

How to Become a Freelancer - Step by Step Guide

According to an analysis by Upwork, in 2019, freelancers in the U.S. contributed nearly \$1 trillion to their country's economy. That's because there are many individuals in the U.S., particularly those who are Gen Z, who do a lot of freelance work, with some considering it as a long-term career. Upwork also stated that 53% of the U.S. 's Gen Z working population is freelancing; in the Baby Boomer working population, 29% are freelancing, 31% in Gen X, and 40% in Millennials. However, all of those things aside, freelancing is open for everyone from different age groups, including those with [no experience](#). So if you plan to be a freelancer in your field of expertise, we'll guide you through the nine basic steps to become one.

Study the Trends in Freelancing

[Freelancing as a career](#) might sound simple enough. You get a call or email from a client and he/she asks you to do a project; you work on the project, you complete it, you submit it, and he/she pays you money. Well, yes, that's the very essence of doing freelance work. But, freelancing isn't as simple as it might seem. The industries of our economy have demands and needs that change constantly, which greatly affects the freelancing sectors. Most notably, the manner of how clients look for freelancers or to what extent they need freelancers isn't a stable matter. That being said, you need to study the freelancing trends in an industry related to your field as a first step.

Assess Whether Freelancing Can Support You

In becoming a freelancer, you need to know beforehand that there will be times gigs are scarce due to particular circumstances. So that means you won't earn the usual income rate in such situations. For that reason, you have to assess if being a freelancer enables you to be financially stable at all times. Freelancing is an excellent career choice no doubt. But, your income will depend on the number of projects you're working on and how many clients you have. If you're sure that you can support yourself as a freelancer, then go for it. Remember that in freelancing, you need a [budget](#) to purchase resources and materials, which you'll have to spend using your income. Basically, no one will sponsor you unless some of your clients do so.

Evaluate Your Skills

Being a freelancer means you're an independent worker; you won't have co-workers and supervisors to help you with your work. That said, make sure to evaluate your current skills to do work independently. You need to improve them if you think they're not at that level yet. You have to keep in mind that your skills are your main selling points in [obtaining clients as a freelancer](#). Clients certainly prefer freelancers with seasoned skills, and they might even pay them [more money](#) if their outputs are of high quality. So, again, make sure to evaluate your skills and hone them further if need be.

Build Your Identity

Of course, you need to have an identity if you're going to be a freelancer. So, exert effort in creating your [resume](#) or curriculum vitae (CV). Make sure that your resume or CV showcases your profile well. Don't forget to input every information that supports your eligibility as a freelancer in your field. Your resume or CV isn't just your identity, they're your ticket and brand in the freelancing world.

Gather and Arrange Your Portfolio

We mentioned earlier that your skills are your main selling points. Well, the level of your skills will be validated by showing your previous or sample works. Remember that most clients will want to see a preview of how you do your craft and how good you are at it. So make a portfolio of your works and grant potential clients the privilege to view them. If you're a writer, gather some of your sample blogs and articles; if you're a graphic designer, gather your designs; if you're a photographer, gather some of your best shots and place them in one photo album/folder, etc.

Set Your Price

The price of your services as a freelancer mainly depends on two things: your experience and the size of the clients' projects. The longer your experience and the bigger the project, the prices of your services should be higher. It's just logical thinking. If you want to embrace freelancing as your primary career, you need to make sure that your minimum price is enough to cover your monthly living expenses. And also, be reminded that among the checklist of [freelancer benefits](#) is that you can [negotiate your service fees](#). In that case, there's a possibility that you can maximize your freelance income.

Find Platforms for Freelance Work

Because of the internet, freelance work is more convenient to come by compared to previous generations. There are many [sites for freelance work](#) where you can register your profile and display your portfolio. You can also easily reach out to prospective clients online and present them with a proposal to work on their projects via email. Social media is another excellent platform to reach out to the market and let them know of your freelance services. Simply put, you have plenty of options and alternatives to sell yourself as a freelancer.

Learn How to Deal with Clients

The most challenging part of freelancing in our opinion is [dealing with clients](#). Each client has different needs and demands that can be difficult to handle or accomplish. If you know someone who's a tenured freelancer, try asking them about their clients; chances are he/she will tell you that some clients have unrealistic expectations. Therefore, you need to learn how to deal with clients professionally. If they have urgent concerns and complaints about your work, attend to them with composure, and provide them reasonable explanations. In freelancing, you have to exercise your patience and interpersonal skills.

Understand Contracts

[Contracts](#) are among the things you'll surely encounter throughout your freelancing career. Some clients will want you to sign them to legally obligate you to complete their projects on time. Don't get pressured when a client wants you to sign a contract. Contracts are actually beneficial because they make your deals with clients transparent. For example, if you and a client agreed on a \$10,000 service fee and stipulated it on the contract, the client cannot, in any way, change the price of your fee. So make sure to study the rules and regulations about contracts before you commence your freelance career.

The one good thing about freelancing is you get to be your own boss. You can freelance at home, at a cafe, or any place where you're comfortable working. You also have the freedom to work at your pace without having to worry about getting up early. For as long as you can produce quality finished products on time, you'll satisfy your clients. So starting now, do all the necessary preparations, and launch your freelance career on a high note.