



A COMPLETE ETSY STARTUP CHECKLIST

Created by SimpleLifeCalc.com

THE FIRST 30 DAYS ON ETSY

Open your shop, list your first products, and land your first sale — one friendly checkbox at a time. No overwhelm allowed.

YOUR 4-WEEK PLAN

1

WEEK 1

Open your shop

2

WEEK 2

Create your listings

3

WEEK 3

Photos & SEO glow-up

4

WEEK 4

Land your first sale

12 checklists · worksheets · progress trackers · a 30-day roadmap to your first sale

Etsy updates fees and policies periodically — confirm current rates in Shop Manager before pricing.

SimpleLifeCalc.com



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This guide is built to be skimmed. Jump to whatever week you're in — every page works on its own, and every checkbox is a tiny win. You don't have to do it all today.

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TIP • ADHD-friendly promise

Short sections. One action per line. Check a box, feel good, stop anytime. Progress beats perfection — a half-finished shop today beats a “perfect” shop that never opens.

1

Welcome! You're Closer Than You Think

Opening an Etsy shop can feel like a hundred tiny decisions stacked into one giant scary one. So we broke that giant decision into 30 small days, four gentle weeks, and a pile of checkboxes. Do one thing, check one box. That's the whole method.

How to use this guide

- **Follow the weeks in order.** Each builds on the last — but if you're already mid-setup, jump to your week.
- **Aim for one short session a day.** 15–30 minutes. This guide is designed for small pockets of time and wandering attention.
- **Check the boxes for real.** Seeing progress pile up is fuel. The trackers on pages 13–14 turn checkboxes into momentum.
- **Done is the goal, not perfect.** You can improve every part of your shop AFTER it's open. Open beats perfect, every time.

GOOD TO KNOW · What you'll have in 30 days

A live, branded Etsy shop · at least 10 real listings · good photos and keyword-smart titles · clear policies and shipping · and the confidence to handle your first sale and first review like a pro.

The 4 weeks at a glance

1

Week 1: Open Your Shop

Account, branding, logo, banner, policies

2

Week 2: Create Your Listings

First 10 products, pricing, shipping setup

3

Week 3: Photos & SEO

Better pictures, keywords buyers actually search

4

Week 4: First Sale Prep

Service, packaging, first sale & review

WEEK 1

Days 1–7 · *let's get you live*

Opening Your Shop

This week is all about getting your shop to exist. By Sunday you'll have a real shop with a name, a look, and rules — even if it has zero listings yet. That's exactly right.

■ SHOP SETUP CHECKLIST

- | | |
|--|--|
| ☐ Create your Etsy account (real email) | ☐ Click “Open Your Etsy Shop” in Shop Manager |
| ☐ Set shop language, country & currency | ☐ Brainstorm 10 shop-name ideas (worksheet) |
| ☐ Check name availability & claim it | ☐ Set up Etsy Payments + bank details |
| ☐ Enable 2-factor login (protect your shop) | ☐ Fill in the 'Shop Owner' bio + photo |

■ BRANDING CHECKLIST

- | | |
|--|---|
| ☐ Pick 2–3 brand colors you love | ☐ Choose 1–2 easy-to-read fonts |
| ☐ Write a one-line shop tagline | ☐ Decide your shop 'vibe' in 3 words |
| ☐ Pick a consistent look for photos | ☐ Save it all in one 'brand' note |

TIP · Quick win

Your shop name doesn't need to be perfect or clever — it can be changed once before you're established. Pick something clear, claim it, and move on. Momentum matters more than the 'perfect' name.

■ LOGO CHECKLIST

- | | |
|--|---|
| ☐ Make a simple text logo in Canva (free) | ☐ Use your brand font + 1 color |
| ☐ Keep it readable when tiny | ☐ Export a square version (for avatar) |
| ☐ Save a transparent PNG copy | ☐ Don't overthink it — done > fancy |

■ BANNER CHECKLIST

- | | |
|---|---|
| ☐ Create a banner in Canva (use Etsy's size) | ☐ Show what you sell at a glance |
| ☐ Match your brand colors & font | ☐ Keep text away from the edges |
| ☐ Add your tagline if there's room | ☐ Upload to Shop Manager → customize |

■ SHOP POLICIES CHECKLIST

- | | |
|---|---|
| ☐ Set your processing time (be realistic!) | ☐ Write a simple returns/exchanges policy |
| ☐ Choose your shipping regions | ☐ Add a privacy/data note (Etsy has templates) |
| ☐ Write a short, warm 'Welcome' announcement | ☐ Fill in the FAQ section with 3–5 questions |

Shop Name Brainstorm Worksheet

3 words that describe my products:

My name ideas: 1) 2) 3)

Available on Etsy? (check each): ■ ■ ■ Final pick:

My 3-word vibe: My tagline:

WATCH OUT · Beginner mistake

Waiting to open until everything is 'perfect.' Etsy rewards active shops, and you learn 10x faster once you're live. A plain shop that exists beats a beautiful shop in your imagination.

WEEK 2

Days 8–14 · aim for 10 listings

Creating Your First Listings

Etsy favors shops with more listings — each one is another doorway for buyers to find you. Aim for 10 this week. They don't need to be perfect; you'll polish photos and SEO in Week 3.

■ LISTING CHECKLIST (REPEAT FOR EACH ITEM)

- | | |
|---|---|
| ☐ Add 5–10 photos (more is better) | ☐ Write a clear, keyword-rich title |
| ☐ Fill in ALL the listing attributes | ☐ Pick the most accurate categories |
| ☐ Write a friendly, detailed description | ☐ Add 13 tags (use all 13!) |
| ☐ Set quantity & processing time | ☐ Choose your shipping profile |
| ☐ Set a price that covers fees + profit | ☐ Preview, then publish — celebrate! |

■ PRICING CHECKLIST

- | | |
|---|---|
| ☐ Add up material + supply cost per item | ☐ Pay yourself for your time (labor) |
| ☐ Estimate Etsy fees using current rates | ☐ Factor in shipping (yours or theirs) |
| ☐ Check 3–5 competitor prices | ☐ Set price, then sanity-check your profit |

TIP · Quick win

Use all 13 tags and all photo slots on every listing. It's free, it takes minutes, and it's one of the biggest 'free' boosts to getting found that brand-new shops routinely skip.



Etsy Fees, Explained Simply

Knowing your real fees is how you price without accidentally losing money. Most Etsy sellers encounter three common fee types when making a sale (exact rates can change — see the note below):

- **Listing fee — about \$0.20 per item.** Charged when you publish, and again every few months or when it sells. Tiny, but real.
- **Transaction fee — a small % of each sale.** Calculated on the total the buyer pays, including shipping.
- **Payment processing — a % + a flat fee.** Charged per order, and it varies by country.
- **Optional: Offsite Ads.** An extra % only when one of Etsy's own ads leads to your sale. Optional for smaller shops; required once your shop passes Etsy's annual sales threshold.

WATCH OUT · Fees change — always check the current rates

Etsy fees can change, and payment processing rates may vary by country. Always confirm current rates in your Etsy Shop Manager before pricing.

REAL EXAMPLE · Example only — a \$30 sale (+\$5 shipping) at recent US rates

Buyer pays \$35. Using recent rates as an illustration: transaction fee ≈ \$2.28, processing ≈ \$1.30, listing fee ≈ \$0.20 — roughly \$3.78 in Etsy fees, leaving about \$31.22 before your material and shipping costs. If the item cost \$8 in materials and \$5 to ship, profit ≈ \$18.22. These numbers are an example, not a fixed rule — check your own current rates in Shop Manager.

Pricing Worksheet (fill in for one product)

Materials + supplies per item: \$ _____

My time (hours × my hourly rate): \$ _____

Subtotal (cost + labor): \$ _____

Planned sale price: \$ _____ Shipping charged: \$ _____

Etsy fees estimate (check current rates in Shop Manager): \$ _____

PROFIT = price + shipping – cost – labor – fees – ship cost = \$ _____

TIP

Need help checking your numbers? Use the Etsy Fee Calculator and Etsy Profit Calculator at SimpleLifeCalc.com.

GOOD TO KNOW · Free-shipping tip

Etsy's search favors free shipping. Many sellers build the shipping cost into the item price and offer 'free' shipping — same money to you, more visibility. Just remember the transaction fee applies to that built-in amount too.

■ SHIPPING CHECKLIST

- | | |
|---|--|
| ☐ Weigh & measure your packaged products | ☐ Create shipping profiles in Etsy |
| ☐ Decide: free shipping or charged? | ☐ Set realistic processing times |
| ☐ Buy basic supplies (mailers, tape, labels) | ☐ Compare carrier prices for your sizes |
| ☐ Turn on Etsy shipping labels (discounted) | ☐ Add a tracking habit for every order |

First 10 Listings Tracker

#	PRODUCT	PHOTOS?	13 TAGS?	LIVE?
1		☐	☐	☐
2		☐	☐	☐
3		☐	☐	☐
4		☐	☐	☐
5		☐	☐	☐
6		☐	☐	☐
7		☐	☐	☐
8		☐	☐	☐
9		☐	☐	☐
10		☐	☐	☐

TIP · Quick win

Duplicate your best listing as a template for the next one (Etsy lets you copy a listing). You only solve the 'how do I write this' problem once — then it's fill-in-the-blank.

WEEK 3

Days 15–21 · get found, get clicks

Improving Photos & SEO

Now we make your existing listings WORK harder. Better photos earn the click; better keywords earn the visit. You don't need new products — just upgrades to what's already live.

■ PHOTOGRAPHY CHECKLIST

- | | |
|--|---|
| ☐ Shoot in bright, natural daylight | ☐ Use a clean, simple background |
| ☐ Fill the frame with your product | ☐ Take all angles + a close-up of detail |
| ☐ Show scale (next to a hand/common object) | ☐ Add one 'in use' or styled lifestyle photo |
| ☐ Make the FIRST photo your best (it's the thumbnail) | ☐ Keep a consistent look across listings |
| ☐ Edit lightly: brighten & straighten only | ☐ Use all available photo + video slots |

REAL EXAMPLE · The thumbnail test

Shrink your main photo to the size of a postage stamp. Can you instantly tell what it is and that it looks nice? Buyers scroll past dozens of thumbnails — yours has about one second to win the click.

TIP · Quick win

A \$0 lightbox: one table by a window, a sheet of white poster board curved up behind the product, shoot late morning. This single setup beats most beginner photos overnight.



SEO: Help Buyers Find You

Etsy SEO just means using the words buyers actually type into the search bar. Match their words, and Etsy shows them your listing. No magic — just matching.

■ SEO CHECKLIST

- | | |
|---|--|
| ☐ List how a buyer would describe your item | ☐ Put your top keyword early in the title |
| ☐ Write titles for humans, not robots | ☐ Use ALL 13 tags — multi-word phrases |
| ☐ Mirror tag phrases inside your description | ☐ Fill every listing attribute (they're keywords too) |
| ☐ Check Etsy search autocomplete for ideas | ☐ Note competitors' best-ranking keywords |
| ☐ Avoid repeating the exact same single word | ☐ Revisit & tweak after 2–4 weeks of data |

Keyword Worksheet (do this per product)

What IS it (plain words):

What is it FOR / the occasion:

What problem does this product solve:

Who is it for (recipient/style):

3 long phrases a buyer might type:

1)

2)

My title (top keyword first):

WATCH OUT • Beginner mistake

Cute-but-empty titles like 'Sunshine Dreams'. Etsy doesn't know what that is, so no one finds it. 'Personalized Name Necklace, Gold Dainty Layering Jewelry' tells Etsy AND the buyer exactly what you sell.

WEEK 4

Days 22–30 · the exciting part!

Preparing for Your First Sale

Everything's live — now we get ready to delight your first customer. Great early service creates great early reviews, and reviews are what turn a new shop into a trusted one.

■ CUSTOMER SERVICE CHECKLIST

- | | |
|--|---|
| ☐ Write 3 saved replies (thanks/ship/issue) | ☐ Set a goal to reply within 24 hours |
| ☐ Add a friendly tone to your auto-messages | ☐ Plan a small thank-you note for orders |
| ☐ Decide how you'll handle a problem gracefully | ☐ Know your policies cold (so you answer fast) |

■ SHIPPING-PREP CHECKLIST

- | | |
|--|---|
| ☐ Stock packaging supplies now (before the order) | ☐ Pre-make thank-you notes |
| ☐ Set up a tidy little packing spot | ☐ Practice-pack one item start to finish |
| ☐ Know where/when you'll drop off parcels | ☐ Save the Etsy label-printing steps |

TIP · Quick win

Write your 'thanks for your order!' message TODAY, before any sale exists. When the first one lands you'll be excited (and a little flustered) — a ready-to-send note keeps you looking pro.

■ FIRST SALE CHECKLIST — WHEN IT HAPPENS!

- | | |
|--|--|
| ☐ Breathe & celebrate — you did it! | ☐ Read the order details carefully |
| ☐ Message the buyer a warm thank-you | ☐ Pack carefully + add your note |
| ☐ Ship within your processing time | ☐ Mark as shipped + add tracking |
| ☐ Log your costs & profit for this sale | ☐ Take a photo of your first packed order |

■ FIRST REVIEW CHECKLIST

- | | |
|---|--|
| ☐ Politely invite a review after delivery | ☐ Thank the customer for any review |
| ☐ Respond kindly & calmly to ANY criticism | ☐ Never argue — offer to make it right |
| ☐ Use feedback to improve the next listing | ☐ Screenshot your first 5-star — keep it! |

REAL EXAMPLE · Turning a wobble into a win

A buyer messages that a mug arrived chipped. Priya replies in an hour: warm apology, immediate replacement, no arguing. The buyer leaves 5 stars praising her service. How you handle a problem is often more convincing to future buyers than a flawless order.

WATCH OUT · Beginner mistake

Taking a critical review personally and replying defensively. Future buyers read your responses. A calm, kind, solution-first reply sells your shop better than any photo.



Beginner Mistakes & Quick Wins

Mistakes to skip (learn from others!)

- Opening with only 1–2 listings — thin shops are hard to find. Aim for 10+.
- Pricing too low 'to compete' — you must cover fees, materials, AND your time.
- Empty or vague titles and unused tags — you're invisible in search.
- Dark, cluttered phone photos — the #1 reason buyers scroll past.
- Slow replies to buyer questions — a question is a near-sale; answer fast.
- Quitting after a quiet first week — new shops take time to gain traction.

Quick wins (small effort, big payoff)

- ✓ Use all 13 tags + all photo slots on every listing — free visibility.
- ✓ Offer (built-in) free shipping — Etsy's search rewards it.
- ✓ Add a short video to listings — most beginners don't; it boosts trust.
- ✓ Reply to every message within 24 hours — speed wins sales.
- ✓ Refresh keywords after 2–4 weeks using your Stats — double down on what works.
- ✓ Share new listings on one social platform you already use.

GOOD TO KNOW · Real-world seller tip

Most successful shops were 'quiet' for their first few weeks. The sellers who win are simply the ones who kept listing and improving while the algorithm learned to trust their shop. Once views come in, the Etsy Conversion Rate Calculator at SimpleLifeCalc.com helps you see how many visitors turn into buyers.



Your 30-Day Progress Tracker

Color in a block each time you finish a task group. Watching the bars fill up is your daily dose of momentum.

Week 1 · Shop open

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Week 1 · Branding done

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Week 2 · Listings (of 10)

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Week 2 · Pricing + shipping set

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Week 3 · Photos upgraded

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Week 3 · SEO on all listings

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Week 4 · Service prep

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Week 4 · First sale ready

☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐

Weekly Reflection (1 line each — keep it light)

Week 1 — one win I'm proud of:

Week 2 — my favorite listing so far:

Week 3 — a keyword or photo that improved:

Week 4 — how my first sale (or near-sale) felt:

TIP

Stuck or overwhelmed? Do just ONE checkbox today. That's a valid, complete day of progress. Tiny steps, repeated, build whole shops. Want a target to aim for? Try the Etsy Income Goal Calculator at SimpleLifeCalc.com.



The 30-Day Etsy Success Roadmap

Your whole month on one page. ~20–30 minutes a day. Check off each block — by Day 30 you'll have a real, findable, sale-ready shop.

WEEK 1 · OPEN YOUR SHOP

- ☐ **Days 1–2** Create account, name the shop, set up Etsy Payments
- ☐ **Days 3–4** Branding: colors, fonts, make logo + banner in Canva
- ☐ **Days 5–6** Write policies, shipping regions, shop announcement
- ☐ **Day 7** Polish the shop 'About' + owner bio. Shop is LIVE!

WEEK 2 · CREATE YOUR LISTINGS

- ☐ **Days 8–10** List your first 4 products (photos + tags + price)
- ☐ **Days 11–12** List 3 more; set up shipping profiles
- ☐ **Days 13–14** List final 3 (10 total!); run the pricing worksheet

WEEK 3 · PHOTOS & SEO

- ☐ **Days 15–17** Re-shoot weak photos with the window + poster-board setup
- ☐ **Days 18–19** Keyword worksheet; rewrite titles, top keyword first
- ☐ **Days 20–21** Add 13 tags + fill attributes on every listing

WEEK 4 · FIRST-SALE PREP

- ☐ **Days 22–24** Write service templates; stock packaging supplies
- ☐ **Days 25–27** Practice-pack an order; share listings on social
- ☐ **Days 28–30** Review everything; invite friends; welcome your first sale!

DAY 30: YOUR SHOP IS OPEN, STOCKED & READY. YOU DID THIS. ★

Most Etsy shops don't fail because the owner lacks talent. They fail because the owner stops too soon. Keep listing, keep improving, and let time work for you.

For more beginner-friendly tools, visit SimpleLifeCalc.com for calculators, guides, worksheets, and seller resources.

Find more free seller resources at SimpleLifeCalc.com/resources