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Body language at auctions

Body language expert and Coast local Allan Pease shares his insights into how to read other bidders and keep your cool during an auction.

Keep it casual

Most of the time, people will have their arms crossed at an auction, and most will try to keep a wooden face so they don't look conspicuous. The key to being a discreet bidder is to not follow what the crowd is doing. Be very casual, like you bid at auction every day.

Practise makes perfect

Don't be afraid to practise 'being casual' in front of a mirror. Breath deeply so you can relax and make sure you don't cross your legs or your arms or touch your face. Lean up against something and act like you're bored.

Have a strategy

A good strategy at an auction is to keep switching positions. If you're standing middle-left, casually move to the right, or go and stand to the back. Keep changing position - auctioneers don't like it, and the other bidders won't know what's going on. If you're in a couple, be sure to split up.

Read your competition

If you're in a bidding war with someone else, look for signals that they may be approaching their limit. When they are nearing their breaking point, they'll generally show tension in their face and will even put their hand over their mouth.



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