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## How snowbirds can buy U.S. dollars on the cheap

**ROB CARRICK**

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The Canadian dollar is pretty much where it was a year ago, which is not great news for snowbirds. Our currency is worth about 75 cents U.S. on the wholesale market, which means you might pay \$135 or more to buy \$100 U.S. dollars. Ouch.

Buying U.S. dollars at your bank is convenient, but expensive. Foreign exchange is one of retail banking's reliable [profit centres](#). A few options for cheaper rates:

- The Canadian Snowbird Association's [currency exchange program](#): The group says members get an "exclusive, preferred exchange rate."
- [Knightsbridge Foreign Exchange](#): Budget travel expert Barry Choi says they're the [cheapest option](#) for people who need to exchange large sums of money – above \$2,000.
- Search for independent forex dealers in your city or neighborhood on Google: A lot of these outlets post their conversion rates online.

I invite snowbirds and other regular visitors to the United States to contact me at [rcarrick@globeandmail.com](mailto:rcarrick@globeandmail.com) to offer their best tips for exchanging Canadian money into U.S. dollars. If I get enough good suggestions, I'll gather them up in a future edition of this e-mail.

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