

# The Adventures of Pricing a Plumbus

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## **Abstract**

A Plumbus is a fictional item in the cartoon sci-fi television show Rick and Morty. In the episode, it is shown how a Plumbus is made and its relative worth compared to other items. The price of a Plumbus in a real-world currency is not revealed.

It is the inquire of this paper to find the price of a plumbus using relative pricing. Using relative pricing, the price of a plumbus is somewhere between \$0.11 and \$0.22. Possible explanations for the ultra-low cost of a plumbus is discussed.

## **What is a Plumbus**

A Plumbus is a fictional item in the cartoon sci-fi television show Rick and Morty. It appears in one episode: Season 2 Episode 8 Interdimensional Cable 2: Tempting Fate, Aired September 20, 2015. An owners manual was also produced and came with the DVD set of the season. In the episode, it is shown how a Plumbus is made and its relative worth compared to other items. The price of a Plumbus in a real-world currency is not revealed. It is stated everyone has a plumbus in her or his homes, making it a common item. It is the inquire of this paper to find the price of a plumbus using relative pricing. Follow me on an adventure through economic pricing.

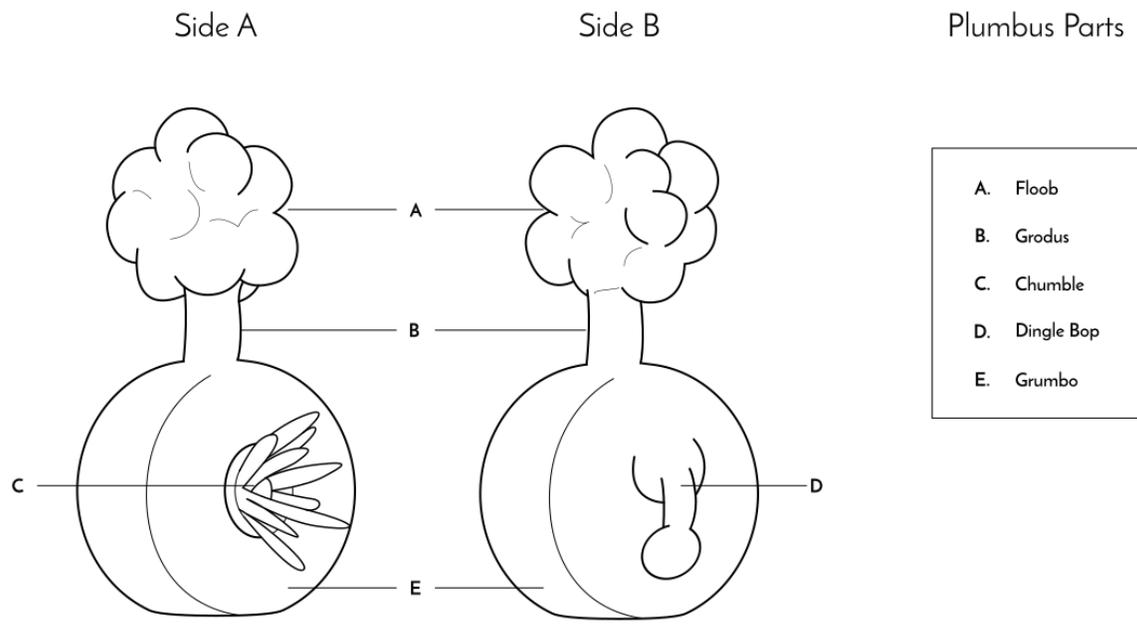


Figure 1: Diagram of a Plumbus

### Stealy's Valuation

Stealy is a humanoid character in the episode that steals several common office objects and then reveals the prices of them in brapples, a fictional currency. The three items he values are bobbish (food in a packaged bag, looks similar to a bag of potato chips) valued at 8 brapples, plumbus valued at 6.5 brapples, and three crushed red party cups valued at 15.5 brapples. Brapples are different when Stealy is comparing items. They appear in three different ways; as an apple fused with meat on a bone, poultry with blue innards, and a three-legged fish. It is unknown what brapples actually are; a currency, a rating system, a meal, a unit of measure (like calories), or a commodity. The value and price of brapples are unknown, however the other objects Stealy shows can be priced. The price of a Plumbus can then be determined based on the relative price of the other object.

### Pricing Plumbus with Relative Price

Since Bobbish does not exist on earth a substitute of potato chips will be used. The United States Department of Agriculture Economic Research

Service or USDA ERS puts the retail price of one serving size of 1.1 ounces of potato chips to be \$0.27. If a serving size equals 8 grapples than one grapple is worth \$0.03. This method produces a price of a plumbus to be \$0.22. This values Plumbus based on Bobbish and assuming a substitute of potato chips.

The other items for relative pricing are three crushed red party cups. On Target.com a 72 pack of 18 ounces Solo red party cups cost \$6.49. On Walmart.com a 60 pack of 18 ounces Solo red party cups cost \$5.58. A cost for three, 18-ounce Solo red party cups is \$0.27 for Target and \$0.28 for Walmart. This method makes the price for a Plumbus to be \$0.11 and \$0.12 rounded.

Method	Cost per Pack	Cost per Unit	Cost for Item	Grabbles	Price per Grapple	Plumbus in Grabbles	Price for a Plumbus
One Serving Size Potato Chips			\$0.27	8	\$0.034	6.5	\$0.22
3 Red Solo Cups Target.com pack of 72	\$6.49	\$0.09	\$0.27	15.5	\$0.017	6.5	\$0.11
3 Red Solo Cups Walmart.com pack of 60	\$5.58	\$0.09	\$0.28	15.5	\$0.018	6.5	\$0.12

Figure 2: Calculating the price of a plumbus

### Price a Plumbus: How they do it

Using relative pricing, the price of a plumbus is somewhere between \$0.11 and \$0.22. The cost of labor on an alien world is unknown, however in the part of the episode called 'Plumbus: How they do it' the process of making a plumbus is shown. The process requires several humanoid workers completing multiple tasks. Finishing the construction of a plumbus is not quick and takes significant time. It seems puzzling that the price of a plumbus would be so low, possibly lower than the cost of labor to produce. What can explain this disconnect?

The value of labor where the plumbus is made might be very different. Because of the importance of a plumbus, the humanoids that make plumbus could be volunteers making the cost of labor to be external to the price of a plumbus. Another explanation is that because the importance of the plumbus the government may subsidize the manufacturing of plumbus. These reasons could explain the puzzle of the low price for a plumbus and the possible higher cost of labor to produce. The other factor in the price is the valuation from Stealy.

Stealy was stealing items, and it could be the value of a plumbus significantly decreases once stolen, or after the first owner. Bobbish might be much more valuable than its substitute of potato chips. Crushed red party cups are not valuable on earth, but they might be incredibly valuable on a distant planet because of scarcity or labor and energy to transport them. Stealy has a financial interest and could intentionally or unintentionally misquoted the prices of the items.

The author states having no financial interests and owns no grapples.

**Work Cited:**

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