



## **40 Small business ideas to become your own boss**

### **Popular small business ideas for anyone who wants to become an entrepreneur**

Many of us dream of starting our own business, but without the perfect business idea, it's impossible to know where to begin. After all, you have to choose a business name, obtain licensing, establish your online presence, and so much more.

To help you gain time, here's a list of small business ideas separated into four major sections: best small business ideas, online business ideas, home business ideas, side business ideas.

Business ideas aren't easy to come by and can take weeks — if not, months — of research to help you get off the ground and running. By the end of this guide, you'll walk away with dozens of small business ideas you can easily start for little money, be your own boss and scale up as your business grows.

## **40 Small business ideas to become your own boss**

1. Best small business ideas
2. Online business ideas
3. Home business ideas
4. Side business ideas

### **1. Best small business ideas**

#### **Event planning**

Do you find yourself the go-to person people ask to plan the next big party? Or, thanks to your organizational skills and meticulous attention to detail, are you always asked to plan the big marketing events for work? Starting an event planning business might be the right calling for you. You'll help your clients bring their event ideas to life.

#### **Photographer**

Photographers help their clients to capture moments in time that they'll save for a lifetime. You may specialize in portraits, family photos, weddings, or something else. Further, you can follow your own artistic intuition and capture photos that you sell. There are many possibilities if you have a passion for being behind the lens.



### Real estate

As a real estate agent or broker, you'll assist people who want to buy and sell their homes. Then, on each successful transaction, you'll earn a percentage of the sale price. However, to get to the sale often requires marketing, networking, gaining local knowledge, and helping your clients to find the perfect house or the perfect buyer.

### Catering

Caterers work with their clients to design the menu for an upcoming event such as a wedding, corporate meeting, or holiday brunch. Then, they prepare the food, provide dinnerware, serve it on the big day, and provide clean-up services afterward. Catering contracts often include a price per attendee to determine the service cost.

### Food truck

Food, glorious food! In 2020, the food truck market was worth over \$1.2 B, and this figure is predicted to increase in 2021. From pizza to jacket potatoes, vegan to Indian cuisine, people just love picking up delicious eats from a local food truck vendor. Investing in starting a food truck business can be a smart move for food passionate individuals.

### Lawn care

One thing most all homeowners need is their lawn mowed and yard tended to. You can gather up all the yard equipment you need from mowers and edgers to rakes, then can offer to take over the tedious task for your local clients. You'll need to build your clientele, show up according to schedule, and provide quality lawn care that they'll want to tell their friends about.

### Clothing

Starting a clothing business requires equal parts creativity and business strategy. You'll need to start with your clothing niche, learn how to structure your business, market your brand, and more. This is a great route for those who have always had a passion for fashion design.

### Vending machine

Have you ever wondered about the profitability of a vending machine while putting in your dollars and selecting B7 to get your drink or snack of choice? It turns out, the people placing those vending machines are turning a decent profit. You'll need to decide



which type of products you want to sell and find great locations for the machines, then you can sit and wait for your customers to come.

### Pressure washing

Pressure washing machines enable you to deep clean a variety of surfaces quickly and efficiently. Once you get the equipment, you can offer this service to various types of clients from consumers to businesses. People commonly hire a professional power washing service to clean patios, house siding, roofing, company buildings, sidewalks, and more. Going this route, the start-up costs are low and the profit margins can be high.

### Recycling business

A recycling business can take many forms from collecting scrap metal to fixing and flipping used clothing. You'll want to have a clear plan in place when launching your business, including your niche, marketing strategy, and necessary permits. Then, you can make a profit while also helping to bring new life to used items.

### How to start a small business

Conduct market research

Clarify your business idea

Draft a detailed business plan

Examine your finances

Consider funding options

Decide upon your business legal structure

Register your business with federal, state, and local governments

Purchase all the necessary insurance policies

Recruit and hire a team



Choose B2B partners

Determine your branding

Establish an online presence

Market your business

Focus on continued growth

## 2. Online business ideas

### Dropshipping

A dropshipping business involves listing products for sale without storing any inventory. You'll be responsible for selling your product but a third party will package and ship it directly to the customer. The keys to starting this business are identifying a niche and finding a dropshipping supplier you can trust.

### Print-on-demand t-shirts

Launching a print-on-demand T-shirt business is pretty straightforward. You create a design, people buy it, you have it printed on a shirt, and it ships to the customer. You'll need to stand out, so be prepared you're ready to source quality materials, unique designs, and more as we've outlined below.

### Bookkeeper

A bookkeeper is an age-old profession dating back to when records were kept on clay slabs. Nowadays, it involves keeping track of financial accounts for businesses, often using digital software. As a bookkeeper, you may record transactions, prepare bank deposits, verify receipts, send payments to the bank, handle payroll, prepare invoices, track overdue accounts, and more.

### Sell on Amazon

Amazon is the world's largest online retailer and the leading U.S. e-commerce market. Being so, you may want to take advantage of all that traffic to sell some products of your own. However, there is a lot of competition so you'll need to take some time to research what you'll sell and ensure can retain a profit margin after you factor in all of the costs and fees.



### Consultant

Consultants are individuals who are experts in a particular field and provide their opinions, recommendations, and analyses to clients. Individuals and businesses hire them to help them prevent problems and improve their performances. If you have expertise in a particular field (IT, marketing, social media, tax, etc.), you could begin to offer your knowledge and experience through a consulting business.

### E-commerce

An e-commerce business encompasses all businesses that sell goods over the internet. However, there are a few main types including business-to-business, business-to-consumer, and consumer-to-consumer. You'll need to consider which type of goods you want to sell, what type of entity you'll be, and who you will sell to. Then, comes branding, marketing, and more.

### Marketing

Every business needs marketing, and with some marketing know-how, you can step in to help. You'll need to get to know your client's business and goals. Then, you can present a plan to achieve them using your marketing tactics. Once approved, you'll implement the plan, track the results, and collect your payments.

### Graphic designer

Graphic design involves crafting visual content using images, typography, and colors to communicate messages for clients. For example, when you see a poster, a visual ad, a billboard, packaging, logos, and marketing materials, they are all the product of a graphic designer's work. To be successful, you will need to have an understanding of marketing and design fundamentals.

### Web design

A web designer creates the layout and design for a website or web page. In this line of business, you'll work alongside a web developer, copywriter, marketing strategist, and possibly others to create an overall web presence that achieves the goals of your clients. Your role will be to combine the colors, typography, pictures, graphics, video clips, and other elements in a way that helps to communicate the brand and messaging effectively.



## Lead generation

Lead generation is the process of helping a business to find people who are interested in their products or services. There are many tactics that can be used to generate leads, and by becoming an expert in a particular strategy (or set of strategies), businesses will pay you to help them earn more prospective customers.

## How to start a small business online

Understand where the value lies in what you have to offer

Identify your target market

Perform thorough market research

Identify the requirements of running your online business

Establish your online presence and branding

Generate marketing content

Drive traffic

Focus on increasing conversions

Constantly analyze your results

Refine your approach for continued growth

## 3. Home business ideas

### Candlemaker

Do you love to make candles? You may want to start a business as a candlemaker. In this profession, you will create your own products and then will need to decide on a way to sell them. You may operate on a small scale with hand-made products, scale up to a large operation that uses machinery to make candles in bulk, or something in between.

### Personal trainer



A personal trainer is a certified individual who helps clients to achieve their fitness goals which can include strength training, weight loss, and health management. They do so through meeting with clients to understand their goals, creating action plans, coaching them through one-on-one sessions, answering questions, and helping to ensure they stay on track to completing the plan.

#### Handyman

A handyman is a jack-of-all-trades type who can help with various tasks required with the maintenance of a house. When you start this business, you can help people on an as-needed basis with projects like flooring improvements, drywall repair, leaking plumbing, painting, deck repairs, and more.

#### Tutor

A tutor is a private teacher who works with a single student or a very small group of students. Your aim will typically be to support your students and help them to better understand the topic at hand. You can provide tutoring services in a variety of niches from helping with homework to assisting in test-prepping, to specializing in a specific topic like algebra or chemistry.

#### Jewelry

Have you always had a love for bracelets, rings, necklaces, and other types of jewelry? Perhaps you'll want to get into the jewelry business. There are many routes you can take from hand-crafted jewelry to high-end expensive designer items. You'll need to stock up on your inventory and then can begin building your customer base.

#### Crafts

If you have a crafty side and enjoy the process of creation, perhaps starting a crafting business would be a good choice for you. Going this route, you'll create and then offer your goods for sale. You'll need to tally up all of your costs and the time you've invested, and then price your crafts at a price that will earn you a profit.

#### Interior designer

Interior design can be a very fun, creative, and rewarding business for the right person. If you have always had a knack for making a space look and feel great, this might be up your alley. Interior designers strategize how to make indoor rooms beautiful, safe, and



functional for their clients. You can opt to serve clients who are homeowners as well as business owners with physical locations like hotels, restaurants, and retail stores.

#### Hair

As a hairstylist, you'll get to spend your working hours making people feel refreshed and confident. Typically, you'll be self-employed and can work within your own salon or can rent a space in an established one. While having your own place may be the end game, renting a spot in an established salon can help you build up your client base.

#### Home baking

When you bring your baked goods to a gathering, is everyone always asking for your recipes? If so, it may be a sign you're meant to be a baker. Starting a baking business involves baking goods and then offering them for sale. You'll have to ensure you are following the laws in your state, and then can dive into the flour, sugar, and more to make delicious creations that also earn you a profit.

#### Airbnb

Airbnb has opened up a new revenue-earning opportunity for people around the world. If you have a space where people can stay while traveling or on vacation, you can post it on the Airbnb site for guests to rent. From homes, apartments, and condos to rooms, cabins, and treehouses, there are many possibilities.

#### How to start a small business at home

Have a dedicated, distraction-free workspace

Pursue what you're passionate about

Embrace a low-cost business idea

Put in the hours of hard work

Perform thorough market research

Choose a niche

Test out your idea for demand and profitability



Be present where your potential customers hang out

Choose a catchy business name

Register your business

Find out about licenses, permits, tax requirements, and regulations for your chosen business sector

Plan SMART goals

#### 4. Side business ideas

##### Private homecare

Private home care is a subset of general home care which involves caring for older adults in their homes. The patients may be living with chronic health conditions or physical disabilities. You will be hired to come in and help with personal everyday activities like getting around, bathing, going to the bathroom, and getting dressed.

##### Cleaning service

Are you great at keeping a home clean and tidy? Many people need your help because they are too busy to keep up with their home cleaning needs or would rather hire someone to do so. You can offer your cleaning services at the frequency you choose, go into homes, and clean according to the client's requests. You can also scale up your business by offering your cleaning services to businesses.

##### Personal chef

A personal chef is a trained cook who works for clients in their homes and prepares meals on request. Your duties will often include creating a customized meal plan, shopping for the items, preparing and serving the meal, and then cleaning up when you're done. You can help your clients save time while eating delicious food that aligns with their desired diet plans.

##### Dog walking

Everybody's precious pooches need their exercise. However, amidst a busy life, it can be hard to find time to walk a dog each day. That's where you can come in with a dog



walking business. Dog walkers take their clients' dogs on walks for them. In many cases, it's a few times per week and they are paid by the half-hour.

#### Courier

A courier is a mail service that handles the shipping of items from one place to another. You can start providing this service in your local area by finding a few clients, getting a reliable vehicle, and ensuring you have the equipment you need, such as a dolly. Then, you will pick up items your clients need to ship and deliver them to the recipients.

#### Drone flyer

While this may sound more like a hobby than a business, people are in need of skilled, certified drone pilots. In fact, the drone market is expected to grow from \$17.82 billion in 2017 to over \$48B in 2023. Having a bird's eye view can be very beneficial for many types of businesses from construction and farming to real estate and mining.

#### Painting

One service that's always in demand is painting. Most houses are painted and need to be repainted periodically over time. Being so, if you have a business of skilled painters, you can come to the rescue. You may be hired by individual homeowners or by business customers that need painting done in bulk.

#### Babysitter

Babysitting is a great business to start with low-to-no startup costs. Parents will always need a reliable babysitter from time to time, so building a reputation as one can guarantee ongoing income. You can start with friends and family, and ask them to let their social circles know that your services are reliable and available.

#### Home stager

When you walk into a brand new home for sale and it's full of beautiful decorations and furniture, that is the work of a skilled home stager. Home stagers are hired, often by real estate agents and home sellers, to fill a home with items that help to attract buyers and create the feel of a finished home. This is a route someone who loves interior design can take.

#### Lawnmowing



Are you an experienced lawnmower who is looking to make some extra cash? Expand from just your lawn and offer your service to your surrounding community. Mowing the lawn is one of those tasks that gets more and more difficult as you get older, especially in hot or cold weather. Help those who would rather hire it out by offering to mow their lawn for them on a regular basis.

**Courtesy of Fiverr**