

E-commerce: Path to Your First \$1,000

Selling physical or handmade products online — jewelry, candles, art prints, curated kits — requires more upfront effort but builds a real brand. You need 30-70 sales at \$15-\$40 each.

The key is starting with a tiny product line and one sales channel.

Your Numbers

Sell a handmade candle for \$28. After \$8 in costs, you profit \$20 each. 36 sales = \$1,008 in revenue.
Or sell curated kits at \$40 — only 25 sales needed.

Key Metric to Track: **Orders received this week**

YOUR STEP-BY-STEP PATH

Week 1

Target: \$0 (setup week)

Milestone: Choose your product and set up your storefront

- Pick 1-3 products to start (not 20) — keep the line small and focused
- Price for profit: cost of goods + shipping + \$10-\$25 margin minimum
- Set up an Etsy shop or simple Shopify store (one page is fine)
- Take 5-8 high-quality photos per product (natural light, clean background)
- Write product descriptions focused on who it's for and why they'll love it

Week 2

Target: \$75-\$200 (5-10 sales)

Milestone: Make your first 5 sales

- Share your shop with friends, family, and social followers
- Post your products in 2-3 relevant Facebook groups or subreddits (follow their rules)
- Offer a launch discount: 15% off for the first 10 orders
- Send a personal 'I just launched' message to 25 people who might buy or share

Week 3

Target: \$300-\$450 (15-20 total sales)

Milestone: Optimize listings and start content marketing

- Update product titles and tags based on what's getting clicks
- Post 3 pieces of content showing your product in use or being made
- Respond to every review and question within 12 hours
- Research and add relevant keywords to your listings (use Etsy search or Google Trends)

Week 4

Target: \$550-\$750 (30-40 total sales)

Milestone: Scale with social proof and paid reach

- Send a free product to 2-3 micro-influencers in exchange for an honest post
- Run a small ad (\$5-\$10/day) on Instagram or Facebook targeting your niche
- Add a 'best seller' or 'customer favorite' badge to your top product
- Offer a bundle deal to increase average order value

Week 5-6

Target: \$1,000+ (50-70 total sales)

Milestone: Push past \$1,000 with repeat buyers and referrals

- Email past buyers with a 'new arrival' or 'restock' notification
- Include a handwritten thank-you note + discount card in every shipment
- Launch one new product or variation based on customer requests
- Run a weekend flash sale to clear any slow-moving inventory
- Set up abandoned cart recovery if your platform supports it

Common Mistakes to Avoid

1. Launching with 30 SKUs — start with 1-3 products and expand based on demand
2. Ignoring shipping costs — bake them into the price or offer free shipping over a threshold
3. Bad product photos — this is the #1 reason e-commerce shops fail early
4. Not tracking profit per unit — revenue is vanity, profit is sanity