

Useful Skills And Items For Bartering After SHTF

There's no way of telling quite how different life after a major disaster or serious collapse of society could be, but humans are remarkably resilient, so life would certainly go on.

One thing is certain, though: in the aftermath of a widespread disaster or the collapse of civil society as we know it, you'll want to have useful [skills and items that you can barter](#) or trade with. In this article, I'd like to discuss some of the most useful items you can stockpile now, as well as skills you can develop that will serve you well should you ever need them.

First, let's start with 5 indispensable skills that you could develop, any one of which will guarantee that your skills will be in high demand in a post-SHTF scenario of just about any scale.

1. **First aid and basic emergency medical care;** think knowing how to stabilize a broken limb pending proper care, how to reduce or stop traumatic bleeding, how and when to apply sutures to a wound, etc. If you're really inclined, you could go all the way and become a medic, a practicing nurse, or a doctor or surgeon. In general, medical training and knowhow are always in demand after a disaster or major catastrophe. There are never enough doctors or medics when you need them, so by developing some of those skills now, you can ensure that you'll have skills that are in high-demand if you ever have need of them.
2. **Mechanical knowledge;** knowing how things work, how they are taken apart, and how to put them back together or repair them with whatever you have on hand, is never

more useful than after TEOTWAWKI (The End Of The World As We Know It). Study up on how to repair generators, farm equipment, even cars (they'll be around for a while, even in the case of most super horrid events). Even being able to fix and repair clocks could serve to be a useful skill, get creative.

3. **Gunsmithing**, repair and ammunition loading; take a moment to think about how many gunsmiths you know. Did you come back with a long list of names? Now think about the number of people you know who own guns and various other firearms, and think about how many firearms are going to be in use in a post-SHTF situation. While you don't necessarily need to turn full arms-dealer, being able to repair various guns and maybe reload some ammunition would be useful skills to have indeed.
4. **Weaving, tailoring, sewing and mending**; while these skills are on the more homely side of things, don't let that fool you. Clothing wears out over time, especially when worn for hard labor, and everyone appreciates a good pair of socks. Holes will need patched, socks will need darned, and eventually new clothing will need to be made.
5. **Butchering animals**; this might take a little while to show its merit, but if you've got the guts and knowhow to slaughter and butcher a variety of animals for consumption, demand for your skills will gradually return and rise as society starts to regulate again. Even during the hardest of times, if you can find work as a butcher it is usually sufficient to allow you to keep food on the table, as you can at least trade your skills as a butcher for a suitable share of the meat, if nothing else.

In addition to those 5 suggestions of useful skills you might choose to acquire, there are also many items that can be stockpiled with relative ease for use in trade and barter.

1. **Cigarettes**, cigars, loose tobacco; supplies may be limited or altogether unavailable after whatever catastrophe has occurred, so [tobacco products](#) would become even more valuable than they already are. Tobacco doesn't keep forever, but properly stored loose tobacco, cigarettes or cigars can last several years.
2. **Lighters**, matches, and/or butane fuel; if electricity grids are down for an extended period of time, or permanently, fire will become integral to daily life. A stockpile of lighters, matches and particularly fuel for refilling lighters, can provide you with a good barter item should you need it.
3. **Alcohol**; in the form of beer, wine, champagne, and various hard liquors, alcohol ranks alongside tobacco for long-term popularity and usefulness as a trade and barter item. If you're so inclined, you could also learn to produce alcoholic beverages, but that requires both the knowhow and the supplies, and may make you the target of potentially violent criminals who compete as producers / suppliers. By contrast, a case or two of fine wine or aged whiskey can just be nice to have on hand in case you need to trade for something or wish to celebrate a very special occasion.
4. **Older (pre-1964) US silver coins**; from dimes and quarters to half-dollars and silver dollars, pre-1964 US coins are comprised of 90% [silver content](#). Because of their various sizes and weights, old US coins are perfect for barter and trade in a post-SHTF scenario or after a major, debilitating disaster.
5. **Non-GMO, organic or heirloom vegetable seeds**; after things settle down following a disaster or serious collapse of civilization, farming will be a top priority for anyone who wants to survive. Having heirloom variety, non-GMO seeds is another way to ensure that you have something valuable to trade and barter with if you ever need it.
6. **Sugar, salt, pepper, and other spices**; many spices are

quite affordable these days, but spices, sugar, even salt were much scarcer commodities traditionally. Stocking up on these kitchen staples now can provide you with desirable commodities for trade or barter, as well as for use in your own cooking and meals.

7. **Spare tools and basic hardware;** think along the lines of hammers, saws, wrenches, nails, screws and other basic odds and ends. Even a few pairs of decent work gloves could prove to be a useful barter item, but nails, hammers and other basic tools will definitely be in high demand post-SHTF.

A surprising new discovery: if you're covered for an EMP you're prepared for anything

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