

7 Bartering Rules To Write In Stone

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In old times, people were exchanging goods, today we barter with paper money issued by the government. Whether people realize it or not, the bartering system is still alive and well. We do it every single day, when we go to the grocery store, the gas station, and when we pay the rent.

In a SHTF-type of scenario, paper money is completely and utterly useless. If you think that having a pig pile of supply will save you, think twice! You'll still need to be able to barter with other survivors to get the supplies you need to survive.

Here's what you need to know when it comes to [bartering with other survivors](#) in a SHTF situation. Keep in mind that your life may depend on your ability to barter and acquire food and other supplies, so take these to heart.

Do I Really Need to Know How to Barter?

In case you aren't familiar with the barter system, it's pretty easy to understand. It can be defined simply as the exchange of goods or services between two people. For example, if you needed your car repaired, you would go to a mechanic who would require some form of payment in exchange for his services to fix up your automobile.

Most people today feel safe and sound in the current government issued currency situation, and don't believe that anything is going to happen to upset things. However, all one needs to do is look at what happened in New Orleans after Hurricane Katrina. People were stuck without any access to funds or outside help, so they were strictly on their own for survival.

For a barter economy to take over, we have to assume a major disaster; something that is serious enough that people aren't confident in the government's ability to back the value of the dollar.

Most disasters, such as natural disasters, martial law or civil war, won't create a situation where a barter economy is needed. People will still use cash for their transactions, as long as they have cash to use. They will only resort to barter when they are out of cash.

That paints us a pretty ugly picture, one in which much of what we depend on to survive is lost. But that's the ideal situation for those of us who are prepared and who have taken the time to learn the necessary skills to survive. We can take care of the opportunity to trade our skills for what others may have that we can use.

So, what sorts of skills will be useful for bartering in that time?

- General survival skills – If power is down, something as simple as starting a fire or purifying water will be a valuable skill as many won't know how to do those things.
- Medical skills – Medical skills of all kinds will be in high demand, as normal medical services will be overrun. Sickness and accidents will increase, making these skills highly valuable.
- Midwifery – Midwives will take over from medical doctors for most childbirths. The difficulty of getting to a doctor will make this necessary.
- Gardening – Yes, something as simple as gardening will be valuable, as there won't be enough

food. Your vegetable garden will become very valuable. Being able to help your neighbors start their own gardens, which would mean having seeds for them to use as well, could be the key skill to build a neighborhood survival team, with you as the leader.

- Animal husbandry – For the very same reason that gardening will be valuable, being able to raise livestock to feed yourself will become valuable.
- [Any sort of repair skills](#) – With the loss of electricity or a market, products will become unavailable. People will need to keep what they have, getting it repaired if it breaks. This includes anything from repairing small appliances to vehicles and heavy machinery.
- Small engine repair – Most mechanics are somewhat baffled when faced by small engines. But there will be a greater need to repair power tools, than cars.
- Mechanics – When the economy is in trouble, people don't replace their cars. They have them repaired and keep using them longer.
- Building trades – While there won't be as much demand for this as some of the other skills I'm mentioning, rebuilding society will require the ability to build new buildings or more likely, rebuild existing buildings to accomplish new purposes.
- [Blacksmithing](#) – In olden times, the blacksmith was the local hardware store, tool manufacturer and general repair man. As people adjust to the new lifestyle, we will see a need for those skills resurface.
- Practical engineering – From communications to pumping water, a host of infrastructure will need to be created, for those who survive. If the current communications network is destroyed by an EMP, some sort of communications will be needed for local governance and defense.
- Clergy – Many people will have a struggle with adjusting to their new lifestyle. Clergy and other counselors will be needed for those who can't make the transition on their own. Clergy will also be needed for the functions of baptisms, weddings and funerals.
- Military – With any sort of breakdown of society, there is an increase in lawlessness. Some will gather together, forming gangs to prey on others and steal the necessities of life. If you can't defend yourself or your neighborhood can't defend itself, then you'll become victims.

Determining the actual value of your skills will be challenging. It's challenging enough trying to figure out the value of goods and services in normal times; in those decidedly abnormal times, it will be much harder to calculate.

Basically, we're talking about the law of supply and demand here. If there's a lot of clean water available, then purifying water isn't going to be all that valuable. But if the city water supply is known to be contaminated, that same water will go up extensively.

Which Items Are Absolutely Essential?

The type of items you need to make it through a SHTF situation can be broken down into two groups. The first group is made up of items you absolutely must have in order to live. The second group is creature comforts.

Two things you must have in order to survive are food and water. These two are your number one priority. Since you need these items to live, that means others do too. If you have livestock and crops, these can be as good as gold in a bartering situation. By trading food and water you can almost guarantee you will get whatever you need from someone looking to trade. Make sure that you have a way to replenish your supply before you begin to trade these items, otherwise you will be in big trouble.

Another important group of items you will need is camping and hunting gear. Hunting will be one of your main sources of getting high protein food to eat and sustain your strength. Any item that can be used to survive away from urban areas will be great for trading with other people. Be sure to visit local hunting and outdoors shops and stock up on supplies when they are putting items on sale. This will make sure that when things go south, you will have "currency" to trade with those who don't have the means of hunting or finding suitable lodging.

Creature comforts make the second group of items both to barter with and for are comfort items. These are items that aren't necessary to sustain life, but they do make things more comfortable, and a little less dark.

Hygienic supplies like soap, toothpaste, and toilet paper are some of the best supplies to trade with. Staying clean is incredibly important to your health and safety. In a SHTF situation, a cut or scrape that gets infected could lead to death. Stock up on soap and toothpaste and you will have commodities that everyone needs, making you "wealthy" in this type of world.

Another comfort item that is good for barter is alcohol. People love their booze, even in a world that's fallen completely apart. You will be surprised at the great lengths individuals will go to in order to get a cup of moonshine.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=g74BNwXevrA>

Video first seen on [7 TRUMPETS PREPPER](#).

7 Tips to Know for Bartering Safely

The value of everything will shift during that time period. Today, we value gold, silver and jewels. Those may retain value, but they won't be very easy to barter. That's because they won't be useful for survival. The only people who would be interested in trading for gold and silver will be people who have enough excess that they don't need to have in order to survive.

1. Be selective

While you might be thinking that a silver teapot isn't worth as much as a ham, you have to realize that you're thinking from the viewpoint of someone living in normal times, where food is plentiful. But that teapot won't help you survive, while the ham will. When there is a serious food shortage, you might be willing to make that trade too.

2. Be fair

Try to be fair as much as possible. I know that some people would say to take advantage of the situation and get as much as possible. But that doesn't mean you should. The problem with that is that you may just succeed in making an enemy. The best deals are those where both parties walk away from it feeling as if they won. A win-win is an especially big win for you.

3. Control your emotions

If you are bartering with someone, it's like playing a game of poker. You don't want to give away too

much information in your body language or facial expressions. Keep a straight face! Do not let the other person see that you are in desperate need of the items they have. If someone sees that you need something badly, the price of the exchange will go up.

4. Don't make yourself a target

Always ask the individual you are bartering with what type of items they are looking for. You do not want to show off your entire inventory to someone you don't know. Start with the items that are of lesser value and work your way up to the valuable ones. Showing off the best you have first could cause you to be harmed by someone who is desperate for that item.

5. Don't trade with weapons at first

Avoid trading with weapons at first. While items like guns and ammunition can be extremely valuable in survival situations, they can also be deadly. Trading with someone you don't know well could lead to someone taking the weapon and using it on you. At that point they will also have access to your entire inventory, leaving you with nothing.

6. Make sure your deal is worked out

Always make sure that your "deal" is worked out before you start working. That way, there won't be any surprises later. Granted, they could still refuse to pay, but at least they won't be able to claim that it's because they didn't think it would be that much. Often, if people aren't planning on paying, they will act disinterested in the negotiating process and look for an opportunity to take advantage; don't allow them that.

7. Bring a friend

Speaking of taking advantage; it's never safe to make a deal alone. You should always have someone there to protect you, preferably behind the people you are talking to. That way, if things turn sour, you have someone positioned to take them out, before they can take you out.

While no one wants to have a situation like this occur, the reality is that we never know what is going to happen day to day. It is better to learn these skills and be prepared, so that if that day comes, you aren't the desperate one roaming around for the basics of life.

Stay well supplied and stocked with the materials mentioned above, and you will be well ahead of the curve when the SHTF. Remember to keep things simple, as our ancestors did. In fact, barter is one of the skills that we have to re-learn from them!



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