

Barter Instead of Buying!

Have you noticed that "economy" isn't part of the economy? Things cost money, and lots of it. Maybe the things are worth as much as ever, and only the money is worth less. However, there is a way to get what you need without money. It's called **bartering**.

Bartering is an economy without money. American Indians used it. So do many other peoples. The French call it "System D" for "débrouillard," ("the smart guy"). Here's how bartering works:

1. Define what you need.
2. Determine who has it or could do it.
3. Contact that person and see what he needs.
4. See if you have it or could do it.
5. Make a win-win deal so everybody's happy.

Here's an example of how it worked for me. I had a beat-up old truck with a bad transmission. I bought a nicer-looking old truck with a bad engine for \$100, so I could pull its transmission out for my truck. One of my friends is a retired body-and-fender man, and he has a son who is a good auto mechanic. He'd bought an engine from me but still owed me money. The deal we made was that he'd put the transmission and good parts from the nicer-looking old truck on my old truck. In turn, he wouldn't have to pay me the rest of the money for the engine.

I ended up with a working transmission in my truck, and a lot of shiny body parts replacing the beat-up ones on my truck. It looks like a new truck! He ended up owing me nothing for the engine he'd bought from me. Everybody's happy!

Barter works. Before you pay for something, why not see if you can barter your way into getting it?

You might swap painting a room in someone's house for a pressure cooker and boxes of jelly jars. Or, a bicycle for a set of how-to books. Or, an old computer for a food dehydrator. Or, mowing a lawn to get plastic barrels for water storage. You get the idea, right?

There's no sales tax on bartering. That's why governments hate it.

And it can be a good way to make a friend.