

WHAT REALLY MAKES MONEY

An Independent Review of Business Opportunities & Money-Making Enterprises

Freelancer Special

The Easiest Ways to Get Paid £3,000 Per Month in Your Spare Time for Things You Are Already Good At

A lot of the enterprise opportunities I cover in this newsletter require you to learn new skills and grapple with unfamiliar forms of work. But how would you like to get paid for doing what you already know how to do?

In this issue, we are taking a deep dive into all aspects of freelancing – both online and offline – from manual tasks like gardening and DIY, to online work like proofreading and admin, to professions like design, copywriting, IT and accounting. And it's all based on what you do and enjoy in your work and personal life.

The important thing to remember is this – freelancing is not only about having specialist skills. You don't need experience or training in a specialised area. You could simply devote time, energy, hard work and a bit of enthusiasm to any number of freelancing jobs. These could include putting together IKEA furniture, helping people move house, and even queuing for theatre tickets.

There are some great advantages to freelancing over creating and running a business:

- » You get to choose which jobs you do and those you don't.
- » You can, by and large, choose your hours, or at least gear the work you do towards your lifestyle and income goals.
- » You can work on specific tasks, or a specific number of hours per week, and the rest of the time is yours to spend as you wish.
- » You don't have to employ people or be responsible for others.
- » There's no long-term commitment – if you decide to stop freelancing, start a business, or get

a job you can do so immediately without hassle or cost.

There are some downsides to be aware of, too:

- » You don't get holiday or sick pay, so you need to save up surplus earnings to cover those.
- » You need to make sure you put aside a percentage of earnings in tax, which takes some discipline.
- » You need strong self-motivation to ensure that you carry out the jobs you promise on time, and to standard.
- » You need to be able to schedule tasks and organise your time (nobody else is going to do it for you).
- » You may need to chase up invoice payments from time to time.
- » You can be vulnerable if a company stops using your services suddenly – however, I recommend that you have multiple clients rather than relying on one.

I have used many freelancers over the years running my business, and I know how valuable they are. I asked one of them to give his honest perspective on it.

FREELANCER CASE STUDY:

Gareth Rees, 48 years old

“In 2012, the small online publishing business I co-ran closed when me and my partners went our separate ways. Suddenly, I found myself with no income. I didn't want to apply for a regular job as I was the parent of small children and shared a lot of the responsibilities with my wife. I also had an ambition to start my own blog and write a book. So

please turn over...

the last thing I wanted to do was return to the 9-5 life of an office worker and miss out on what was important.

But we urgently needed money, and fast. So that was when I started looking for freelance work. I had experience in editing, writing and selling information products, so I based my search on those skills. It was slow at first, and took me time, but eventually I found three or four regular clients willing to pay me for jobs. It was enough to keep an income coming in. But it also gave me plenty of time to spend with my children and focus on my creative life.

Ten years on, I am happier as a freelancer than I was a small business owner, and happier than when I had a regular office job. With freelancing, there's no long-term commitment and no pressure. I don't have staff or even colleagues to deal with and I can decide which days of the week I want to work. If I need to take a holiday, I can. During the pandemic, my income didn't dry up as I could carry on working online. I ended up getting much wealthier over the lockdown because my spending plummeted.

Best of all, when I am not carrying out the week's freelance tasks, I have the freedom and headspace to pursue my interest in walking, fiction writing and music. I'm now in a couple of bands, which I'd never have had the time to do in the past when I ran a business."

Why Freelancing is Becoming More Popular

In the March 2020 issue of *What Really Makes Money* I wrote about the rise of 'the gig economy'. This is one major factor behind the rise in the supply of, and demand for, freelancers.

But new online technology is also making it much easier to go freelance. Until recently, if you wanted to earn money from gigs, you had to go online and search for companies or look through job listings. But now there are platforms specifically designed to hook up freelancers with employers.

The range of jobs is huge, from skilled activities like web design, voice-overs, and marketing to everyday tasks like pet sitting, data entry and power washing.

So in this issue, I want to show you what's out there that might match your experience, skill and energy levels. I'll show you the easiest ways to find freelance gigs online. But I'll also show you how to

find paid gigs offline, using old-fashioned, hyper-local methods that still work.

This could suit you if:

- » You're unhappy with your current job earnings and you want to start a side hustle.
- » You're looking for a job but need something to keep some regular money coming in.
- » You're trying to start a home business but you're not earning yet, or need to build up some investment capital.
- » You're retired and bored, or would like to boost your pension income.
- » You're already a gig worker, looking to add more strings to your bow.

This issue could help you start earning £10-£50 per hour from freelancing, giving you a flow of income when you need it. Who knows? It might become so enjoyable, you will decide to make it your full-time income!

TIP: After you've read this issue, I recommend that you also access the March 2020 issue of *What Really Makes Money* in which I first covered 'the gig economy'. There you will see that I reviewed and rated 19 of the UK's top gig platforms. This will give you a range of platforms to try. All of these could be good sources of freelance jobs.

But for this issue, I want to drill deeper into the options – what kind of work you could do, where to find it, and how to get the most profit for your efforts. I'll also give you a strategy for organising and running your freelance work to fit around your work and family commitments.

Online Networks for Offline Freelance Jobs

One of the big developments in recent years is that there are now online platforms that allow you to find clients for largely offline freelancing work. Let's look at the two biggest players.

TaskRabbit

The most famous platform for finding offline jobs online is [TaskRabbit.co.uk](https://www.taskrabbit.co.uk)

The company was founded in 2008 and has brokered 4 million tasks for over 1.5 million clients. It was bought by IKEA in September 2017 and operates

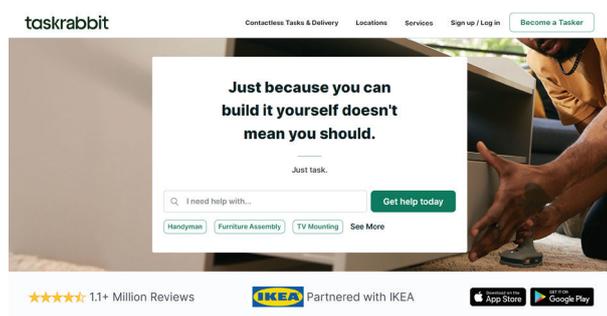
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in the UK, the United States, Canada, France, Italy, Germany, and Spain.



Members of TaskRabbit who want jobs carried out will describe that task, along with when and where it needs to be done. They can then browse for registered taskers, who will have prices for their work listed along with their locations. Once the price is agreed, a tasker will arrive to get the job done – the payments are safely processed through the website.

You can offer work based on cost per hour, rather than for a whole job, which helps you avoid the pitfall of not knowing how long something will take. If the job overruns, you get paid more, rather than missing out.

TaskRabbit takes 15% from every completed job. However, it also gets 7.5% of the total price as a ‘trust and support’ fee, so the total commission they take from you is 22.5%.

CASE STUDY:

£3K a Month for Freelance DIY

In August 2022, this headline appeared in the *Express*.

‘I’m in control!’ Man shares ‘great way’ he makes up to £3,000 extra each month

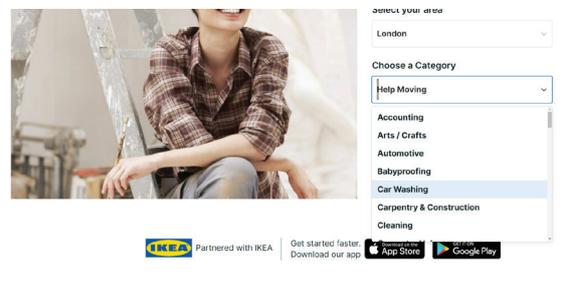
After he lost his job, Karim started using TaskRabbit during the pandemic. He pitched mainly for DIY and handyman jobs including painting, furniture building, putting up shelves and TV mounting. Karim carries out his tasks part-time and says he spends 15 to 20 hours each week completing them.

He says: “It was such a great way to earn money and utilise my skills whilst I had more free time... The great thing about TaskRabbit is that the more tasks you do, the more experienced you become and in turn you can then charge more per hour to reflect that.”

How to Find Your Freelance Gig on TaskRabbit

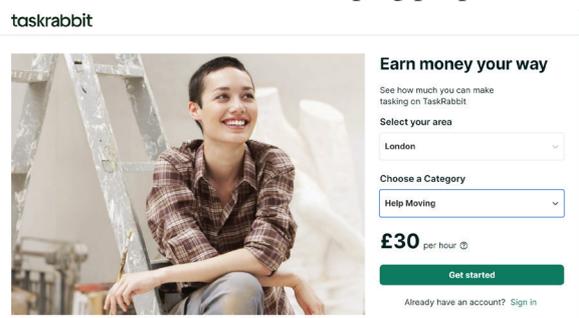
Click on ‘Become a Tasker’ on the top right and

you’ll be able to browse some categories.



The freelance jobs you’ll see presented in the side bar will be relevant in all towns and cities. London has by far the largest variety, and almost double the payment price in some cases. But the other main cities, like Manchester, Bristol, Glasgow, Edinburgh, had a good range and decent fees. For smaller towns like Maidstone or Milton Keynes, the range is smaller and payments lower – but this should be balanced out by the relatively lower cost of living.

For example, you can search in London, where you can make £30 an hour for helping people move house.



To save you time going through it all, I’ve done some of the legwork for you. Below is the job list and an idea of how much you can earn for each. I’ve arranged them with the most profitable at the top. Tick the ones that you have experience or basic skills in – or which don’t require skills at all.

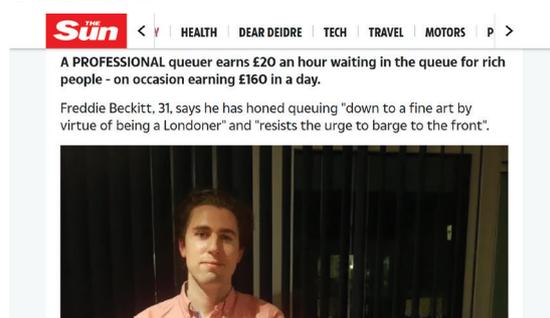
- » Plumbing Help – £27 an hour, £49 an hour London.
- » Electrical help – £24 an hour.
- » Minor Home Repairs – £21 an hour in big cities, £14 an hour in small towns, £40 an hour London
- » Painting – £19 an hour. £26 an hour London.
- » Carpentry and Construction – £23 an hour in big cities, £41 an hour (London), £19 in small towns.
- » Mounting – £23 an hour in large cities, £14 an hour in small towns, £38 an hour London.
- » Flat-Pack assembly – £20 an hour in main cities, £11 an hour in small towns, £29 an hour in London.
- » IKEA assembly – £18 an hour.
- » Lift and move furniture – £18 an hour in big cities, £10 an hour in small towns, £30 an hour in London.

- » Deep Clean – £17 an hour, £27 in London.
- » Packing and unpacking – £15 an hour, £27 an hour London.
- » Furniture removal – £14 an hour in main cities, £10 an hour in small towns, £24 an hour London.
- » Cleaning – £13 big cities, £11 small towns £21 an hour London.
- » Entertainment – £14 an hour (London only).
- » Data Entry – £13 an hour London only.
- » Errands – £12 an hour, £14 an hour London.
- » Delivery – £11 an hour, £14 an hour in London.
- » Shopping – £12 an hour. £14 in London.
- » Full service help moving – £10 an hour, £40 an hour London.
- » Smart Home Installation – £10 an hour, £39 in London.
- » Power washing – £10 an hour, £37 an hour London.
- » Help moving – £10 an hour £30 an hour London.
- » Computer – £10 an hour, £27 an hour London.
- » Interior Design – £10 an hour, £18 an hour London.
- » Decoration – £10 an hour, £17 London.
- » Organisation – £10 an hour, £17 an hour London.
- » Event staffing – £10 an hour, £16 an hour London.
- » Office administration – £10 an hour, £14 an hour London.
- » Personal assistance – £10 and hour, £14 an hour London.
- » Queuing – £10 an hour, £13 in London.
- » Accounting – £10 most places, £12 per hour London.
- » Graphic design – £11 an hour (London Only).
- » Automotive – £10 an hour.
- » Babyproofing – £10 an hour.
- » Car Washing – £10 an hour.
- » Cooking / Baking – £10 an hour London only.
- » Disaster recovery – £10 an hour.
- » Laundry and ironing – £10 an hour, £16 an hour London.
- » Arts/Crafts – £10 an hour.
- » Pet Sitting – £10 an hour.
- » Project Coordination – £10 an hour.
- » Rental unit management – £10 an hour.
- » Senior and Disabled Care – £10 an hour.
- » Sewing £10 an hour.
- » Window cleaning £10 an hour.

I'd recommend picking the options you've ticked which are highest up these rankings and basing your profile on these. However, if you have skills

or experience in something, then push that up the priority list, as you're more likely to stand out from the competition.

Bear in mind, these are broad estimates based on averages. There are people who can make a lot more. For example, 'Queuing' is estimated on the TaskRabbit site to be £13 an hour in London, but in this example from an article in the *Sun* this year shows how one man is making £20 an hour, and sometimes £160 a day – all commissioned through TaskRabbit.



An Easy TaskRabbit Idea for City Dwellers: Make Money by Standing Around!

This one will apply if you live in, or near, to London or one of the big cities with expensive shows – for instance Bristol, Edinburgh and Manchester.

The basic idea is that you queue to get tickets for exclusive and high-demand events on behalf of wealthy people. For example, a Bob Dylan concert in Glasgow, an exhibition at the V&A in London, or the release of a new iPhone at the Apple store in Covent Garden.

Freddie Beckitt from Fulham, West London, took up freelance queuing as one of his TaskRabbit income streams, which also included pet sitting, packing, moving help, errands and gardening. He told the *Sun*: “TaskRabbit enables you to list various different odd jobs and clients just select you from the roles you’ve listed. They listed lots of random low-skilled jobs and I saw what I thought was the easiest job in the world!”

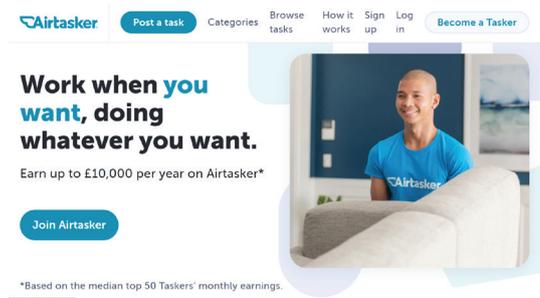
It might surprise you to know that there’s money to be made in standing around, but think about the fact that the average Brit spends three months of their life queuing. For wealthy people it’s tempting to pay somebody to queue for them. But not always the rich. Sometimes it’s superfans of a band, film or technology brand who cannot get to queue because of their jobs or family situation.

The upside is that this requires zero skill. The

obvious downside is that it can be boring, although professional queuers say that they kill time by speaking to the other people standing in line with them.

Airtasker

The second main online platform for offline freelancers is AirTasker.com/uk, though it also includes jobs you can do online, such as admin support, graphic design and copywriting.



Based on the median top 50 taskers monthly earnings, you could earn up to £10K a year.

The most popular task category in 2021 was removal services, followed by general cleaning (172,000 jobs) and then 'general handyman' work (124,000). Also in the top 10 were plumbing, mechanic and painting services, as well as carpentry and household equipment repair or instalment.

To work out what kind of work might suit you, and what you can potentially earn, their site includes a handy Side Hustle Calculator:



Based on carrying out just four tasks a week in your spare time, here are their estimated 'per month' earnings based on the input of their taskers, covering their list of job categories – in order of highest earnings to lowest:

- » Painting – £1,801
- » Carpentry – £1,524
- » Tree surgery – £1,455
- » Handyman – £1,247
- » Gardening – £1,108
- » Pet care – £1,039
- » Web design and development – £1,039
- » Admin support – £970 per month

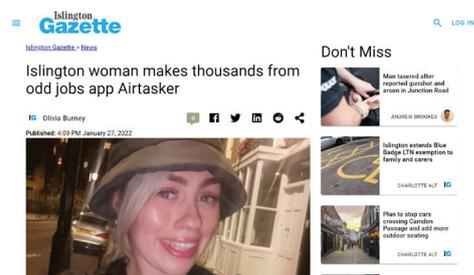
- » Baking/cooking – £970
- » Electrical work – £970
- » Plumbing – £970
- » Removals – £956
- » Car washing – £914
- » Baby sitting – £901
- » Appliance repair – £873
- » Locksmith – £831
- » Fitness training – £859
- » Photography – £839
- » Furniture assembly – £831
- » Lawn mowing – £831
- » Cleaning – £818
- » Car mechanic – £790
- » Videography – £790
- » Hairdressing – £734
- » Computer repair – £693
- » Rubbish removal – £693
- » Interior design – £693
- » Pick up and delivery – £624
- » Washing and ironing – £568
- » Copywriting – £554
- » Tutoring – £554
- » Graphic design – £485
- » Sewing – £483
- » Research and analysis – £236

Bear in mind that the four tasks per week that earn you this income could easily be increased – and that you might mix this income in with freelancing for clients you find offline, or independently.

It's perfectly feasibly to earn £1,000-£2,000 per month, while still doing this part-time. With a potential £3,000 or more per month full-time. That would equate to a £36K+ salary, where you are your own boss, choosing your own hours and working style.

CASE STUDY 1:

London Woman Makes £2K Per Month



As reported in the *Islington Gazette* in January 2022, Deborah Patterson started using Airtasker in August 2021, after leaving her sales job.

She and a friend completed two or three jobs, four or five days a week, mainly removal and furniture assembly jobs. Within two months, she had earned £4,000. She said, “There’s so much money to be made in removals it never stops. And you can constantly get an amazing wage from it, so I’d love to get my own van and continue working for Airtasker.”

CASE STUDY 2:

Unemployed Man Makes £1,000 in a Single Month

In the *Daily Express*, July 2022, there was an article about 30-year-old Waz, from Gants Hill. He was made redundant during the COVID-19 pandemic. He used Airtasker UK to generate extra income immediately.

He started with a cleaning job for an Airbnb host, which consisted of going to the various properties, changing the sheets, then doing very basic cleaning and hoovering. After that he started building bedside cabinets, desks, bed frames and wardrobes.

As a result, he created a part-time income, averaging £500 per month. It became his primary source of income and in one month, Waz was able to make over £1,000, simply through Airtasker jobs.

He told the *Express* that customers ranged from single parents to “insanely rich people” who work a lot and did not have the spare time to build their furniture.

The Drawbacks...

You might have noticed that skilled online tasks like copywriting and graphic design are not as well paid as you’d expect. This is because these platforms are geared more towards offline jobs like furniture assembly, gardening and painting.

So if you are looking to make money from skills in design, writing, marketing and tech, you should consider the next section in this issue instead.

There are some other drawbacks with doing physical freelance work using the TaskRabbit and Airtasker platforms, including:

- » You don’t live near a big town or city where most of the work is offered.
- » You don’t have a vehicle for getting around.
- » You lack the skills, time, enthusiasm or energy for physical work.
- » You have mobility or health issues.
- » You need to be at home because of family commitments.

If these are obstacles for you, then consider finding online freelance work...

Online Freelance Jobs

Online freelance jobs are digital tasks that you carry out from home, or wherever you have an internet connection. It includes skilled jobs like IT, design, writing and marketing, but also unskilled work like admin and customer support.

An example is Lily May from the UK, who – as reported in the *Sun* in July 2022, started freelancing as a social media assistant without any previous experience, and earns £5,000 a month. Her tasks include managing Instagram and Pinterest accounts, or admin tasks such as organising her clients’ emails and diaries.

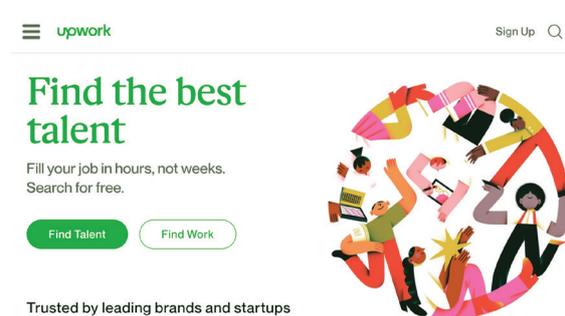
She uses TikTok for publicity but also the online platform Upwork to secure clients. She advised people to “Charge £20/hr initially” then “Work up to £50/hr.”



Let me show you four platforms where you can find online work...

Upwork

The big one for finding online jobs online is Upwork.



This platform was formerly known as ‘Elastic’ – set up in 2003 – and is a long-term, established player. It charges 20%. Categories include:

- » Development & IT
- » Design & Creative
- » Sales & Marketing
- » Writing & Translation
- » Admin & Customer Support
- » Finance & Accounting

- » HR & Training
- » Legal
- » Engineering and Architecture

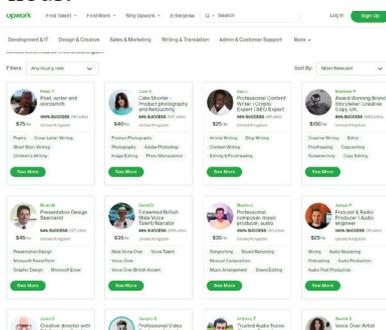
To sign up, they'll ask you some questions to build your profile in less than 10 minutes. You'll then be able to apply for roles, or list your services for potential clients. They'll safely process orders and payments for you.

You can choose from three options: to find work yourself; package up your work for clients; or get Upwork to recruit for you.

Once your account is set up, you can browse the available jobs on the platform, then narrow them down using filters based on your skill set and experience. Upwork uses 'connects' when applying for a job, which you get free of charge during sign-up.

Your client can pay you for a whole project or split the project into smaller chunks and pay for each one individually. Or they can hire you on an hourly rate basis. Upwork includes time-tracking apps to ensure that freelancers get paid for their time, and so that clients know the promised work has been done.

The amount Upwork takes in commission varies from 5%-20%, depending on your total earnings from a particular client. Here are some examples of top UK freelancers on the site, and what they charge per hour:



Here are the fees they are charging in descending order...

- » Copywriting – \$115-\$130 (£94-£107)
- » Marketing help – \$85 (70)
- » Writing – \$75 (£61)
- » WordPress design – \$60 (£50)
- » Presentation and design – \$45 (£38)
- » Product photography – \$40 (£33)
- » Voice-over – \$35 (£28.50)
- » Audio engineering and mixing – \$30 (£24)
- » Search Engine Optimisation – \$25 (£20)
- » Data entry – \$15 (£12.40)

When you first set up, you might be tempted to lower your rates to encourage people to hire you. However, clients don't necessarily expect super low fees or

trust them. So price yourself according to the market rate and don't try to undercut.

Tips for a Good Profile

To increase your likelihood of getting work, use these guidelines:

- » Clear, direct headline that tells what you do.
- » An eye-catching testimonial.
- » Show your expertise – any skills, training or experience. But make sure it's targeted at the customer – don't list things that aren't relevant to your target client.
- » Scarcity/exclusivity – is there anything you offer that they won't get from many other workers?
- » Call to Action – make sure you tell them what to do to get in touch.
- » Social proof – show that people are using you and like your work.
- » Add a video – this makes you stand out, and shows that you're a real person. People are 85% more likely to buy a product after viewing a video. Make it simple. Introduce yourself, list your skills, and say why they should hire you.

The important thing to remember is that you are trying to appeal to your client and show that you'll make their lives better in some way.

CASE STUDY 3:

Woman Earns £3,300 Per Month While Travelling



The Insider website recently profiled Michelle Checchi, 29, who left her home in the US to travel across the world. To fund it, she works remotely as a freelance writer and video producer on Upwork, making \$4,000 per month from 15 to 30 hours per week, which is equivalent to £3,300 per month.

Fiverr

Another option you can try to find even more clients is Fiverr.com, a well-established platform with over 4.2 million active clients. Fiverr allows you to pitch for tasks for individuals and companies in these categories:

- » Graphics & Design

- » Online Marketing
- » Writing & Translation
- » Video & Animation
- » Music & Audio
- » Programming & Tech
- » Advertising and Business

Registered users seek out workers willing to do a task at the best price for the skills they offer. You can set your pricing from \$5-\$995 and offer up to three versions of your service at three different prices. Once a buyer selects you, they will pay Fiverr, and Fiverr gives you the money after 14 days. They take a 20% cut out of each transaction, including any tip you get on top of the fee.

The downside of Fiverr is that it's highly competitive with services priced as low as £4. Some tasks offer quite low rates of pay, for instance, article writing, data entry and online polls. Others offer you medium pay levels (accounting work, customer service, CVs, graphic design, photography, proofreading)... while some kinds of work command much higher rates (animation, app creation, copywriting, JavaScript, website building).

Recently, Canva published a list of the highest paying gigs on Fiverr, which are:

- » Website design
- » Social media manager
- » Proofreading and editing
- » CV, cover letter and resumé writing
- » Website building
- » 3D and 2D modelling
- » Business consulting
- » Social media advertising
- » Graphic design

However, even with lower paid tasks, the money can build up.

CASE STUDY 4:

£1 MILLION From Writing Amazon Product Blurbs

Insider profiled Levi Newman in the USA who made £1m writing Amazon product descriptions on Fiverr.



This former pastor turned his hand to doing voice-overs on Fiverr, even though he had no experience. He made over £1m for his efforts.



Even though you might not get the best rates on Fiverr, if you are just starting out as a freelancer, it can be a good place to build a portfolio and gain some experience.

Tips for a Fiverr Profile

When you sign up, write a short, clear description of yourself. Your potential clients will use this to decide whether you and they are the right fit. Make sure you mention your experience and skills here. You can list up to 15 skills. So even if you only have three or four main skills, you can add micro skills like 'PDF converting', or 'Excel spreadsheet'.

Make sure you tell them exactly why they should choose you to do the job.

Remember, there are no geographical boundaries for this kind of work, so if you can speak more than one language this will widen your scope. So list all the languages that you know. You can describe your level as: Basic / Conversational / Fluent Native or Bilingual.

Another top tip: Link your other social media accounts to Fiverr. This gives added social proof and adds credibility to reassure the potential clients.

Freelancer

I recommend you check out Upwork first, and then Fiverr as a secondary platform. But you also consider Freelancer.co.uk. This is a dedicated freelancer marketplace, packed with projects including virtual assisting, data entry, SEO, software and website development.

You sign up, create a profile, select projects you are interested in. There are also fixed-priced jobs with a fee of 3%. In others you can become a 'preferred' freelancer and get presented with more jobs of higher quality, in return for a 15% project fee.

For some jobs in design and technology, they hold contests where you pitch your ideas and then win an award if yours are selected. If you are awarded a project that you accept, they charge a project fee of 10%.

People Per Hour

PeoplePerHour.com is another platform that you might not have come across before. It has some positive feedback from freelancers and customers on Trustpilot. Their main categories include:

- » Technology & Programming
- » Writing & Translation
- » Design
- » Digital Marketing
- » Video, Photo & Image
- » Business
- » Music & Audio
- » Marketing, Branding & Sales
- » Social Media

They take 20% commission on everything you earn but some freelancers have complained about a 20% tax charge on top. So it's worth testing the water with this one. It does lack some of the slickness and features of Upwork and Fiverr, but it could be another place to pitch for work to widen your net.

Don't Forget...

Whether offline or online, when it comes to getting hired as a freelancer, one of the most important elements is 'proof'. You want to show you have carried out work for people in the past, and they've been happy with it.

So once you do your first few tasks on any of the online platforms make sure you get in touch with each and every client, asking for a review (once the job is done and they've paid you, of course).

Going Beyond Freelancing Platforms

It's important to remember that online freelancing platforms are just one way you can get set up online and find clients. You can, of course, use more traditional means.

The obvious one is to contact former colleagues and employees. If your freelancing is related to a job you've had in the past, that should be your first stop. Contact all the companies you've worked for and people you've worked with. See if they need your services or ask them if they can suggest you to people they know.

You can also look for freelance jobs on these sites:

- » **uk.indeed.com** A global job-seeking platform with over 250 million unique visitors every month.
- » **uk.linkedin.com** This social media network has a section devoted to finding jobs. You can search for either companies or job titles.
- » **jobs.theguardian.com** You can look for work,

and get alerts when something comes up.

If you're starting freelancing from scratch, then the next section will give you some more ideas on finding clients and getting your first testimonials.

Hyper-Local Freelance Gigs

If you want to avoid digital freelancing, or relying purely on digital media to find offline freelancing gigs, never fear. It is also possible to offer your services in your local area to create your own residual income.

There are some advantages to going the hyper-local route:

- » People often trust small independent businesses more than faceless online companies with offices that are in big cities, or overseas. Plus, your clients get to support a local sole trader, helping the local economy.
- » Those who hire you get to meet you face to face. You have knowledge of the local area and can offer a personal touch that online businesses cannot offer. It's easy for you to nip back to visit if there's a problem or if anything else needs done on the job.
- » Being local, you don't have to travel far, which is much more economical and eco-friendly.
- » It's much easier for you to build up word of mouth through recommendations to friends and neighbours.

What you choose as your hyper-local freelance work will depend on your skills, level of time and physical health. Anything you do regularly around your home, or at work, is an obvious starting point. Hobbies and interests are another angle to think about.

But it will also depend on the needs of your town or region. For instance:

- » Some areas are hip, young creative hubs with lots of independent shops and businesses that might need certain kinds of services – designs for brochures, craft items, and gourmet drink and food.
- » Some areas have an older population who might need more help with home, garden and transportation.
- » Some areas are popular with wealthier families, who might have more money to spend on things like tutoring for kids, cleaning services and personal training.
- » Some areas are rural, where being able to drive out to people and take them groceries, or provide services, becomes highly valued.
- » Some areas are industrial, or have big business parks, which might benefit from things like

lunch delivery, larger-scale cleaning and other services.

So make sure you work out what the demand is. It's worth joining local Facebook groups and forums to get a sense of what people want, and what isn't provided by enough local businesses or the council. Failing that, attend local meetings and events and talk to people.

Options for local freelance work include:

- » **Creative freelancer** – This includes illustration copywriting, writing, graphic design, videos, animation and other services for local businesses. This could include marketing, publicity and events promotions for shops, pubs, cafés, restaurants, charities and local organisations.
- » **Tutoring** – Teaching local adults and older children. You could specialise in subjects like maths, English and foreign languages, to help people study for and pass exams. Or there are plenty of creative hobbies you could tutor people in, like playing a musical instrument, dance, drama, art and writing.
- » **Health and sports** – You could become a freelance personal trainer, or if you've experience in a specific sport, then you could coach people or small groups privately. This could also include yoga and Pilates.
- » **Fixing and building** – You could set yourself up as a local DIY SOS person, helping people assemble flat-pack furniture, putting up shelves, fixing broken pipes, repairing decking and other jobs.
- » **Gardening** – You could offer your services in mowing, pruning, clearing leaves and other tasks. You could offer local homes and businesses your services in plant care or provide seedlings to gardeners.
- » **Cleaning, ironing and washing** – From clothes and cars to houses, there's always a demand for cleaning services.
- » **Beauty** – It requires some training, but if you have any expertise in this area, home visits to provide beauty treatments is a good option.
- » **Pet training and care** – You could offer training services, coaching for new owners, walking services and sitting services.
- » **Food and drink** – you could offer services in making bread, cakes, juices, sandwiches and salads for local cafés and businesses. This could include delivering lunches to businesses, or supplying items for events like weddings and fetes.

My recommendation is not to spread yourself too thinly over too many different areas. I'd focus on one category so that it becomes easy to advertise yourself, and for people to have a clear idea of what you do.

Better to do this than to offer a bunch of very random skills, e.g. 'dog walking, editing, plumbing and voiceovers' which sounds strange and might put people off.

However, you can combine a couple of complementary categories. For instance, if you choose 'Home and Garden Maintenance and Repair', you could combine various jobs in the gardening, cleaning and fixing/building categories. If you have two or three very different areas you want to freelance in, then advertise them separately.

I recommend that you set up as a sole trader. This applies if you earn more than £1,000 from self-employment during a tax year. It will allow you to prove that you're self-employed to claim things like Tax-Free Childcare, and also to make voluntary Class 2 National Insurance payments so that you qualify for benefits.

Go to this website for details: Gov.uk/set-up-sole-trader

Marketing Yourself

Consider the following factors before you start advertising your services:

Who is Your Target Customer?

You should have a clear idea of the kinds of people who are most likely to pay for your services. This will depend on your research into the needs of your local area. For example, you might be targeting trendy independent shops, or elderly people with gardens, or wealthy people who are worried about their health, or parents who want their kids to learn a musical instrument.

What is it That You Offer?

Decide what your group of main job specialities are and make sure that they complement each other. For example:

- » DIY, carpentry, decking, building, fixing and assembling furniture, handyman jobs.
- » Window, car, home and decking washing, power washing, deep cleans.
- » Pet grooming, dog walking, pet sitting, puppy training, babysitting.
- » Editing, proofreading, website and email content, copywriting, ghost writing, memoirs, transcription.

Why Should They Choose You?

Think about what you can offer that rival freelancers and online freelance platforms can't. Obviously, you're local, which means you're familiar with the area, you understand the needs of the community, you can get to locations quickly and whenever needed, with a low-carbon footprint. Also consider your experience and skills – perhaps you've been gardening for 20 years, or used to work for a successful design agency, or trained as a beautician, or built your own house.

Also consider any ethical or social factors. You might be a toxin-free home cleaner who uses natural ingredients in your own sprays, or a gardener who specialises in non-chemical methods. You might use recycled materials in your building jobs. Your cakes and sandwiches might be vegan, or gluten-free. There might be a particular ethos to your coaching and teaching methods.

When you have worked out these three elements, then I recommend you write up a couple of paragraphs that summarise your freelancing business. You can use this as your basis for any publicity and advertising.

Finding Clients

Before you begin, you'll need an official contact phone number and email address so that people can get in contact. Make sure you give your freelancing enterprise a name. It could be as simple as your name or surname and what you do.

Now get your message out there!

- » Create a one-page flyer that you can post through letterboxes and target all the local areas where your ideal customers are likely to live. Also ask local shops and cafés if you can advertise on their windows or notice boards.
- » Create a basic website with all the same details so that people can find you online too (recommendations in the 'resources' at the end).
- » Tell your family and friends. Let them all know that you're embarking on a freelance career and ask them to recommend you to anyone they know who might need your services.
- » If you have worked in a local company, or done similar work in a professional capacity, do the same thing with former bosses and colleagues or even customers if you can.
- » Tell your social media friends and followers. Use whatever presence you have on networks like Facebook, Instagram, Twitter and TikTok to promote your freelance enterprise.
- » Search for specific companies and individuals

who might need the kinds of skills you offer.

This is particularly good with local businesses in your geographical area.

- » Put an advert in the local press or, even better, write a press release about your exciting new offering and get in touch with newspapers and local radio.
- » Use social media to grow your freelance enterprise. Being active on social media makes you easily findable, and shows people that you're a genuine human being. This kind of transparency and visibility is key these days.
- » For any physical freelancing work like gardening, washing, designing and carpentry, I recommend an Instagram account to show off your work, using video reels to show you doing your thing.
- » A Facebook page for your business is a good idea. Once you have that you can create a limited-budget advertising campaign on Facebook, targeting specific kinds of people, or geographical areas.
- » I also recommend LinkedIn, which is the ideal network for finding clients, making contacts and networking.

Getting Testimonials

The key to hyper-local success is building up some trust and credibility. If you have absolutely no previous experience, then I recommend that you offer your work for free, or at a very low price for a handful of people you know, just for a few days. This small investment of time will create for you a bunch of highly useful testimonials to start the ball rolling.

For example, you could offer to illustrate a menu for a local café, trim the hedges for a neighbour, or give a few sessions of guitar lessons. Make sure you take photos of any work you do and get testimonials from the clients. This will help you get the ball rolling.

If you have done any similar jobs in the past for friends or neighbours, get in touch with them and ask them to write a testimonial. They need to say that they used your services, that you did the job well and on time, and for a good price, and that they were impressed with the results.

The key is to build a portfolio of customers and the work you do. Create a document, either on a computer, or printed out physically, with these testimonials, images and completed jobs, so that you have a record of your achievements that you can show to potential customers.

Freelance Resources

Support and Advice

IPSE.co.uk

A community that supports people as they become freelancers. They have over 35,000 self-employed subscribers. If you go to the main page you'll see that there is a newsletter you can join for free.

For a £9 subscription per month you receive:

- » Premium guides and templates
- » Access to exclusive events
- » Money-saving offers
- » Well-being services
- » Tax and legal helplines
- » Discounted contract review service
- » Discounted business insurance portal

For £21 a month you also get:

- » Up to £750 contract failure cover
- » Tax investigation cover
- » Agency default cover

Registration and Tax

Gov.uk/government/organisations/hm-revenue-customs

As soon as you start any freelancing, make sure you're aware of any tax responsibilities. Register with HMRC online before the registration deadline of 5th October after the end of your first tax year. You'll have to register for VAT if you expect to have more than £85,000 turnover a year.

You'll find all the information you need on the HMRC website.

Bookkeeping and Accounts

To help you run your freelance enterprise without needing any bookkeeping or accounts skills, you can use an online accounting system to make invoices, keep track of cash flow, and handle your expenses. Three options include:

- » **QuickBooks.Intuit.com/uk** Accounting software that includes expert help with things like invoicing and expenses, payroll and submitting VAT. It's currently offering £2 a month for the basic self-employed person package.
- » **FreshBooks.com/en-gb** This is a rival to QuickBooks with a very similar offering. However, it is reported to be a bit more user-friendly for beginners. Currently £3.30 per month for the basic package.
- » **Xero.com/uk** Manage your finances in real time. They offer a 30-day FREE trial.
- » **Freeagent.com/try/accounting-self-**

employed-rs offers easy-to-use online accounting software.

Website

- » **Wix** – A template-based website builder that offers off-the-peg designs. It's popular amongst small firms thanks to its simple drag-and-drop interface, Wix also has an Artificial Design Intelligence (ADI) feature, which will design you a personalised site based on your answers to a series of questions.
- » **Weebly** – Another popular drag-and-drop option with added marketing and e-commerce platforms.
- » **WordPress** – The most famous of the website builders and the most popular. Allows you to choose from thousands of themes but also allows you to develop your own should you choose.

Organisation

- » **DropBox.com** – enables you to keep all your documents, videos and photos together on a cloud, and then share them easily. If you are working on a project with various contributors, Dropbox allows you to share files much more quickly and accurately than sending emails. You can access it from wherever you might be, via your computer, tablet or phone.
- » **Trello.com** This is an online noticeboard where you can arrange jobs in terms of priority, as well as store completed tasks, useful articles and content.
- » **Asana.com** You can make and schedule your plans, check progress, and discuss work with clients and collaborators.

Focus and Concentration

To help you focus on tasks and get the work done without procrastination and distraction, use the 'tomato timer' technique. This requires one of those tomato, egg or lemon timers people use when cooking. Or any clock with a timer on it will do.

Set the time to ring in 25 minutes. Then start work. When the timer rings, put a mark down and take a five-minute break. Allow your mind to unfocus, by staring out of the window or making a coffee, walking around the room.

Now set the timer again for 25 minutes. Do this three or four times, then either stop the work session entirely, or take a longer break.

'Toptal's tomato timer' is an online tool that will allow you to do this easily without needing your own clock. Go to TopTal.com/project-managers/tomato-timer