



How to Set Up Your Etsy Shop **Fall 2014**

Self-Guided Exercises and Tips to
Get Your Online Business Open and Operating



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WELCOME

Welcome to the Etsy community! We're so excited to have you join us.

This workbook is designed to help you set up a successful shop. We've compiled our top tips from real Etsy sellers to help you get started.

TO MAKE THE MOST OF THIS WORKBOOK:

Start by browsing through the entire workbook to get a sense of what you'll learn.

- Use the **Quick-Start Checklist** on **page 7** to gather the things you'll need to get started and open your shop.
- Once your shop is open, optimize it and each of your listings using the lessons in this workbook. Consider your shop a work in progress while you learn how to improve your photography, refine your keywords and fill up your shop with products for sale.

Connect, read, grow and take advantage of the great resources Etsy has to offer. Check out all of the ways to learn and find inspiration in the *Guide to Etsy Resources* on **page 29**.

Now, it's time to get started!



"Opening my shop on Etsy has been more rewarding than I could have ever imagined! I love connecting with other creatives through Etsy Teams and being able to share my cards with people from around the world. Etsy has given me a place to learn, grow and nurture my creativity."

Ann Cosgrove of acbc Design, www.etsy.com/shop/acbcdesign





Quick-Start Checklist

Have the following items ready to go when you start to open your shop to ensure you can do it in one sitting.

1. SIGN IN TO ETSY.COM

If you do not already have an Etsy account, you will need to create one. Go to www.etsy.com and click *Sign In*, then click *Register* to create a username and password.

- ✓ **Etsy username**
- ✓ **Etsy password**

2. START YOUR ETSY SHOP

You'll need a shop name to open your shop. Have a few options ready, just in case your first choice is already taken. Try adding the word "shop" or "boutique" to the end of your desired name.

Shop name ideas:

- 1.
- 2.

3. CREATE ITEM LISTINGS

- ✓ Have at least one item ready to sell.
- ✓ Have digital product photos of your item (800-1000 pixels wide). You'll find more photography tips on page 13.
- ✓ Have a list of words that describe your item to be used in tags and titles. You'll find more tagging tips on page 21.
- ✓ Have a price in mind for your item.
- ✓ Know how much it will cost to ship your item.

4. OPEN YOUR ETSY SHOP

It's free to open your shop, but we do require billing information to set up and help you on your way to getting paid. You'll need:

- ✓ Credit/debit card
- ✓ Checking account info (account and routing number)



LESSON 1: THE ANATOMY OF A GREAT ETSY SHOP

YOUR SHOP HOME

The screenshot shows the Etsy shop home for 'Milk and Honey' (MilkandHoneyLuxuries). The page is organized into several sections:

- 1. Banner:** The top header area featuring the shop's logo, a bee illustration, and the shop name 'milk & honey' with a crown icon.
- 2. Product Listings:** A grid of featured items, including 'Rise & Shine' spoons, 'Spread Love' butter stamps, 'The King and The Queen' ice spoons, and 'Ransom Note "Cereal Killer"' spoons.
- 3. Shop Sections:** A sidebar menu on the left listing various product categories like 'Shop home', 'Hand Stamped Silverware', 'Wedding Silverware', etc.
- 4. Shop Announcement:** A section below the banner providing information about the shop, including media mentions and social media links.
- 5. Shop Owner:** A section on the left identifying the shop owner as Sarah and Ryan Parker, located in Richmond, VA.
- 6. Social Media:** A section on the right showing the shop's social media presence, including a 'Like' button and follower count.

Each shop on Etsy has a Shop Home that serves as your virtual storefront. Here, you'll be able to create a visual identity for your brand and present all the products you have for sale.

- 1. Banner:** Customize your shop with a banner image (760x100 pixels) of your choice.
- 2. Product Listings:** Each item you list for sale on Etsy has its own page. Shoppers can browse all of your listings from your Shop Home, click to read more and see additional photos of each item. More listings increase your shop's visibility and create a better experience for browsing shoppers.
- 3. Shop Sections:** You can organize your products by type, style, size or any other category you choose.
- 4. Shop Announcement:** Use this section to broadcast important messages to your shoppers.
- 5. Avatar:** This image represents you wherever you interact on Etsy. Most sellers use an image of their face, product or logo as their avatar.
- 6. Social Media:** Link your Facebook and Twitter accounts directly to your new shop so potential new customers can follow you in just one click.

YOUR ITEM LISTINGS



Use your listings to tell shoppers what makes your product unique and answer any questions they might have.

- 1. Product Photos:** The first photo in your listing will represent that product on your Shop Home, as well as anywhere your item is featured on Etsy. Use all five photos to communicate details, scale and use.
- 2. Title:** Write item titles that include words you think shoppers will use to find your items in search.
- 3. Item Description:** Describe what makes your product unique and answer questions a shopper might have about your item, including details about size, materials and colors.
- 4. Reviews:** After a purchase, your customer may leave a review based on their transaction with you. Accurate descriptions and professional customer service lead to positive reviews.
- 5. Shipping & Policies:** Be sure to clearly define your policies and shipping options in this section so customers can make informed purchases.

YOUR ABOUT PAGE

The screenshot shows the 'About' page for the 'Milk & Honey' shop. The page layout includes a left sidebar with 'Shop Sections' and 'Shop Owner' information, a main content area with a large image of a woman etching glass, and a bottom section with 'Shop Info' and a bio. Numbered callouts are placed as follows:

- 1:** Points to the shop owner's portrait and bio section on the right.
- 2:** Points to the 'Milk & Honey LLC' shop name.
- 3:** Points to the 'Shop Story' paragraph describing the shop's presence in various media.
- 4:** Points to the main image gallery area showing the production process.

Shop Sections:

- Shop home 1026 Items
- Hand Stamped Silverware 524
- Wedding Silverware 188
- Spreaders & Sugar Spoons 109
- Serving Pieces & Holiday 129
- Cutting Boards & Wood 43
- Same-Sex Collection 6
- Garden Markers 2
- Jewelry & Accessories 11
- Etched Glass & Barware 12

Shop Owner:

Sarah and Ryan Parker
Richmond, VA, United States

Have a question?
[Contact Shop Owner](#)

Shop Info:

MilkandHoneyLuxuries
Opened on Oct 3, 2011

[About](#)
[Policies](#)
[Seller Information](#)
[Reviews](#)
★★★★★ (3,774)

Milk & Honey LLC

is seen in People Magazine, The Today Show, Nordstrom Wedding Suites, Martha Stewart American Made, The Knot, and Anthropologie's BHLDN.

Milk & Honey products have been featured in many international gift guides and publications including:

Sarah
Owner, Maker, Designer

I live in Richmond, Va. with my husband and two children. I enjoy the pursuit of pleasures, such as the bliss of playing with my kids,

Etching my favorite cake stand, Let Them Eat Cake.

Tell your shop's story and offer a behind-the-scenes look at your production process on your About page.

- 1. Portrait and Bio:** Shoppers love to see the individuals behind their favorite shops. Add a portrait to make a more personal connection.
- 2. Headline:** Use this area to sum up your product and business in a succinct phrase.
- 3. Shop Story:** Shoppers want to know about you as a person and an artist. What inspires you? How did you learn your craft? Where do you like to work?
- 4. Image Gallery:** Include high-quality images of your workspace, materials and production processes that highlight what makes your shop unique.



LESSON 2: SHOOT ENTICING PRODUCT PHOTOGRAPHS

RESEARCH

Take a few minutes to search Etsy to find shops that inspire you, either because they have a look and feel that draws you in, or they sell products similar to yours. In either case, try to pick shops that have good customer reviews and many sales.

For each of these inspiring shops, pick one item and answer the questions below about its photography. While great product photos do not need to contain every one of the approaches below, this exercise will help identify ways you can improve your own work.

Shop Sections

[Shop home](#) 83 items

[Recycled Tote Bags](#) 10

[Baby Organic OnePiece](#) 11

[Screenprinted Pillows](#) 47

[Adult Eco T-Shirts](#) 8

[Kids Eco T-shirt](#) 5

[Hand printed napkin sets](#) 1

[Party Decor / Bunting](#) 1

Shop Owner


Krissy Callahan
Chicago, IL, United States

Have a question?
[Contact the shop owner.](#)

Need a custom order?
[Request Custom Order](#)


EARTH CADETS
Organic, screenprinted pillows, clothing and totes

EARTH CADETS' PRODUCTS ARE ALL
HAND MADE + PRINTED IN CHICAGO
ON ORGANIC + RECYCLED MATERIALS

follow us @earthcadets for sales, news and giveaways

[Favorite](#)

[Like](#) 875

[Follow](#) 542 followers

As all items are hand made to order, our current production time is 10-15 business days. Should you require an expedited order please send a note and I will do my best to accommodate... [read more](#)

 This shop accepts Etsy Gift Cards.

[3 upcoming local markets](#)

[Search](#)

Sort by: **Custom**



FEATURED ITEMS FROM EARTHCADETS


Mountains of Montana - Orga...
EarthCadets \$25.00 USD


Polka Dot - hand printed repe...
EarthCadets \$36.00 USD


Pinnacle - black and natural, ...
EarthCadets \$40.00 USD


Feathers - screen printed nat...
EarthCadets \$44.00 USD



"Looking at my first listing photos always gives me a chuckle. I knew how important good photography was — I just wasn't sure how to achieve it. After many hours of self-teaching, I was able to take decent product shots."

Krissy Callahan of Earth Cadets, www.etsy.com/shop/earthcadets

Etsy

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PHOTO RESEARCH WORKSHEET

1. What details do the photos show?

- | | |
|-----------------------------------|----------------------------------|
| a. The scale of the product | e. Materials used in the product |
| b. Color | f. Possible variations |
| c. The size of the product | g. Product packaging |
| d. Unique features of the product | h. How the product was made |

2. What angles were used?

- | | |
|-----------------------------------|----------------|
| a. Close-up | d. Straight on |
| b. Distant | e. Side view |
| c. A mix of close-ups and distant | f. Top view |

3. How does the lighting impact the photo?

- | | |
|-------------------------------|---|
| a. It's bright and clear | c. The lighting shows the details of the product |
| b. The lighting seems natural | d. The lighting is even – there are not shiny or flashy spots |

4. The photos illustrate:

- | | |
|---------------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| a. Possible uses of the product | c. What season the product is for |
| b. Who the product is for | d. The larger brand look |

5. The product is shown:

- | | |
|---------------------------------|----------------------------------|
| a. Alone, with a solid backdrop | c. On or with a model |
| b. Alongside other props | d. In a setting (such as a park) |

SHOOTING BETTER PHOTOS

Taking photos of your products can be challenging, but with just a couple of tips, you can make big improvements in your photos. Take a look at these before-and-after examples of product photography.

BEFORE



Quick tips for improvements:

1. Use props to show context and possible uses.
2. Use angles to show the depth and size of the product.
3. Use natural, even, outdoor light so your photos don't have flash spots.
4. Show relevant details and be clear about what's for sale.
5. Use simple backgrounds that don't distract from the product.

These after photos of the same product all have more even lighting when taken using natural light and not with a flash and use props to show context and scale.

AFTER



What steps can you take at your next photo shoot to improve your product photos and maximize how they communicate to your shoppers?

1.

.....

2.

.....

3.

.....

YOUR CAMERA: DOS AND DON'TS

Whether you use a smartphone camera or a more elaborate DSLR device, these basic tips will help you shoot like a professional.

1. Never (ever) use the flash. The flash setting on a camera is great for capturing a night out with friends, but when it comes to product photos, it can mean the difference between a buyer and a browser. Using the flash creates unappealing glare spots that are distracting and make it difficult for potential buyers to see product details. If your photos are too dark, try using the best light source around: the sun! Natural lighting is best because it allows cameras to pick up your products' natural hues. That said, it's best to avoid direct sunlight, which also creates a glare. When setting up your shoot, find a spot near a window that gets sufficient, even light. Then, start taking those shots!

2. Steady, now! Using a tripod or other means of steadying your camera while you shoot will help ensure that your photos are clear and well composed. A tripod — or even a stack of books on which you can rest a phone or camera — is great for planning and setting different angles and making sure you frame the shot well.

Pro tip: *If you are shooting multiple items, find an angle you like and shoot all of the products before switching angles.*

3. Focus, focus, focus. Fuzzy product photos are a turn-off for buyers and don't do justice to your hard work. Every camera has some sort of focus capability, but many of us rely too heavily on the auto-focus feature. If your camera allows you to adjust focus manually, do it! Play around with the focus while taking lots of shots. Don't fret if your camera only has an auto-focus feature; you can still work around it and get great shots. Auto-focus works by trying to automatically detect what objects in a photo should be in focus. Try taking several photos and adjusting the focus by moving your product from side to side, up and down, and closer and farther. Your camera will continue to adjust focus as you move. With enough shots, you'll get a great set.



LESSON 3: DEVELOPING SALEABLE PRODUCTS

Offering shoppers choice and variety strengthens your brand and encourages repeat business. Well-stocked shops are more successful. Nicole Porter of Nicole Porter Designs grew her product line to fill her shop by offering additional colors, sets of items, coordinated pieces, pattern choices, material choices and related accessories. Here are some ways to diversify your product offerings.

Here are some tips to help you fill out your shop:

1. List samples of one-of-a-kind items.
2. Create listings for custom orders to inspire future customers.
3. Offer gift sets in addition to individual items.
4. Get inspired by your existing product line and branch out to different colors and materials.



“My favorite part of my creative process is my willingness to fail. For every good idea, I have at least three horrible ones. I love working with new materials and riffing on old ideas to make something new.”

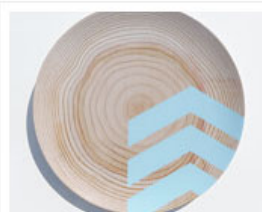
Nicole Porter of Nicole Porter Design, www.etsy.com/shop/nicoleporterdesign



Modern Neon Hardwood 7" S...
nicoleporterd... \$54.00 USD



Mod 2015 Calendar Tea Tow...
nicoleporterd... \$25.00 USD



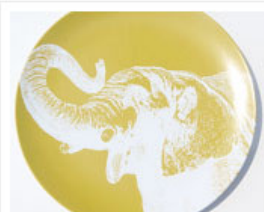
Modern Wood Simple Chevro...
nicoleporterd... \$24.00 USD



Indian Lace Wood Grain 14" ...
nicoleporterd... \$36.00 USD



Modern Neon Hardwood Ser...
nicoleporterd... \$35.00 USD



Vintage Elephant 10" Melami...
nicoleporterd... \$24.00 USD



Modern Neon Hardwood 10" ...
nicoleporterd... \$54.00 USD



I Love Vermont, Set of Four ...
nicoleporterd... \$28.00 USD



LESSON 4: USING KEYWORDS TO GET FOUND BY BUYERS



“If I find that after a few months no one searches the term “atomic rocket,” then I use something else. Keywords are a constant process of experimentation.”

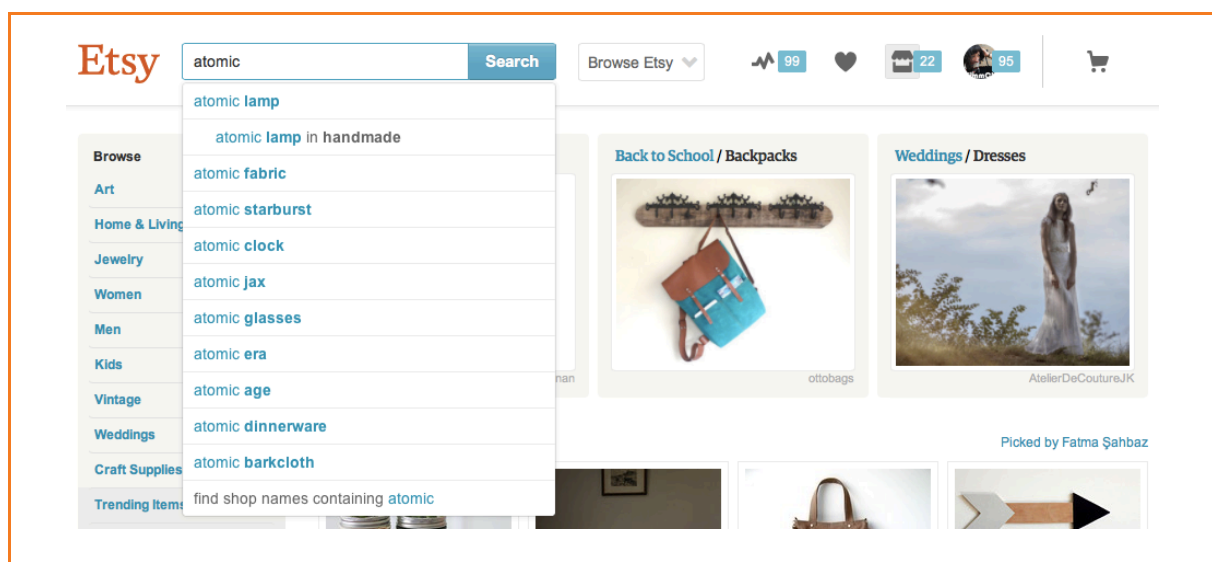
Erin Proctor of Saturn 5 Studio, www.etsy.com/shop/saturn5studio

Think about the last time you bought something online. How did you search for it? When people shop online, they use descriptive words to find what they are looking for, such as “small green table lamp.” Being thoughtful about what keywords and tags to use will go a long way toward helping potential customers find your products.

Using words in your tags, titles and item descriptions that match what customers use in search is a smart way to optimize your shop for shoppers and helps drive customers that are looking for exactly what you make. We call these words “keywords.”

START BY BRAINSTORMING

Use the exercises below to brainstorm some keywords for one of the products in your shop. Use as many descriptive words as possible and feel free to write several words to answer each question. **Pro tip:** If you are having a hard time coming up with descriptive terms, type one of your product keywords into Etsy’s search bar to see if it suggests a commonly searched term that may be relevant to your item.



Answer these questions about your product *in just one or two words* to develop your own keyword list.

What is it?

.....
.....

Who is your target customer?

.....
.....

What is it made out of?

.....
.....

What is the main material?

.....
.....

What's the color?

.....
.....

Where will it be used?

.....
.....

What is the style?

.....
.....

Does it have any imagery or motifs?

.....
.....

What technique did you use to make it?

.....
.....

What occasion is it for?

.....
.....

What era is it from?

.....
.....

What synonyms could be used to describe it?

.....
.....

What scent or flavor is it?

.....
.....

What size is it?

.....
.....

What is the texture of the product?

.....
.....

The first three words of your title carry the most weight in search results. Take a minute to go through your answers to the questions above and circle three words that you believe are the most important for helping you get found.

.....

NEXT, WRITE A SEARCHABLE TITLE AND ITEM DESCRIPTION

Now that you have relevant keywords for your product, you can start to work them into your title and item description. Shoppers can only see the first few words of your product title when browsing search results, so it's important that it clearly explains exactly what your items is.



Start your item title with your three most important words and then add some more keywords from your list.

Example: “Welcome - recycled felt applique pillow 14"x 18" – more colors available” from www.etsy.com/shop/alexandraferguson

.....

.....

.....

THEN, PICK TAGS TO ATTRACT SHOPPERS

“Tags” are simply keywords that appear at the bottom of each listing page. They help attract the right shoppers to your items through search results. It's important to take time and experiment with the keywords that you use for your tags to figure out what works best for your listings. As with your titles and descriptions, be sure to use the three keywords that you identified as most important in your tags.

Remember, tagging is not a perfect science. It takes some experimentation to find the best words to describe your product listings. Keep an eye on your **Shop Stats*** to see which terms are bringing the most traffic to your shop, and try reworking terms that aren't as effective.

Pro tip: Use phrases. For example, you can use “clutch purse” instead of just “purse” as a tag. This will help people find your item whether they search for either word, and because you don't need to repeat a keyword twice, it frees up an extra space for you to add another tag.

Example: housewares, welcome home, sign, welcome, pillow, room decor, home decor, felt, eco friendly, appliqued

.....

.....

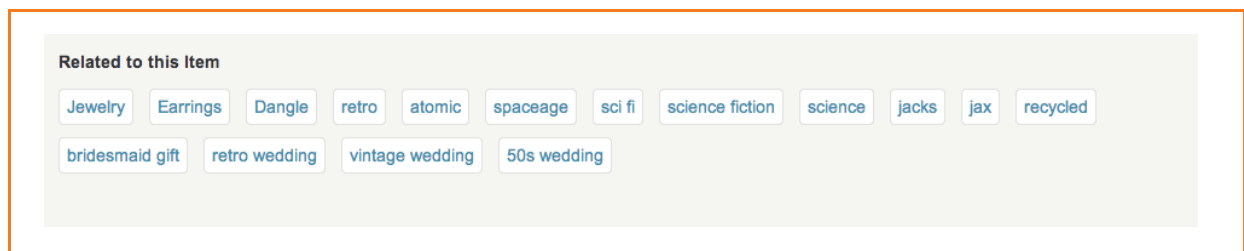
.....

*Shop Stats is a tool available to all Etsy sellers that shows both the volume and sources of traffic to your listings and shop.

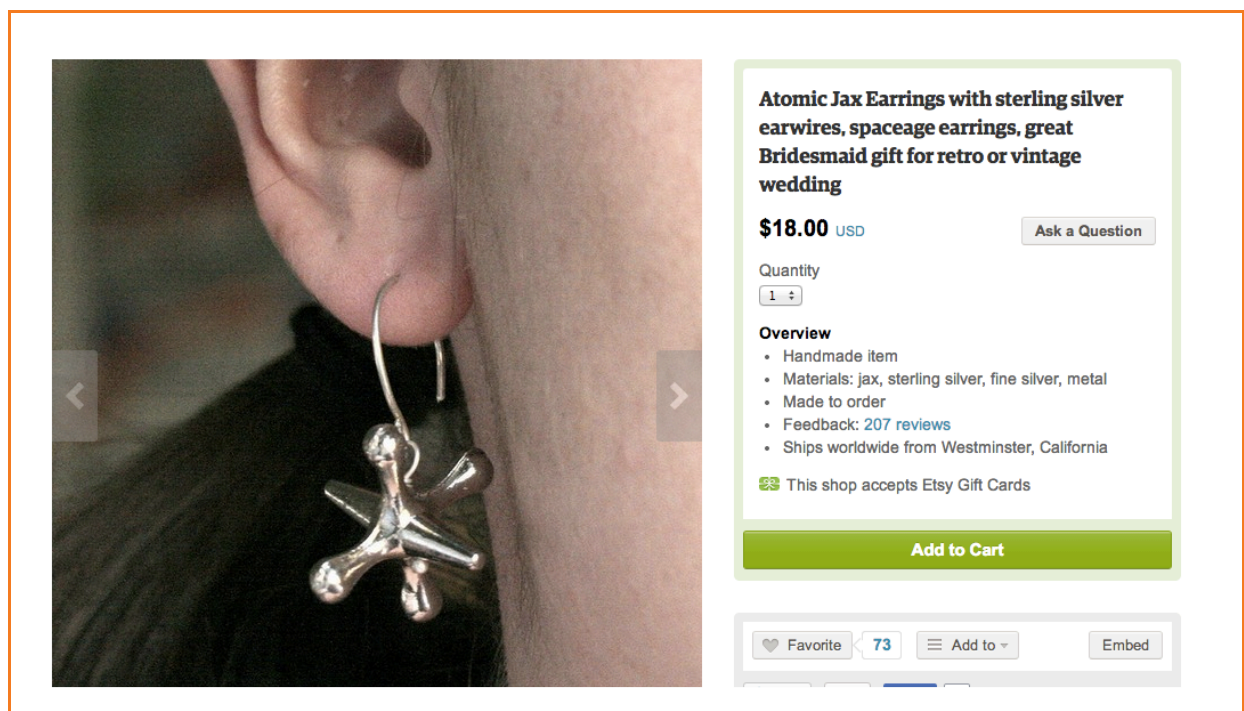
WHERE KEYWORDS MATTER

On Etsy, your tags and titles are the most important factors in how listings rank in search — be sure to use all 13 tags available and repeat the most important keywords in your listing title.

TAGS



TITLES



ITEM DESCRIPTIONS

Use the next exercise to start answering your shoppers' most essential questions and begin to build your item descriptions.

WRITING ITEM DESCRIPTIONS: ANSWERING SHOPPER QUESTIONS

WHAT IS IT?	It might be totally obvious to you what your item is, but it might not be quite so obvious to shoppers. Don't forget to use keywords to improve search results.
WHAT COLOR IS IT?	List all available color options.
WHAT ARE THE ITEM'S EXACT DIMENSIONS?	Shoppers don't want to guess if a painting will fit over their fireplace. Grab a ruler and measure your items, then provide exact dimensions.
WHERE WAS IT MADE?	Add some colorful details about your workspace to connect with shoppers.
WHAT IS IT MADE OUT OF?	Describe the materials and techniques used to create your item.
HOW SHOULD IT BE CARED FOR?	Share instructions for washing, drying, ironing and other special care needs.
WHO SHOULD BUY IT?	Help shoppers imagine your item as a part of their daily lives by mentioning your target audience.
DOES IT TAKE EXTRA TIME TO MAKE?	Be sure to build in additional time as necessary.
IS IT AN APPROPRIATE GIFT?	If the packaging is good for gifting or you add personalized gift notes, be sure to share that information.
HOW DOES IT FEEL?	Describe what the senses can't to help shoppers understand an item's texture.
HOW DOES IT WORK?	No matter if it's a pullover, side tie or button up, be sure to explain.
WHY IS YOUR PRODUCT THE BEST OUT THERE?	Explain how you make the item and the special skills or equipment you use.
WHAT'S INCLUDED?	Be clear about exactly what the shopper is getting. For example, if you have a photo that features more than one necklace but the listing is for one, make sure that this information is clearly stated.
WILL IT FIT?	Provide the measurements for all fitting areas, like the neck, waist, length, etc.
WHAT IF IT DOESN'T FIT?	Clearly spell out your exchange policy and which party pays for shipping.
IS IT READY TO USE?	If you don't provide everything necessary for use, make sure you note this for the shopper (for example, hardware needed for hanging).
WILL THEY GET THE EXACT ITEM IN THE PHOTO?	If the item in the photo is not the exact item that the shopper will receive, be sure to say so.
ARE THERE ANY ODORS?	Vintage items can smell aged. Be sure to explain this for the shopper.



LESSON 5: GROW YOUR REACH THROUGH SOCIAL MEDIA

Social media platforms like Facebook, Instagram and Pinterest provide great opportunities for businesses of all sizes to connect with shoppers, and grow their visibility using engagement marketing. The goal of engagement marketing is to pull potential buyers into a conversation by providing inspiration and inviting them to have a more personal relationship with a business and its brand. Consider it a dialogue instead of an advertisement.

For one week, follow the content outline below to see how easy and valuable it is to build a consistent social media presence for your shop. Have fun with it, and remember everyone loves photos!

POST STYLE	OBJECTIVE	PICK ONE THING TO SHARE
BEHIND THE SCENES	Convey your humanity and make yourself personally accessible to potential buyers. Provide transparency about your shop and practices. Give a broader sense of your shop's style Show your investment in your work	• A work-in-progress product • An image of your workspace • A shot of you constructing or working with your products • Your shipping supplies or branded tags
INSPIRATION SHARE	Provide a strong sense of your identity outside of your work Attract potential buyers who share the same interests Promote information sharing Show your interest in the artistic and maker community	• A photo of someone you look up to • Another post by someone you admire • A link to another person's product or artwork that you love • A blog you follow • A motivational quote • Music you listen to while you work • Business resources you find helpful
SHOP PROMOTION	Share your work! Encourage people to visit your shop Celebrate milestones Solicit feedback on your products	• An image of the most recent product you listed • Your listing with the most views • A listing someone favorited • A link to your shop, asking people to vote for the item they like best by favoriting it • A prompt soliciting suggestions for improving one of your favorite listings
BONUS: ASK QUESTIONS	Establish a two-way dialogue between you and your followers Gain inspiration from your network Maintain audience interest Gain insight into your audience's interests	• What artist/maker inspires you most? • What music have you been loving lately? • What blogs or websites do you follow?

PLANNING AND TRACKING YOUR SOCIAL MEDIA OUTREACH

Look at your schedule through the next week and pick three times that you can devote to promotion. Using the ideas you selected above, map out your post schedule for the next week below.

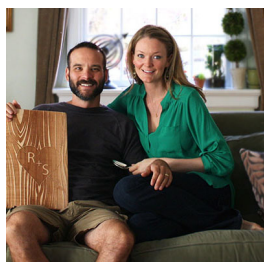
Post #	Day	Time	Results?
One			
Two			
Three			

Throughout the week, keep track of three things. First, pay attention to results — which posts get the most likes or comments. This will provide hints about what your audience is interested in and wants to see more of. Second, pay attention to activity within your shop in the few days after you post on social media. Do you have more views? Favorites? One easy way to keep track of activity within your shop is through your Shop Stats.

Don't just stop at one week! The checklist above provides you with countless combinations to try out and have fun with. No matter what, the key is to post regularly and try to engage your followers rather than advertise.

Pro tip: If you're a fledgling business, use your **personal Facebook account** for this exercise. Your friends and family want to support your work and can help build the initial momentum your shop needs. A few purchases and positive feedback from acquaintances can reassure strangers who come across your shop, making them more likely to buy from you as well.

A GUIDE TO ETSY'S RESOURCES



“Become a voracious reader, especially in the beginning. Even now, I read every word I can find that pertains to small business, whether that's on blogs, through Etsy Teams or across the web.”

Sarah Parker of Milk and Honey Luxuries, www.etsy.com/shop/milkandhoneyluxuries

Here are four ways to get help, advice and inspiration when you need it! We encourage you to do all of the following:

- **Join the Etsy Success Team** (etsy.me/etsysuccessteam) to ask questions and network with other Etsy shop owners who share tips and best practices daily.
- **Subscribe to the Success Newsletter** (etsy.me/success) to receive helpful articles, delivered to your inbox twice a week.
- **Read the Seller Handbook** (etsy.me/sellerhandbook) for articles designed to help you solve problems, set goals and improve your shop. Don't miss “Quit Your Day Job” for real-life stories of seller success.
- **Turn to the FAQs** (etsy.me/FAQ) when you have any questions about how to do something in your shop. These how-to articles are your best bet for any technical questions you encounter.



CONGRATULATIONS ON OPENING YOUR SHOP!

Don't forget to join our community of new sellers in the Etsy Success Team for support, help and advice.

We're thrilled to count you as member of the Etsy community!