



Freelance Leap

The Complete *Step-By-Step* Guide to
Starting an Online Freelancing Business



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Introduction

If you're wondering if working from home is possible, it is! At this time and age, anything can be done virtually – including work! As a good mentor of mine once said “online work is the work of the 21st century”!

If you'd like to work at the comfort of your own home, on a hammock by the beach, at your favorite cafe... basically anywhere, this is the guide for you!



Working online has taught me a lot of things about myself, and has allowed me to explore my passions while earning generously.

I've had lots of people come to me asking how I do it, and that has inspired me to make this guide. This has been the result of diligent research and years of experience, and I hope this will save you tons of time on your freelancing journey.



A little bit about me...



Yo! My name is **Chris Acebu**.

I quit nursing in 2013 and became a full-time freelancer. I started **Ace Freelancing** to help freelancers to stand out from competition, get new clients, and make more money!

Your parents, your friends, and the society at large should not determine what you do with your life! You have the power to choose... and you should. *It's your life after all.*

Quitting nursing and defying people's expectations was the scariest thing I've ever done in my life, but it's also the most liberating.

Since then, I've been able to do a lot of fun things! Things I probably could not have done if I stayed in the course that was already laid out for me.

Starting with no knowledge and having made tons of mistakes, I was able to build a reputation on Upwork and have earned more than \$100,000 just on that platform.

Online freelancing changed my life. In a way, *it saved me!*

And it can be this way for some of you. That's what I'm here for. ;)



How to Start *Working from Home as an Online Freelancer*

Every single day the world of freelancing is growing bigger and bigger!

More businesses are looking for remote talent, and more people are finding out that they can actually work from home to meet this demand... and make a decent living from it.

And so, I've had people (family, friends, and strangers) come to me asking about how they can start working from home, as it's something I've done for years now!

I found myself having to explain the process over and over again, so I've decided to write about it, so that the next time someone asks, I'll direct them to this ebook.

Starting an online freelancing business can be confusing and overwhelming at first because it's a **completely different world compared to being an employee or running a physical business.**

It certainly was the case for me when I started 5+ years ago—I literally had no idea what I was doing! I only remember being desperate to make some money while I was waiting for my board exam.

I used to scour the internet for "*how to make money online*" and all I got were scam after scam. I've never even heard of "*freelancing*". Thankfully, I didn't have a credit card then, otherwise, I'd be in deep trouble.



The funny thing is that I actually learned about freelancing through a friend who introduced me to Upwork (formerly oDesk).

And that's how it all started for me.

I created a freelancer account, built my profile, applied to jobs, and (luckily) won some projects.

But knowing what I know now, **I'd have done so many things differently...** so, so many things. And I'm sure every experienced freelancer thinks the same. Heck, I've made so many mistakes, I'm face-palming right now!

Fortunately for you, the resources for freelancing online has expanded exponentially over the last few years This means **you can avoid all the rookie mistakes almost everyone makes.**

Disclaimer: This article is designed to help you get started! I don't want you to think about getting "premium" or "high ticket" clients for now. Understanding the basics and getting started on the right foot is crucial to your success as a freelancer!

Let's get started!



What is *online freelancing*?

They say that freelancing is “*the work of the 21st century*”, so this must mean that increasingly more people are exploring it as a career option.

Still, many of us can't really pin it down, and more than simple curiosity does it conjure up notions of online scams and shady get-rich-fast schemes.

Sadly, the freelancing world is **fraught with misunderstanding**, if not downright stigma.

So from friends who lament your decision not to pursue an advanced degree, to parents who continually urge you to get a “*real job*,” **very often does it feel like only freelancers themselves know what freelancing is.**

But even then, some of us can't neatly define it ourselves. So what really is an online freelancer?

An **online freelancer** (also known as an independent contractor or a work-from-home professional) is a self-employed individual who offers services to multiple clients at a time.

Because freelancers are self-employed, **they have control over what projects they'd like to do and who they'd like to work with. BOOYAH!**

Although many freelancers work independently, some may be represented by an agency that outsources freelance work to clients.



The types of services freelancers offer vary such as *virtual and administrative assistance, customer or tech support, graphic design, web design, sales and marketing, writing, and many more!*

What are the *pros of freelancing?*

- **Affordable.** All you need are the three essentials (laptop + internet connection + marketable skill) and you're set!
- **Easy to start.** Just create your freelancing account and build your profile, and you can then start applying to jobs.
- **Unlimited possibilities.** Because there's a high demand for help, there's a good chance landing a job for the skills you offer.
- **Work anytime*.** Many freelancing jobs will allow you to work anytime you like as long as you get the job done. However, some clients will require you to be around at specific hours (e.g., virtual assistance or customer support).
- **Work anywhere*.** When you're a freelancer, you're location-independent. You can work wherever you like -- cafes, beaches, airports -- as long as you have internet connection. Some jobs will require you to be in a quiet space though (e.g., phone support).
- Control over who you work with.
- Control over your rates or how much you get paid.
- Great avenue for exploring and pursuing your passions.



What are the *cons of freelancing?*

- ~~Can take time to build a steady clientele.~~ This particularly applies to short-term or project-based contracts because you'll need to continuously submit proposals to ensure you have work available. However, if you aim for long-term contracts, you won't need to keep a queue of clients. You can work with 1 or 2 clients (or more, depending on how many you can manage) for as long as you can.
- ~~Work can be irregular.~~ That's what many people think, but work can be regular if you pursue long-term jobs, or if you build a great relationship with you clients that they go to you for future projects.
- ~~Managing multiple clients and projects can be challenging.~~ This is something that is easy to overcome with use of task management or project management applications.
- ~~Pay may be low to start out.~~ Well, it doesn't have to be this way. This is actually a big misconception that beginners have -- bidding low because they're new. Low rates may indicate inexperience or low quality work, and that's definitely not a good thing. You need to bid according to your value.
- Hmm, looks to me like there are no cons...



What are the *basic requirements* of freelancing?

1. Computer or Laptop

Your computer or laptop is your workspace since all your work will be digital. As for specs, you don't have to worry about it, unless you're doing some heavy video editing.

If you must know, I started with my grandpa's laptop and had used it for several months until I was able to afford my own.

So, if you encounter people advertising online freelancing as working with just your phone only, *proceed with caution*.

2. Reliable Internet Connection

To be an "online" freelancer, you'd need a reliable internet connection. While it's possible to do some of your work offline (e.g., article writing), you will generally need internet connectivity to run your business.



3. Good Communication Skills

Online freelancing relies heavily on your ability to communicate well. As a freelancer, you'd have to reach out to clients and pitch your services. You might even have to hop on interviews or discovery calls.

You don't need to have a native-level fluency. What's important is that you're able to communicate well with your clients!

If you don't feel confident with your communication skills yet, I encourage you to invest some time, money and effort to improve it. The ROI will be hundredfold!

4. A Marketable Skill

A rookie mistake that beginners make is starting an online freelancing career with no marketable skill/s. **When you don't have a marketable skill, it's difficult to get clients to pay you for your services.**

This is why many freelancers resort to starting as a virtual assistant because they just want to take on menial tasks—data entry, encoding, scheduling, and research, among other things. Unfortunately, *these skills are incredibly hard to scale.*

And this is not to shed bad light on virtual assistance. It's a great starting point if you really don't know where to begin as it is a broad service offering and you can always specialize down the line. *Psst! I've been a virtual assistant at some point in my freelancing career.*



To have a marketable skill, you must... well, **align your skills with the market.**

Create a list of your knowledge and skills and check the market for demand, and build your freelancing niche.

For example, I started as a writer in the health niche because I'm good at writing and I have a medical background.

I'm sure you have something that you can offer to clients, but if you feel that you don't, and want to develop skills that you're interested in first, I recommend checking out some learning platforms like [Skillshare](#) (use this link to get 2 months FREE!) or [Udemy](#).

5. A Way for You to Get Paid

The last thing you'd need to get started is a way for you to get paid. You can do this by setting up a bank account to receive your earnings.

You may then link your bank account to your freelancing website of choice, or if you're working with clients directly, you may use invoicing app like [PayPal](#) or [Payoneer](#) to bill your clients.

6. Pick Your Platform

Once you have the basic requirements down, it's time to go where the fish are... or in your case, go where the clients are.

For beginners, I'd suggest starting out with gig sites like [Upwork](#), [Freelancer](#), [Fiverr](#), etc., however, don't limit yourself to freelance marketplaces.



Clients can be found anywhere! You just need to be diligent enough to know where they are.

I know many freelancers who use social media (Facebook, Instagram, Twitter) or professional networking sites (LinkedIn) to acquire clients.

But before you create any account, I need you to make one thing first: *a professional email address.*

Yes, another rookie mistake is using your email in high school or college. Do you really think clients will trust their business to *naruto23@gmail.com*?!

To create a professional email, use a first name last name basis.

For example, *chris.acebu@gmail.com* or *chrisacebu@gmail.com*. You don't have to use [Gmail](#), although I highly recommend it!

Use your professional email for everything related to your business—your social media accounts, your professional networking accounts, your task and project management applications, and your communication channels (e.g., Skype, Slack, etc.)

7. Create Your Account and Build Your Profile

After you've decided on where to get your clients, proceed by creating an account using your professional email.



Depending on the platform, the next step will usually involve building your profile. Spend some time thinking about what to add (and what not to add) to your profile and really invest in making it look professional like using a photo that attracts business.

8. Apply to Jobs and Deliver Great Work

Once you've set everything up, you should then be able to start applying to projects!

Winning projects can be challenging at first, but once you land your first one, you should be able to get some momentum going.

And as you improve your selling and negotiation skills, you can start scaling your freelancing business.

After you're hired, ensure to deliver great work and exceed your clients' expectations to help you build a great reputation which will help you win even more projects in the future.

Good luck on your freelancing journey!

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“The secret of getting ahead is getting started. The secret of getting started is breaking your complex, overwhelming tasks into small manageable tasks, and then starting on the first one.”

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