

FREE GUIDE & PLANNER

The Etsy Startup *Guide & Planner*

From "I could sell these" to your first sales — picking your niche, setting up your shop, listings that get found, pricing that pays you, and a 30-day launch plan.

7 STEPS TO OPEN

PRICING FORMULA

LISTING SEO

30-DAY LAUNCH PLAN

Yes, you can actually do this.

Every Etsy shop you admire started with someone at a kitchen table wondering if their stuff was good enough. The difference between them and everyone still wondering? They listed something. This guide walks you from idea to first sales in seven honest steps — no "quit your job in 30 days" nonsense, just how Etsy actually works in 2026.

WHAT YOU'LL NEED

- ☐ **Something to sell** — handmade, vintage (20+ years old), or craft supplies. Digital products count too.
- ☐ **A phone camera + daylight** — that's your photo studio for now.
- ☐ **~£15 to start** — Etsy charges about \$0.20 (~16p) per listing plus fees when you sell. No monthly cost on the standard plan.
- ☐ **A few hours a week** — consistency beats marathons.

THE 7 STEPS

- ☐ **1 · Pick your niche** — specific sells
- ☐ **2 · Set up shop properly** — name, branding, policies
- ☐ **3 · Photos that stop the scroll**
- ☐ **4 · Listings that get found** — Etsy SEO
- ☐ **5 · Price it properly** — the formula
- ☐ **6 · Win your first 10 sales**
- ☐ **7 · Market beyond Etsy**

The mindset shift: Etsy is a search engine with a checkout, not an art gallery. Shops win by matching what real people type into that search bar — then delighting them so they come back. Keep that in mind and half of this guide will feel obvious.

Pick a niche, not a category

"Jewellery" is a category with millions of listings. "Minimalist birth-flower necklaces for new mums" is a niche someone actually searches for. On Etsy, the specific shop beats the general one nearly every time — it's easier to find, easier to remember and easier to buy from as a gift.

A strong niche = what you love making + what people already buy + a twist that's yours

Test "what people already buy": search your idea on Etsy. Do the top results have hundreds or thousands of reviews? Good — that's demand, not competition to fear. No results at all is a warning sign, not an opportunity.

What could you happily make 100 of?

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Who is it for, and what occasion? (gift niches are Etsy gold — birthdays, new baby, weddings, teachers)

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Search it on Etsy. What are the top 3 shops doing well? What would you do differently?

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Write your niche in one line: "I sell _____ for _____ who want _____"

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Don't overthink it. Your niche will sharpen as you see what sells. Pick the best idea you have today — you can rename, reshoot and relist later. Every big shop pivoted at least once.

Set up shop like you mean it

Buyers decide in seconds whether a shop feels trustworthy. A complete profile with consistent branding out-converts a half-finished one at any price point. Work through this once, properly:

- ☐ **Shop name** — short, easy to spell, not boxed-in ("LunaBloomStudio" survives a pivot; "LunaCatEarrings" doesn't). Check the name is free on Instagram too.

- ☐ **Logo & banner** — clean and simple beats fancy. Canva is free; pick two colours and one font and stick to them everywhere.

- ☐ **Shop announcement** — one line: what you sell, for whom, dispatch time.

- ☐ **About section with your face** — people pay extra to buy from a real maker. Photo of you + why you started + how it's made.

- ☐ **Policies: returns, dispatch, postage** — clear policies reduce disputes and Etsy favours complete shops.

- ☐ **Plan 5–10 listings for launch** — a shop with one listing looks abandoned. More listings = more doors into your shop from search.

- ☐ **Sort the boring bits** — bank details for Etsy Payments, and a note to check HMRC's rules on declaring side income (the trading allowance covers your first £1,000/yr).

Shop name ideas (check availability)

Your two colours + one font

Photos that stop the scroll

Your photo is your shop window, your salesperson and your first impression — buyers see it before your title, your price or your five-star reviews. You don't need a camera. You need daylight, a tidy background and these shots:

- 1 The hero** — product on a clean, plain background, filling most of the frame. This is your thumbnail; it must read clearly even tiny.
- 2 In context** — the mug on a desk, the print on a wall, the earrings worn. Helps buyers picture it in their life (and shows scale).
- 3 The details** — close-up of texture, stitching, glaze, engraving. This is where "handmade" earns its price.
- 4 Scale shot** — in a hand, next to a coin or ruler. Kills the #1 cause of bad reviews: "smaller than I expected".
- 5 Packaging / gift-ready** — most Etsy purchases are gifts. Show it wrapped and ready to delight someone.
- 6 Variations** — colours, sizes, personalisation options in one shot.

Free lightbox: a big window (not direct sun), a sheet of white card curved behind the product, and your phone's portrait mode. Shoot everything in the same spot so your shop looks consistent.

Add a 5–15s video to each listing — a slow turn of the product in your hands. Listings with video convert better and Etsy nudges them in search. Phone footage is exactly right.

Listings that get found

Etsy SEO sounds technical; it isn't. It's writing your listing with the same words your buyer types into search. Think like the buyer: nobody searches "Aurora" — they search "personalised name necklace gold".

- ☐ **Title: put the search phrase first** — "Personalised Birth Flower Necklace · New Mum Gift · Gold" beats "The Aurora ✨". Front-load the words that matter.
- ☐ **Use all 13 tags, every listing** — multi-word phrases ("new mum gift", "birth flower jewellery"), not single words. Empty tags are free traffic left on the table.
- ☐ **Mix head terms and long-tail** — a few big phrases ("name necklace") plus specific ones ("gift for plant mum") where you can actually rank early on.
- ☐ **First two lines of description sell** — what it is, why it's special, who it's perfect for. Then materials, sizes, dispatch times, care.
- ☐ **Fill every attribute** — colour, occasion, material. Attributes are search filters; skip them and you vanish from filtered results.
- ☐ **Steal your keywords honestly** — type your product into Etsy's search bar and note the autocomplete suggestions. That's real buyer language, free.
- ☐ **Renew and iterate** — after 30 days, check stats. Views but no favourites? Photo problem. Favourites but no sales? Price or trust problem. No views? Keywords.

Brainstorm 13 tags for your first listing (phrases a buyer would type)

Price it so it pays you

The most common Etsy mistake isn't bad photos — it's pricing for "what feels cheap enough" and quietly paying customers to take your work. Your time is a cost. Use the formula:

(Materials + Your time × hourly rate + Fees & postage) × 2 = your price

The ×2 isn't greed — it's what funds replacements, failed batches, sales/discounts, and eventually paying yourself properly. Etsy's cut (listing, transaction + payment fees, plus offsite ads if they apply) typically lands around 10–15% — build it in, don't discover it later.

WORKSHEET • PRICE ONE PRODUCT

Materials cost per item

Etsy fees (~12% of price)

Minutes to make × your hourly rate (pay yourself at least minimum wage)

Total costs × 2 =

Packaging + postage cost

Top-3 competitor prices for comparison

If your price comes out "too high": don't cut your wage. Either reduce making time (batch, simplify), raise perceived value (photos, packaging, personalisation), or make a different product. Competing to be cheapest on Etsy is a race you don't want to win.

Win your first 10 sales

The first sales are the hardest — no reviews, no history, no momentum. That's normal, and it's temporary. Your job in month one is simple: get 10 sales and 5 reviews by any honest means, because they unlock everything after.

- ☐ **Launch with 5–10 listings, not 1** — each listing is another way into your shop from search.
- ☐ **Tell everyone you know** — not to guilt-buy, but to share. One share to the right person is a sale. Post it in your own socials with the link.
- ☐ **Run a launch offer** — 15% off for the first fortnight. Etsy lets you set up a sale in a couple of clicks; "launch week" is a reason to buy now.
- ☐ **Over-deliver on the first orders** — handwritten thank-you, careful wrapping, fast dispatch, then a polite message asking for a review once it's arrived.
- ☐ **Answer messages fast** — speed builds trust and Etsy tracks responsiveness. A saved reply for common questions helps.
- ☐ **Expect the quiet** — days with zero views happen to every new shop. Iterate weekly (photos, tags, prices); don't refresh hourly.

The review flywheel: sales bring reviews → reviews bring trust → trust brings sales. Every part of this page exists to spin that wheel the first few turns. After ~10 reviews, the shop starts pulling its own weight.

Market beyond the marketplace

Etsy brings you buyers, but it also owns the relationship — and charges for the privilege. The shops that last build their own audience alongside. Start small:

- ☐ **Instagram: show the making** — process reels (15s of your hands working) are the highest-performing content for makers. Post 3×/week: process, product, you.
- ☐ **Pinterest: your quiet salesperson** — pin every product photo with a keyword-rich description. Pins surface in search for months, and Etsy links are welcome there.
- ☐ **Local: markets & stockists** — one craft fair gives you customer conversations, email signups and photos of real people loving your stuff.
- ☐ **Start collecting emails** — a note in every parcel with a signup offer ("10% off your next order"). Your list is the only audience no algorithm can take away.
- ☐ **Eventually: your own website** — once you have repeat customers, a simple site of your own means no marketplace fees on your loyal buyers, and a brand that's fully yours. (That's the bit we help with — see the back page.)

Which one channel will you commit to this month?

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What goes on your parcel insert?

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Your 30-day launch plan

From nothing to an open, selling shop in a month — one small task a day. Tick as you go; cross out and rewrite anything that doesn't fit.

Day 1 Write your niche one-liner (Step 1)	Day 2 Research top 3 competitor shops	Day 3 Pick shop name; check Etsy + Instagram	Day 4 Make logo + banner in Canva	Day 5 Open the shop; fill About + policies
Day 6 Decide your first 5 products	Day 7 Price them with the formula (Step 5)	Day 8 Set up your photo spot; test shots	Day 9 Shoot product 1 & 2 (all 6 shot types)	Day 10 Shoot product 3–5
Day 11 Keyword research: Etsy autocomplete	Day 12 Write listing 1: title, 13 tags, description	Day 13 Write listings 2 & 3	Day 14 Write listings 4 & 5	Day 15 Film 15s video for each listing
Day 16 Publish everything. Shop is LIVE 🎉	Day 17 Set up launch offer (15% off, 2 weeks)	Day 18 Announce on your personal socials	Day 19 Create shop Instagram; first post	Day 20 Post a process reel
Day 21 Set up Pinterest; pin all products	Day 22 Prepare thank-you notes + inserts	Day 23 Ask 3 friends to share (not buy)	Day 24 Post: the story of why you started	Day 25 Check stats: views? favourites? adjust
Day 26 Add 1–2 new listings	Day 27 Post another process reel	Day 28 Research one local craft market	Day 29 Fill in your numbers tracker	Day 30 Review month 1; plan month 2

Listing planner

One page per product — reprint as needed. Fill this in **before** you open the listing form and the listing takes 10 minutes instead of an evening.

Product name (what the buyer calls it, not your pet name for it)

Who buys it, and for what occasion?

Title (search phrase first, ~120 characters)

13 tags (multi-word phrases)

First two lines of description (what it is · why it's special · who it's for)

Price (from the formula)

Photos done? hero · context · detail · scale · gift · video

Monthly numbers tracker

Five minutes at the end of each month. The pattern across three months tells you more than any single number — and "views but no sales" vs "no views at all" are different problems with different fixes (see Step 4).

WHAT TO TRACK	THIS MONTH	LAST MONTH	NOTES
Shop visits			
Orders			
Revenue			
Conversion rate (orders ÷ visits)			
Reviews (total)			
Best-selling listing			
Where traffic came from (Etsy search / social / direct)			

One goal for next month (a number, not a vibe)

One experiment to try (new product, new photos, new tags...)

Benchmarks so you don't panic: a 1–3% conversion rate is normal on Etsy. 100 visits and 2 sales? You're doing fine — now go get more visits.



Stop wondering. *List something.*

A month from now you could still be thinking about it — or you could have a live shop, your first orders, and proof that people will pay for what you make. Follow the plan. Tick the boxes. Post the reel.

And when your shop outgrows the marketplace and you want a beautiful website of your own — that's what we do. Fast, gorgeous sites for makers and small businesses, live in days.

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