

# The Definition of "Price"

Prices determine how resources are to be used. They are also the means by which products and services that are in limited supply are **rationed** among buyers. The price system of the United States is a complex network composed of the prices of all the products bought and sold in the economy as well as those of a **myriad** of services, including labor, professional, transportation, and **public-utility** services. The **interrelationships** of all these prices make up the "system" of prices. The price of any particular product or service is linked to a broad, complicated system of prices in which everything seems to depend more or less upon everything else.

If one were to ask a group of randomly selected individuals to define "price", many would reply that price is an amount of money paid by the buyer to the seller of a product or service or, in other words, that price is the money value of a product or service as agreed upon in a market **transaction**. This definition is, of course, **valid** as far as it goes. For a complete understanding of a price in any particular transaction, much more than the amount of money involved must be known. Both the buyer and the seller should be familiar with not only the money amount, but with the amount and quality of the product or service to be exchanged, the time and place at which the exchange will take place and payment will be made, the form of money to be used, the credit terms and discounts that apply to the transaction, **guarantees** on the product or service, **delivery** terms, return **privileges**, and other factors. In other words, both buyer and seller should be fully aware of all the factors that comprise the total "package" being exchanged for the asked-for amount of money in order that they may evaluate a given price.

译文

## "价格"的定义

价格决定资源的使用方式。价格也是有限的产品与服务在买方中的配给手段。美国的价格系统是复杂的网状系统，包括经济生活中一切产品买卖的价格，也包括名目繁多的各种服务，诸如劳动力、专职人员、交通运输、公共事业等服务的价格。所有这些价格的内在联系构成了价格系统。任何一种个别产品或服务的价格都与这个庞大而复杂的系统密切相关，而且或多或少地受到系统中其它成份的制约。

如果随机挑选一群人，问问他们如何定义"价格"，许多人会回答价格就是根据卖方提供的产品或服务，买方向其付出的钱数。换句话说，价格就是市场交易中大家认同的产品或服务的货币量。该定义就其本身来说自有其道理。但要获得对价格在任何一桩交易中的完整认识，就必须考虑到大量"非货币"因素的影响。买卖双方不但要清楚交易中的钱数，而且要非常熟悉交易物的质量和数量，交易的时间、地点，采用哪种形式付款，有怎样的缓付和优惠，对交易物的质量保证、交货条款、退赔权利等等。也就是说，为了能估算索价，买卖双方必须通晓构成交易物价格的通盘细节。

ration	/'ræʃən/	v. 限量分配
be composed of		由...组成
myriad	/'miriəd/	n. 无数的 a great and varied number
public-utility		n. 公共事业
transaction	/træn'zækʃən/	n. 交易
valid	/'vælid/	a. 站得住脚
guarantee	/'gærən'ti:/	n. 保单, 保证书
delivery	/di'livəri/	n. 交付
privilege	/'privilidʒ/	n. 特权
interrelationship	/intə'rri:ʃənʃɪp/	