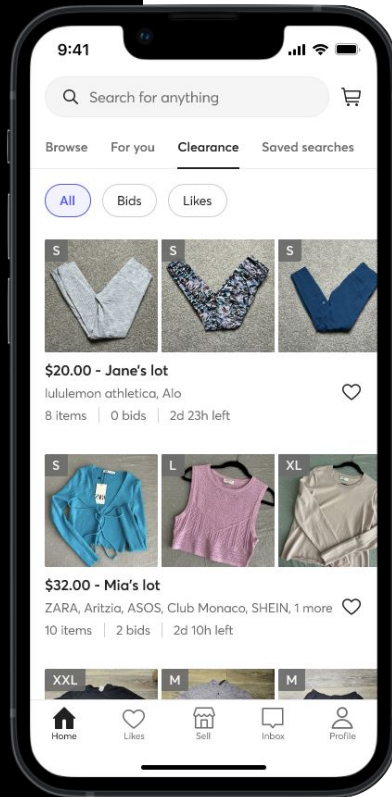
The presentation order of prototypes was randomized across participants.



## Target Audience

6 Mercari users who purchased a fashion category bundle in the past 2-3 weeks (post-GBF)

# Design A (MVP)



## Key differences:

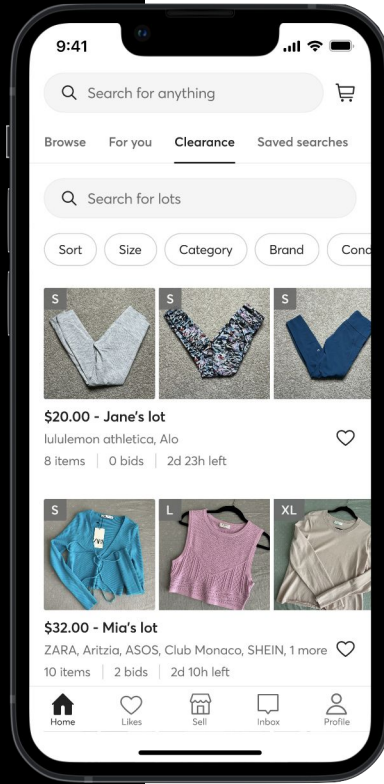
- Bids pill - Access lots on which you've placed a bid
- Likes pill - Access lots on which you've placed a like

## Rationale:

- Due to engineering constraints, this was the most feasible way to allow buyers to conduct follow-up activity on listings they're interested in

HUGE thank you to @Minami for putting together the prototypes! 🙏🙏

# Design B



## Key differences:

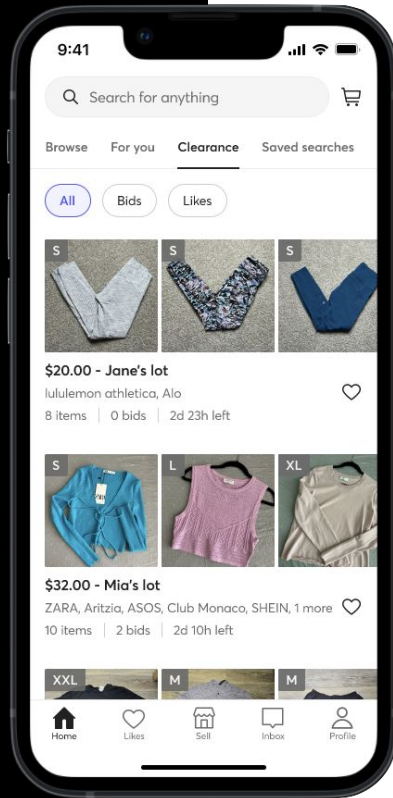
- Search the clearance tab
- Sort lot listings by time left, price, newest, etc.
- Filter by size, category, brand, condition

## Rationale:

- We believe these tools are important for fashion shoppers, who are often interested in shopping for specific sizes or brands

# Design Wins

Positive feedback!



Most rated Clearance tab as **visually appealing**, stating it appeared well organized, emphasized photos, and was easy to navigate



**Horizontal carousel** makes it easy to browse without having to click into a listing



Scrolling through multi-item photos on the lot detail page was **intuitive**



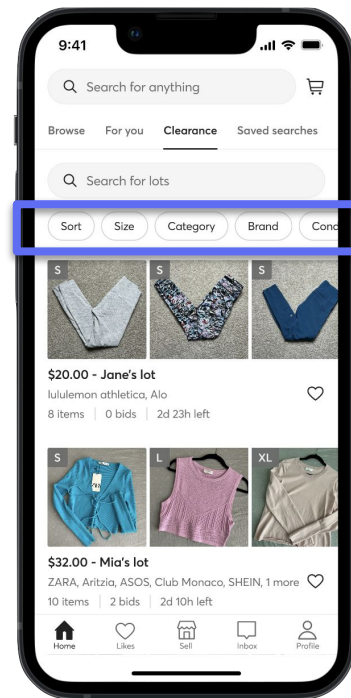
**Metadata**, like brand and size, was perceived as relevant and useful



# Areas for Improvement

High	<b>Filters and search</b> Buyers were unlikely to shop Clearance frequently without filters and/or search.
Medium	<b>Search</b> 2/5 participants expected the global search to return clearance lots in the results.
Medium	<b>Custom bids</b> Custom bidding was among the most highly ranked post-MVP feature, and % requested this feature ad-hoc.
Low	<b>Likes and bids</b> One participant misinterpreted the function of the Likes and Bids pills.
Low	<b>Checkout</b> 2/5 buyers reported needing to go back and forth between LDP and checkout to confirm details.
Low	<b>Order of items</b> The order of individual item within a lot influences ease of browsing and desirability.
Low	<b>Carousel interaction</b> Most participants intuitively scrolled horizontally through the carousel images, but one reported that functionality wasn't immediately clear.

All 5 participants preferred **Design B.**



# Which metadata is necessary when browsing lots?

Necessary	Photos
Necessary	Time left in auction
Test	Number of items
Necessary	Size
Necessary	Next bid price
Unnecessary	Buy now price
Necessary	Brand
Unnecessary	Category L0
Test	Number of bids
Unnecessary	Last bid price
Unnecessary	Delivery price
Unnecessary	Title ("Jane's lot")
Unnecessary	Number of likes

## Most important metadata:

- Photos
- Time left
- Size
- Next bid price
- Brand

This largely tracks with the UX team's decisions about what metadata to include for MVP.

**How?** Participants were asked to sort these **metadata** by how necessary they are when browsing the Clearance Tab.

Metadata is shown here in weighted rank order, from highest to lowest, aggregated across participants.

[Link to data](#)

# Which post-MVP features are most highly valued?

P1	Message sellers
P1	Filters
P1	Separate by LO category
P1	Sort listings
P1	Custom bid
P1	Search clearance lots
P1	Lots I've bid on are automatically liked
P2	Auto-bidding
P2	Section for lots expiring soon
P2	Time remaining in auction on checkout screen
X	Public comments
X	Schedule bid
X	Separate section for liked lots
X	Auto follow sellers when placing a bid
P1	One hour left in auction notification

## Most important features:

- Messages
- Filters, sort, search
- Separate by LO category\*
- Custom bid
- Auto-like bids

Participants were asked to sort these **features** by importance for browsing Clearance frequently.

Features are shown here in weighted rank order, from highest to lowest, aggregated across participants.

UXR recommendations are color coded by perceived necessity.

[Link to data](#)

# Recommendations

P0 (MVP)

## Communications

Highlight up to 50% off in launch communications and landing page. Is this immediately visible to buyers?

P1

## Filters, search, and sort

Prioritize implementing filters as soon as possible. For sort, sort by time remaining in auction is top priority, then newest, then price.

P1

## Navigation

Integrate liked lots into My Likes, consider a separate section to denote time limited listings.

P2

## New features

Consider: enabling buyers to create custom bids; allowing sellers to edit the order of the items within a lot, add cover photos; rethinking titles; showing a dropdown of items at checkout; ways to communicate the discount value to buyers (resale market value, price per item, etc.).

UXR

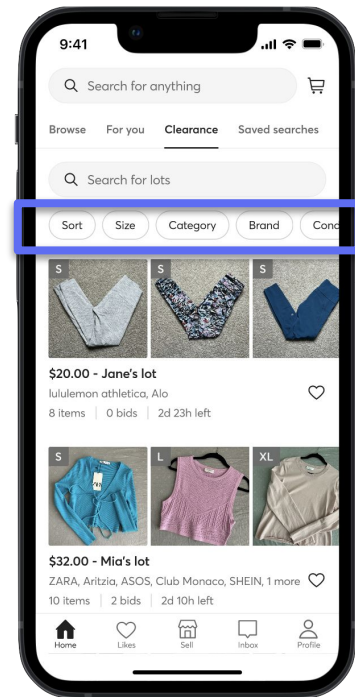
## Taxonomy

Partner with UXB-C to test clarity of overall Mercari taxonomy to understand. Are auctions distinct from offers in the minds of buyers? Are lots distinct enough from what will be collections?

UXR/BI

## Search

How do buyers prefer to search and/or filter clearance lots?

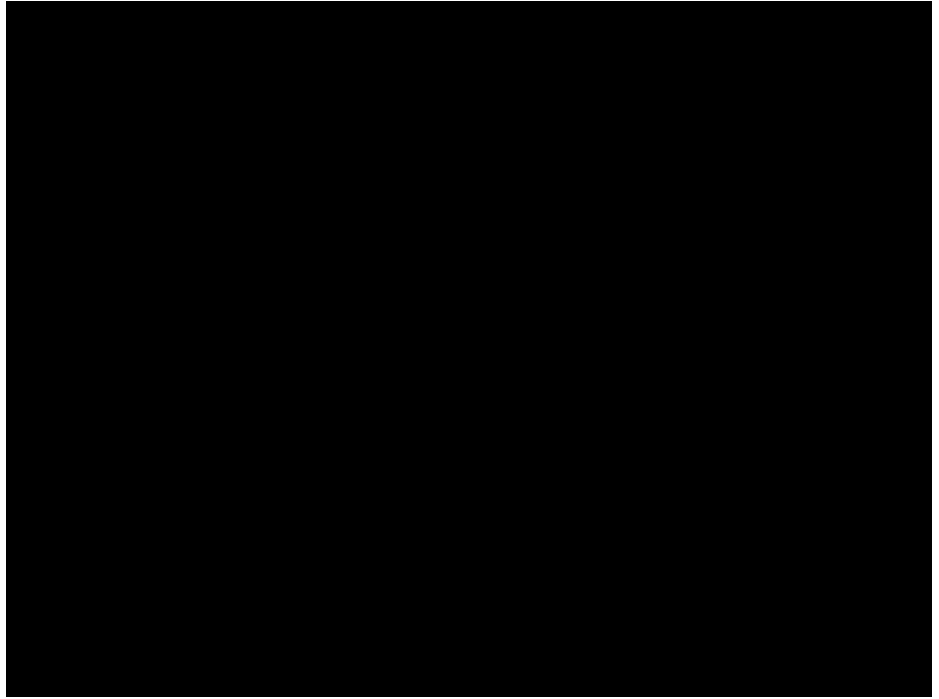


## II. Detailed Findings

# Initial Impressions

## Mixed pricing expectations

Is the magnitude of the discount on clearance lots communicated clearly enough in product?



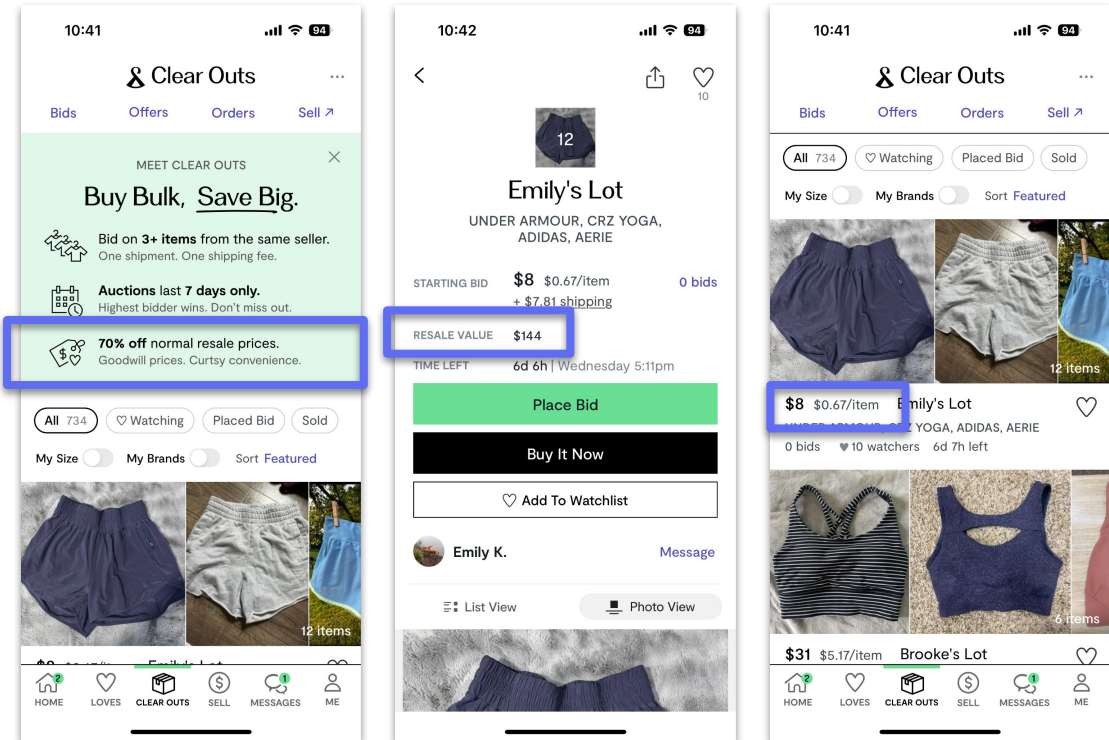
**Task:** You can now look for bulk deals on clothing. What are your initial impressions?

# Pitching Clearance in product

In order to reinforce that shopping Clear Outs is a great way for buyers to get deals, Curtsy:

- highlights a 70% discount on the landing page ✓ (see [Mercari LP](#))
- shows estimated resale value on the detail page 🌟
- shows price per item on the browsing page 🌟

We should consider in-product strategies to signal the value proposition more strongly.



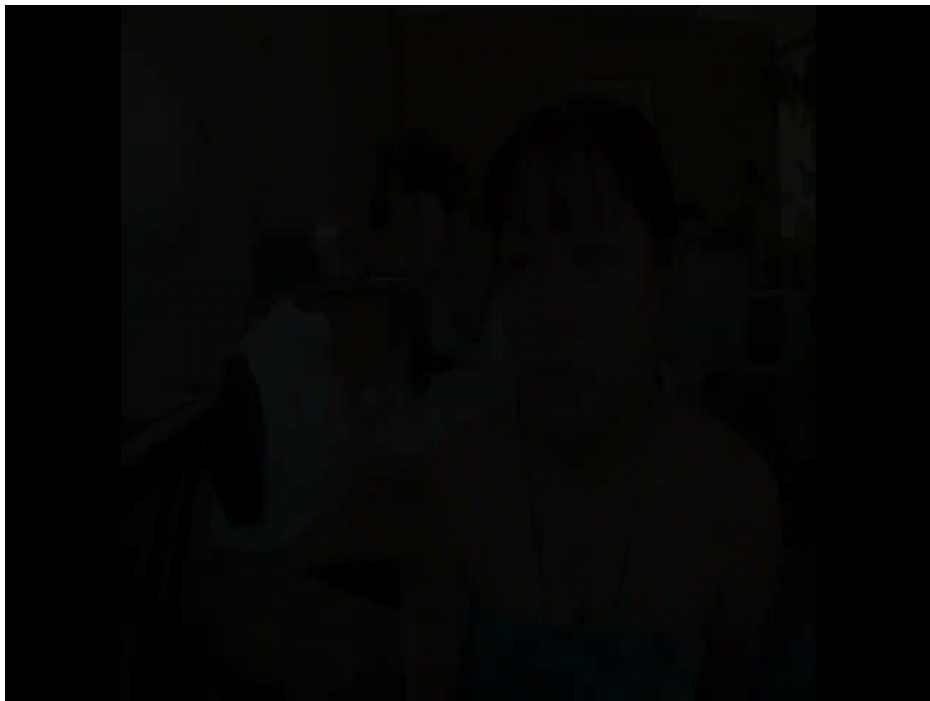
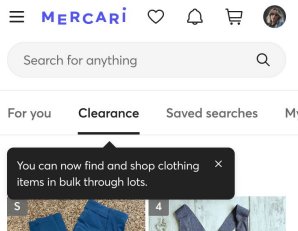


## Confusion about seller(s)?

# Single seller, or multiple sellers?

The top initial question buyers had were about whether lots were sold by a single seller or multiple sellers.

The term **bulk** may be causing confusion here. However, this was resolved quickly through initial interactions with the design.

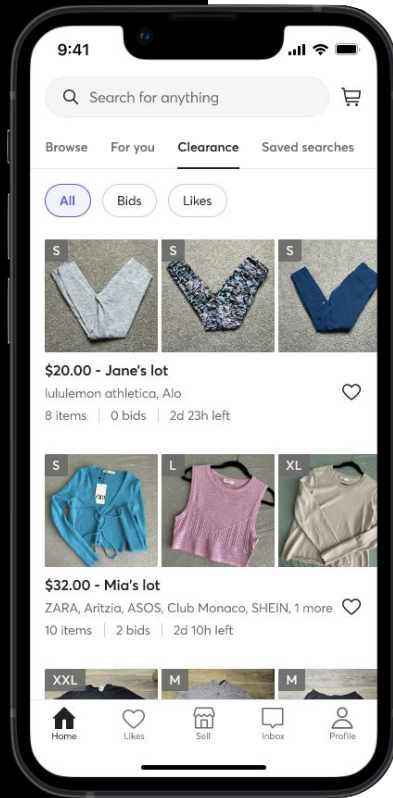


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Scrolling through multi-item photos on the lot detail page was **intuitive**



**Metadata** was perceived as relevant and useful

# Pain Points

## Filters and search

Buyers were unlikely to shop clearance lots frequently without filters and/or search.

Additionally, without being able to find items they're interested in and familiar with easily, the magnitude of discounts on the lots may not resonate.

Buyers may have emphasized filters as opposed to search because of the visual presentation in the Design B prototype.

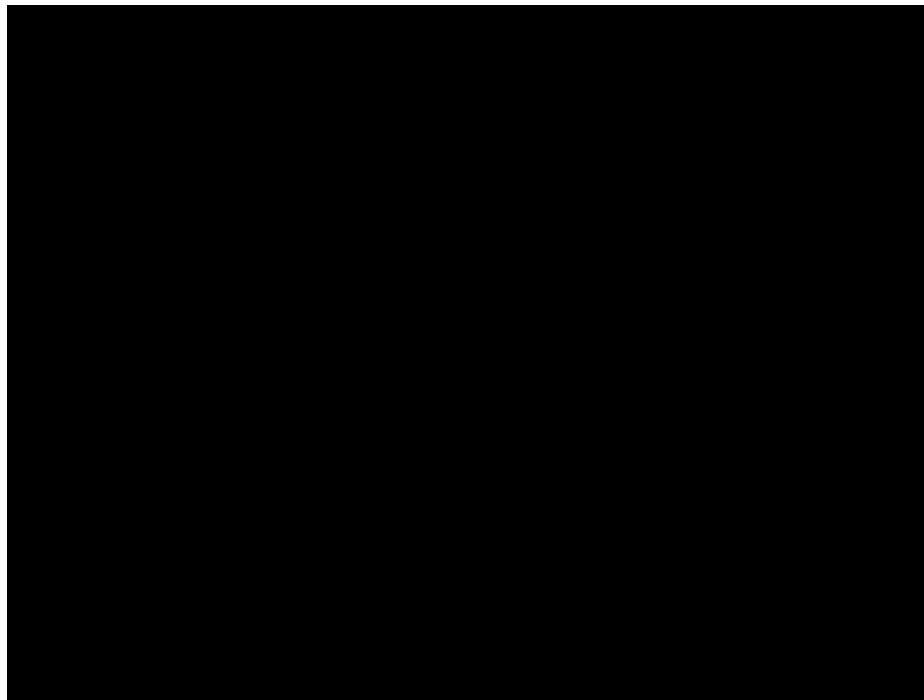
Design A  
MVP

**Task:** Imagine you're interested in shopping for [Nike] clothing. Show me how you would go about finding a listing you would be interested in purchasing.

Medium Priority

## Global search

2/5 participants expected the global search to return clearance lots in the results.



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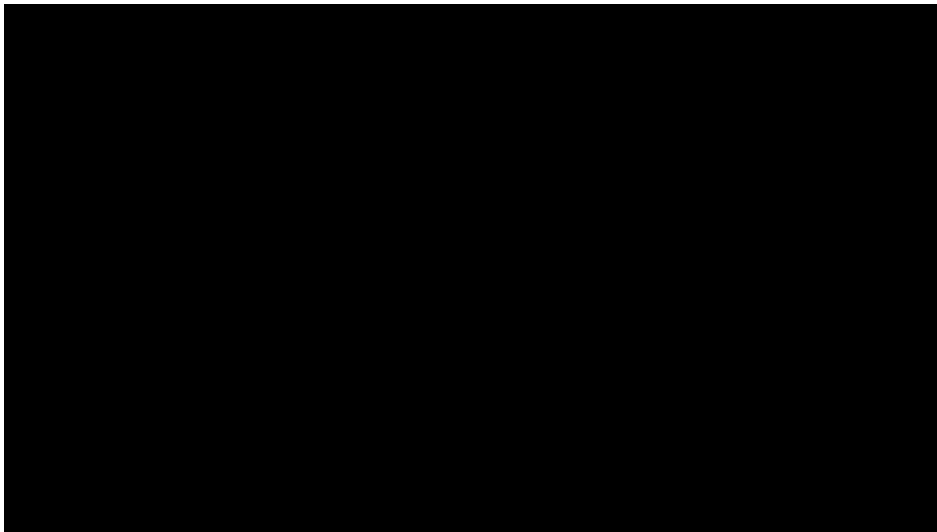
## Custom bids

Custom bidding was among the most highly ranked post-MVP feature, and 3/5 requested this feature ad-hoc.

Most interpreted custom bids as being able to make a bid for any amount, but one participant interpreted this as bidding on a subset of lot items.

This study was conducted with Mercari users, only one of whom reported using eBay regularly, so they may not prefer a bidding system compared to other audiences.

**If we introduce custom bidding, is the auction terminology more or less clear, when we already have offers?**



Lower Priority

## Likes & Bids pills

One participant misinterpreted the function of the Likes and Bids pills.

This would likely be resolved with trial and error, but may be something we should think about covering in onboarding, or consider renaming the pills (“My bids?”).

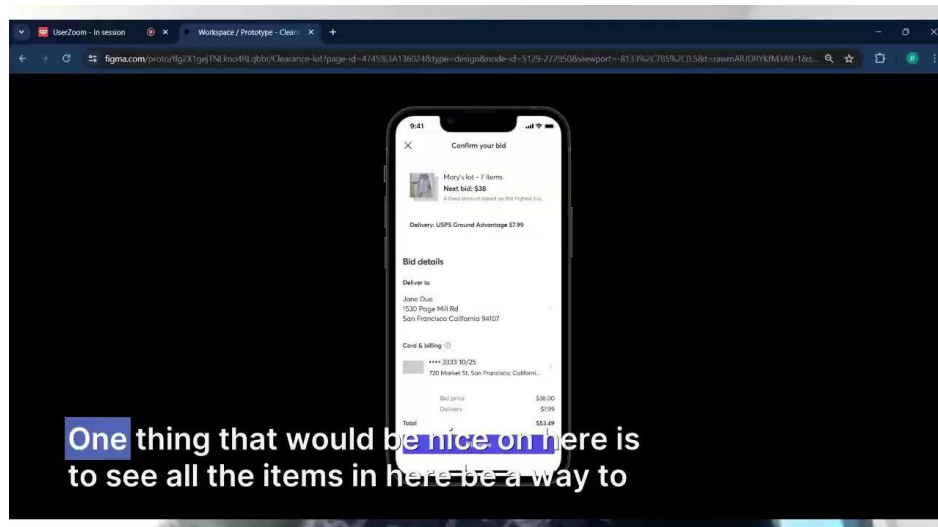
**Task:** What are all the actions you could take in the Clearance tab?



Lower Priority

## Checkout confidence

2/5 buyers reported needing to go back and forth between LDP and checkout to confirm details.

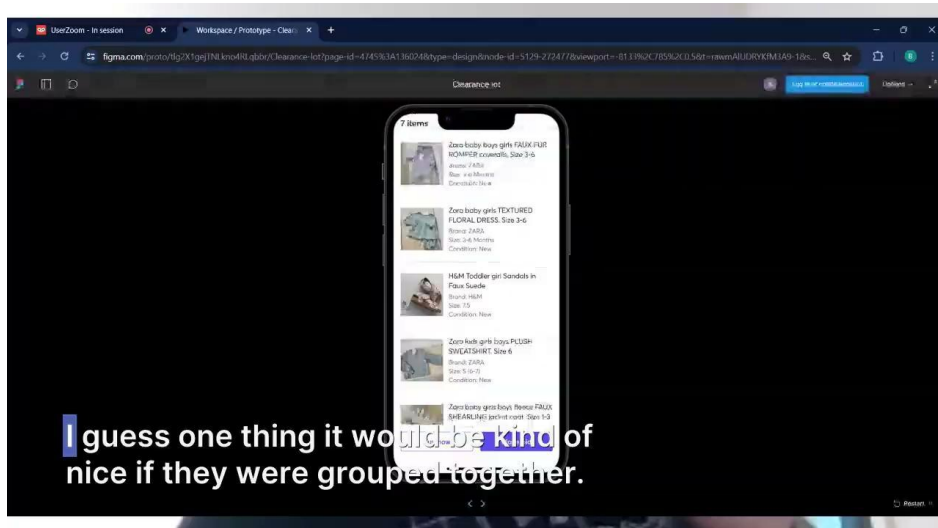
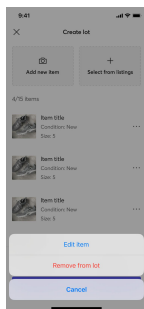


**Task:** Find a listing you're interested in... Take me through your next steps.

## Order of items

The order of individual item within a lot influences ease of browsing and desirability.

Should we consider allowing sellers to change the order of their listings within a lot?

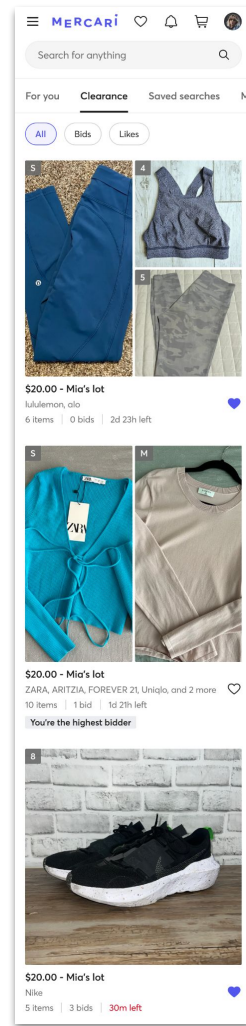
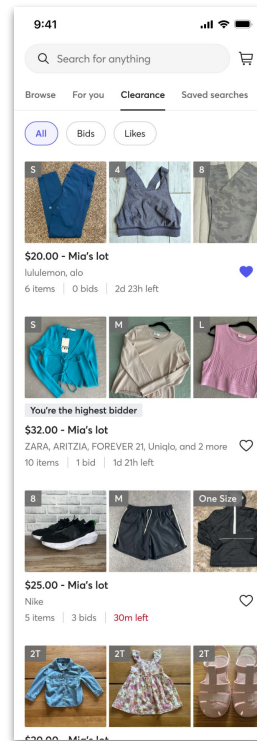


**Task:** Find a listing you're interested in... What are the brands included in that listing?

## Carousel interaction

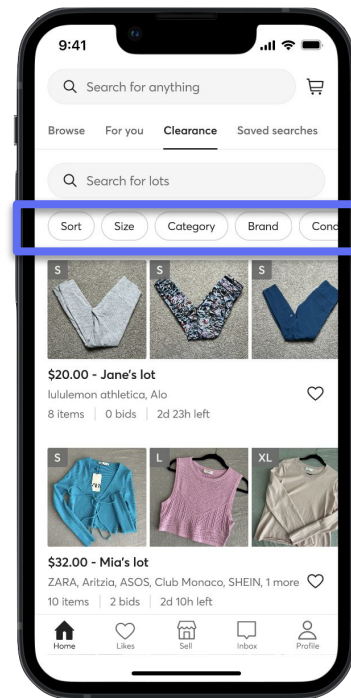
Most participants intuitively scrolled horizontally through the carousel images, but one reported that functionality wasn't immediately clear.

Because we're rolling out different image layouts on app and mobile web, we can compare performance post-launch.



# Areas for Improvement

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# Navigation

# Where to put liked lots?

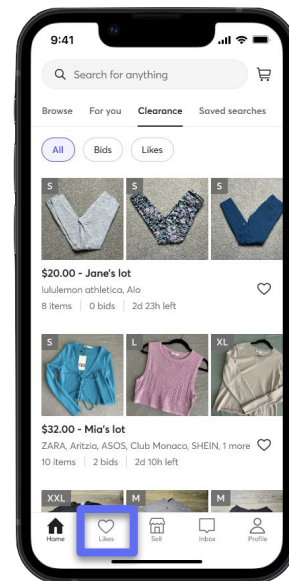
**Task:** Where would you expect to find lots you've liked?

**Most participants expected to see liked lots in the My Likes section.**

"I would think in my Likes tab. OK. Yeah, like for me, I think like how I use the app already and just like this being integrated into it, I think that it would make sense for me personally."

**How?**

One expected they would be integrated with other listings, whereas three thought they should have a separate tab, module, or some other form of separation within My Likes.



# Prioritization

# Which metadata is necessary when browsing lots?

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This largely tracks with the UX team's decisions about what metadata to include for MVP.

**How?** Participants were asked to sort these **metadata** by how necessary they are when browsing the Clearance Tab.

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[Link to data](#)



# Which metadata is necessary when browsing lots?

## Brand, Size

Unnecessary → Necessary

Though some ranked these as 'nice to have,' when actually browsing, participants regularly referred to this information on the Clearance Tab.

## Number of bids

Unnecessary → Test

The rankings here were polarizing.

Some reported that seeing a high number of bids would make them uninterested in moving forward with bidding.

Some reported that seeing the number of bids helped them set their expectation about how engaged to be in bidding, and were willing to entertain more competition if they really liked the listing.

## Number of likes

Unnecessary

Participants reported that the number of bids was a better signal of interest. They would like to refer to the likes on the listing page itself.

## Number of items

Necessary → Test

People liked having an idea of how many items are included relative to the overall price.

One struggled to understand the horizontal carousel, so showing the number of items was critical to understanding there were more than 3 available in a lot.

There may be other design treatments to indicate the number of items, but this is probably critical if we are allowing up to 15 items in a lot.

## Buy now price

Necessary → Unnecessary

The auction was not appealing to some people, so those folks appreciated being able to see the Buy Now price to avoid engaging with the bidding system.

## Delivery

Unnecessary

These participants are experienced Mercari buyers, and used to seeing shipping on the listing page. They assumed that shipping wouldn't be too much because they'd be saving on shipping by purchasing items as a lot anyway. They did not expect to see shipping on the Clearance Tab.

## Title

Unnecessary

The title isn't doing anything. Even revisiting a listing, it seems like users identify listings primarily through photos and metadata.

If we implement custom titles (that refer to useful data, like type of clothing eg. fairycore, athletic wear, baby girl bundle, etc) this would convey more value.

# Which post-MVP features are most highly valued?

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[Link to data](#)

# Which post-MVP features are most highly valued?

## Filtering

Without this, participants were less likely to 'shop here frequently for clothing'.

Filtering, and searching within filters, was seen as more useful than the lots search bar.

## Search

Participants reacted negatively to seeing two search bars on the Clearance Tab, and were confused about how to search.

Without the clearance tab search, however, some participants thought the general search bar might allow them to search clearance lots specifically, which was incorrect.

## Messaging sellers

Messaging was ranked more highly than public comments.

Some participants reported disliking engaging in public comments because they're doing the work for other buyers.

## Custom bid

Participants wanted to be able to set custom bids in order to minimize needing to check the app repeatedly.

With custom bidding, is this still conceptually distinct enough from offers to justify its own terminology?

## A separate place to see liked lots

Most participants expected to see liked lots integrated into My Likes so they can see all their likes in one place.

Some expressed a desire to see a separate section for clearance lots within My Likes.

## One hour left notification

2 participants mentioned a desire to be notified about an auction ending in an hour.

This was not explicitly tested, but reflects an implicit expectation.

## Auto-like lots I've bid on

Participants thought they might have trouble finding lots they've bid on without the listings being integrated into My Likes.

Show time remaining on checkout screen  
The use case was not internalized by any of the participants.

## A section for lots expiring soon

Participants seemed to prefer the ability to sort listings in this way rather than viewing them in a separate section.

This would allow them to filter in on the listings of interest to them first, rather than browsing expiring lots more generally. [Link to data](#)

# Taxonomy

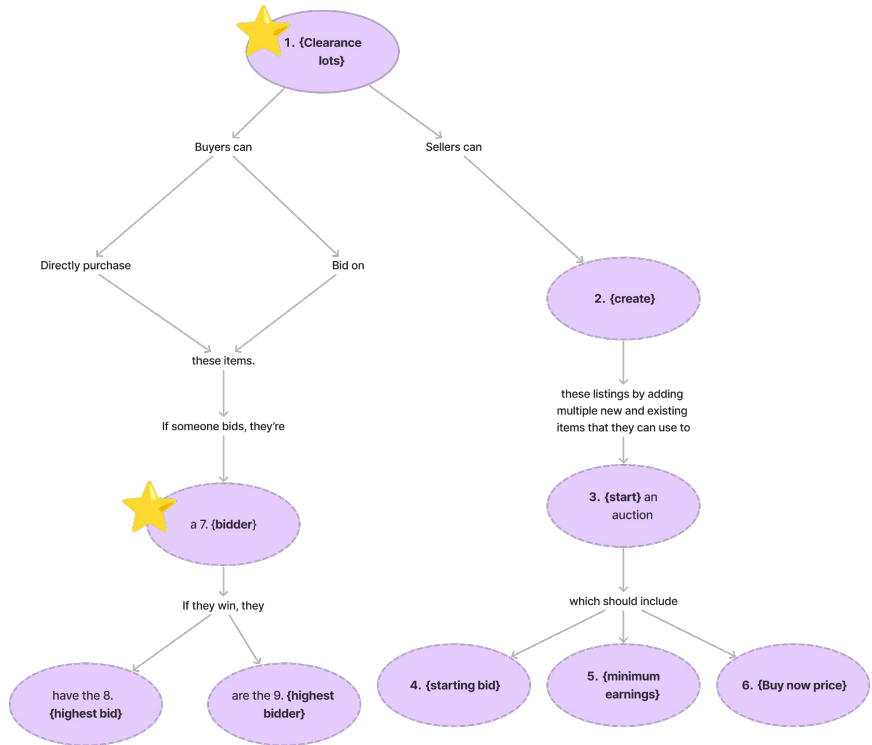
# A \* lot \* of terms

Participants used inconsistent terminology to refer to lot listing concepts.

This is to be expected with the introduction of a new concept, but something **we should monitor and flag for future research**.

If we revisit any of the product strategy assumptions from when the taxonomy was created, will the taxonomy continue to make sense to our users?

- Does **lot** bring more or less clarity, when we have bundles?
- Does **bid** bring more or less clarity, when we have offers?
- Does **clearance** bring more or less clarity, if we make the starting bid flexible?

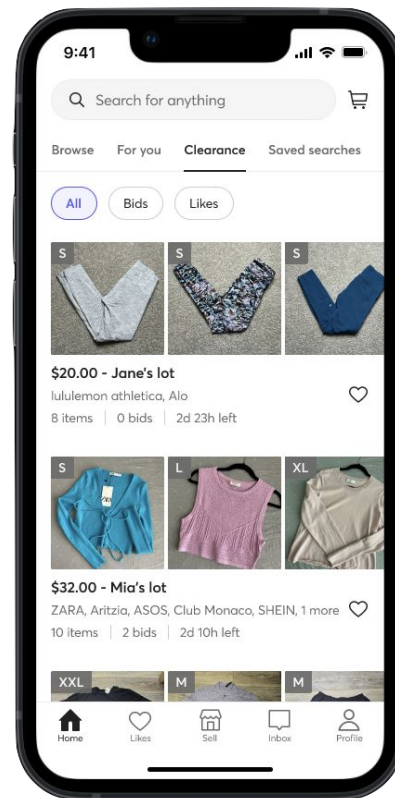


[Taxonomy Map @Adrian](#)

# **III. Key Takeaways & Recommendations**

# Working Well 👍

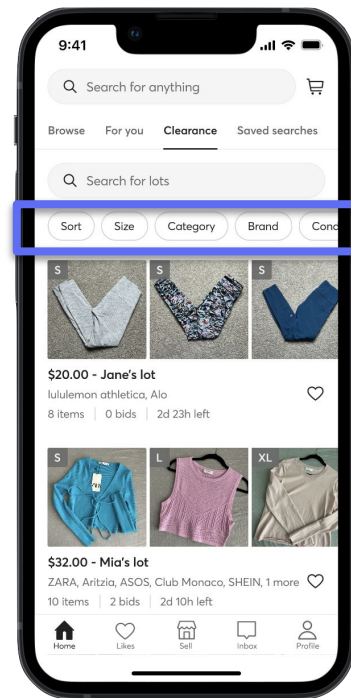
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- **Horizontal carousel** makes it easy to browse without having to click into a listing
- Scrolling through **multi-item photos** on the lot detail page was intuitive
- **Metadata** was perceived as relevant and useful



# Areas for Improvement

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All 5 participants preferred **Design B.**





# Recommendations

P0 (MVP)

## Communications

Highlight up to 50% off in launch communications and landing page. Is this immediately visible to buyers?

P1

## Filters, search, and sort

Prioritize implementing filters as soon as possible. For sort, sort by time remaining in auction is top priority, then newest, then price.

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## Navigation

Integrate liked lots into My Likes, consider a separate section to denote time limited listings.

P2

## New features

Consider: enabling buyers to create custom bids; then: allowing sellers to edit the order of the items within a lot, add cover photos; rethinking titles; showing a dropdown of items at checkout; ways to communicate the discount value to buyers (resale market value, price per item, etc.)

UXR

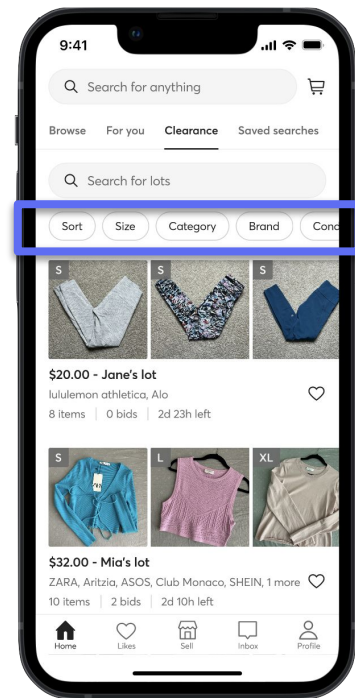
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UXR/BI

## Search

How do buyers prefer to search and/or filter clearance lots?



# Thanks!

**Thanks to @Minami @Adrian @Michelle for help with the study plan and prototypes!**

**Have any questions?**

**Reach out to UXR @Megan on Slack**

# Links to Working Docs

- [Confluence page](#)
- [Drive Folder](#)
- [Study Plan](#)
- [Activity Board](#)