

Sharing economy

The post-capitalist life

From utopian commoning to “creative capitalism”, here are 18 ways to swap, borrow, barter, donate and freeload your way through Berlin.



Christoph Neumann

COLLABORATIVE FIXES

Meet the Berlin altruists who want to make your life better.

Fix your body

Yoga's all about letting go of the material world – so why is it so damn expensive? Monday nights at 6:30pm, Monika Herre will treat your body to hatha yoga for absolutely zilch at the **Famlienzentrum Menschens-kinder** in Friedrichshain. For expert knowledge, Juli Saragosa of **English Yoga Berlin** by Görlitzer Park holds sliding-scale donation classes on Wednesdays and Sundays, and lets you practise hatha, vinyasa or “Queer Flow” in exchange for flyering or cleaning the studio, with an hour-to-hour rate. If you're the high-intensity type, join Berlin-based online meetup group **Freeletics**, started just a few months ago and based on the Crossfit-like exercise programme of the same name. Once a week, Chris, the group's Latvian organiser, leads group jogging, stretching, core and endurance exercises in public places like Treptower Park. Around 15 people attend each session (and, sometimes, blow it all by going out for beers after). — HS

Fix your German (finally!)

Lacking both the money and commitment to make a real go at learning German? Audrey Liehn and the other five founders of **Deutsch für Dich** just might be your guardian angels. Founded in 2010 and held in the Richardkiez bar Kleinod (Niemetzstr. 24), it's a donation-based, volunteer-run language class with

worksheets and everything. Up to 35 people at a time drop in on classes covering four levels from beginner to expert, with an additional “conversation” course focusing on literature and figures of speech. A small grant from the Richardkiez neighbourhood council helps keep them afloat, but you're still expected to donate €2-6. It's worth it, though – where else can you learn German for less than the price of a beer? — HS

Fix your stuff

Do you have a busted watch, a cracked phone or a sweater with moth holes? Despite the hype from a few years ago cooling down, **repair cafés** are still very much a thing in Berlin, with locations in just about every *Kiez* teeming with experts and hobbyists who'll tinker with your broken stuff once or twice a month after work. These menders are usually just volunteers who do this either for fun, out of political conviction or just out of the goodness of their hearts. Check repaircafe.de for the full list, and call or email ahead to make sure your café of choice has someone who specialises in what you need fixed. This being Berlin, there are several dedicated to bikes alone: **Repair Café Fahrräder** (Goebenstr. 12) in Schöneberg, open every day of the week except Sunday, will provide you with spare parts and small to large fixes totally free of charge, and your bike will likely be ready for pick up the same day. Alternatively, learn how to fix it yourself at **Regenbogenfabrik**, a bicycle workshop that offers repairs, assistance and advice for a donation of around €3 per hour. You may not even need to pay for someone else to fix your bike ever again; now *that's* investment. — HS

“SHARING” CAPITALISM

These projects may look and smell like post-capitalism, but they're pure Silicon Valley. Which doesn't mean you can't profit from them yourself...

Network for free

The fact that it's held at slick Schöneberg co-working space RoofUp might clue you in that the 2011-founded **Berlin Skills Exchange** isn't exactly a bunch of idealists trading gardening know-how for homeopathic massage technique. Nah, this is an old-fashioned networking mixer and workshop series geared towards start-uppy self-actualisation folks – at the last two-hour session, some 50 attendees took corporate personality tests. Other meet-ups feature everything from karate to the video instruction platform UDEmy, but don't get the wrong idea: organiser Ralph Pache says the group is more about exchanging ideas for fun and curiosity, not gaining fully new skills totally free of charge. — HS

Your “content” for a seat

Are you a freelance blogger, photographer, Youtuber or Instagrammer looking for somewhere your laptop can call home (outside your actual home, that is)? As part of the creative *Prekariat*, you might not have the money... but you have content. Welcome to the trendy world of “co-creative labour” at **Blogfabrik** on Kreuzberg's





Free bicycle repair in Schöneberg.



Johanna Warda

Oranienstraße, where payment for your contributions to an online magazine called Daily Bread comes in the form of a co-working desk. One article a month gets you a non-fixed seat, two a fixed one – if you’re “hired” via online application, that is. It’s a new business idea by an old corporation, Munich’s Trunk group, but the 50 or so bright young creatives who work there, from Youtube gender activist Tarik Tesfu to the women behind design-y dating site Im Gegenteil, don’t seem to mind being part of this Silicon Valley-esque experiment. They’re just grateful for the access to the conference room, photo studio and video-editing suite, not to mention the opportunity to mingle with fellow international “content creators” in a cute, succulent-filled Kotti loft. Joining the ranks of the new exploited class has never been more appealing! — *HS*

