

## *Free Stuff In This Age Of Austerity*

What can you get totally free in this age of austerity? Quite a lot. If you are reading this, you can of course watch all manner of films and documentaries for free on YouTube, and there are all sorts of apps you can use to edit video files, compress PDFs, etc, but what can you find on-line for free in the real world?

Over the past few years, a number of websites have sprung up that offer all kinds of freebies. There is [Nextdoor](#), a social network which is very different from Facebook. In the UK, this is the successor to the short-lived [Streetlife](#), whose [domain](#) now belongs to a company that manufactures street furniture.

Nextdoor advertises local businesses, listings, public services and the like in your local area, but also allows people to offer free stuff which they might otherwise throw away. It is all rather hit and miss, but you never know what you might find.

[Freecycle](#) is a dedicated free network which boasts over nine million members worldwide.



**According to its homepage;**

**MEMBERSHIP IS ALWAYS FREE**

**OPERATION IS GRASSROOTS AND 100% NONPROFIT**

**LOCAL TOWNS ARE MODERATED BY VOLUNTEERS**

**ZERO TOLERANCE OF SCAMS, SPAM AND ADULT CONTENT**

Freecycle has now been operating for eighteen years.

**Freegle** is a UK offshoot of Freecycle, and has been around since 2009. It claims to have over three million members, and works on an ask and offer basis. As might be suspected, there will always be more people asking than offering.

The latest arrival is **FREETRADE** which calls itself a private exchange club that allows users to search, connect and trade locally for free. It is a bit like eBay but “for free, and without being spied on and your data sold”.

Finally, **Loot** and **Gumtree** are advertising sites which offer some free adverts. **Loot** actually started as a newspaper back in the 1980s; it was known as London’s noticeboard, but now exists in cyberspace only. **Gumtree** was founded in 2000 but was acquired by eBay five years later.

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