

25 Things To Do Before Opening Your Etsy Shop

A practical pre-launch checklist for first-time handmade and small-product sellers.

Use this list before you publish your first listing. Not legal, tax, or business advice.

Short-form checklist

1. Product

- 1. Define one first product. State exactly what it is, who it is for, and what a buyer receives.
- 2. Make or source a finished sample. Check the actual item rather than planning from a description.
- 3. Record every material and component. Include consumables, findings, blanks, labels, and inserts.
- 4. Confirm options and variations. List only choices you can make reliably.

2. Pricing

- 5. Measure material cost per item. Divide bulk purchases into a realistic per-unit cost.
- 6. Time one complete item. Include making, finishing, packing, and personalization work.
- 7. Choose a labor rate. Use a deliberate hourly rate; do not treat your time as free.
- 8. Check your price against total cost. Include fees, packaging, shipping, and other variable costs before publishing.

3. Photos

- 9. Take a clear main photo. Show the finished product at a useful size and in good light.
- 10. Add detail photos. Show texture, scale, finish, and parts a buyer may ask about.
- 11. Photograph important variations. Avoid making buyers guess what a color, size, or option means.

4. Listings

- 12. Write a plain-language title. Lead with what the product is, then add the key descriptor.
- 13. Write the first two description lines. Explain the item, buyer use, and key distinction before extra detail.
- 14. Add measurements and materials. Use units consistently and make handmade variation clear.
- 15. Set variations and personalization instructions. Test them as a buyer would before publishing.
- 16. Review the listing on mobile. Check that the first photo, title, price, and options are understandable.

5. Shipping

- 17. Pack one finished order. Confirm the item is protected and the package is practical to ship.
- 18. Weigh and measure the packed parcel. Use packed dimensions, not product dimensions.
- 19. Choose processing time you can meet. Include making, packing, weekends, and real capacity.
- 20. Decide where you ship. Set destinations and buyer-facing costs deliberately.

6. Policies

- 21. Write a clear returns/cancellations position. State what applies to ready-made, personalized, and made-to-order items.
- 22. Add care and safety information where relevant. Include truthful use, care, material, or age-related information.
- 23. Check Etsy and local requirements. Review current Etsy policies plus the consumer, tax, product, and privacy rules relevant to your business.

7. Launch

- 24. Map a test order workflow. Note what happens from payment notification to dispatch and buyer message.
- 25. Set a first-week review time. Schedule one check for listing clarity, questions, costs, and fulfillment.

