

What Is Hard Money?

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In traditional economics, money is defined by three core functions:

- A medium of exchange
- A unit of account
- A store of value

These attributes allow people to transact efficiently, compare prices, and save purchasing power over time. But money is more than just a tool-it's a shared language that civilizations use to coordinate trust, value, and time across space.

The History of Money

Money has taken many forms throughout history-from shells, beads, and cattle to silver, gold, paper currency, and now digital ledgers. Societies converge on what works: the most salable, durable, divisible, and transportable commodity. Gold dominated for centuries due to its scarcity and physical properties. Fiat money, backed by governments rather than intrinsic value, became dominant in the 20th century-but not without tradeoffs.

Broken Money

"Broken money breaks everything else." - Lyn Alden

When money loses its integrity-through inflation, central manipulation, or devaluation-it distorts economic signals. Savings are eroded, long-term planning becomes risky, and wealth concentrates near the money printer. History shows repeated collapses of fiat systems when trust fails. As Lyn Alden notes in her book **Broken Money**, debasement leads to dislocation in nearly every part of society.

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Hard money refers to a form of money that is resistant to debasement or arbitrary creation. It is governed by strict rules of supply and requires real effort (proof of work, physical mining, etc.) to produce. Hard money maintains purchasing power across time and protects savers from inflationary erosion.

Examples include:

- Gold (historically)
- Bitcoin (digitally native hard money)

Hard money serves as an incorruptible base layer of economic trust-especially when political systems falter.

Money as a Language

Beyond accounting and exchange, money is a language-a numerical system through which humans communicate value, coordinate action, and remember economic relationships across generations.

Like any language, it can be corrupted or refined. Hard money refines this language by anchoring it in reality-where truth is measured in time, energy, and scarcity, not decree.