

10 Step Startup Guide

Here's your ultimate cheat sheet to becoming an online English teacher. It's a step-by-step guide of how to get your first paying student quickly. Of course, it's only one approach, and other successful online teachers may have their own ways, but the following provides a good place to think about how to get started.

Your Goal

Keep your goal in mind. While you would eventually like, say, 10 to 15 regular students, when you first start, keep it simple and doable. So your goal here is to get **ONE** student. Aiming for one student is not only simple and doable, but it is also a massive first step, because.

a) Getting one student makes you a teacher, so it changes your mindset a little and also gives you the confidence to get more students: "I've already done this, so I can do it again"

b) Your one student may well recommend you to their friends, relatives, neighbours, work colleagues, classmates, Facebook friends, pizza delivery guy, and so on, so you can get more students through referrals.

So here are the 10 steps to achieving that goal:

1. Sort out your software: install Skype and set up a user account.

2. Sort out your hardware: a computer with a webcam is best because it's much easier to use online materials such as whiteboards, but you can also use a phone or a tablet computer. Ideally, get a decent headset because this will help reduce any background noise, such as the sound of your typing and background chatter if you want to teach from a coffee shop.

3. Check your Internet speed. Make sure your Internet connection is fast enough. We'd recommend a minimum of 1 megabit per second upload, maybe a little more if you are using an HD webcam. Use speedtest.net to check the speed of your connection.

4. Create a PayPal account if you haven't got one already. You can use this to receive payments online and these can then be transferred to your bank account. (Note that while PayPal operates in lots of countries, there are some where it doesn't yet operate, so you'd need to find an alternative, such as Western Union, AliPay or Yandex).

5. Decide what you are going to teach. Teaching a niche of some sort is better than deciding to teach 'general English' or 'conversational English' because you get paid more, you have a far clearer idea of what to put into your lessons, and you have a far clearer idea of who your students might be (so it's easier to find them). The two most lucrative areas for English teaching are **Business English** and **exam preparation**, so carve out a niche for yourself in one of these areas.

If you're going to teach Business English, what kind of business people do you have in mind? People in customer care, health professionals, sales representatives? Do you have any particular business background to help you decide this?

If you're going to teach exam preparation, which exams? IELTS, TOEIC, TOEFL are very popular and students need to know how to get the best mark. You can find huge amounts of information about these exams along with lots of preparation materials online.

Deciding what to teach is crucial, because now you know what product you are going to offer, who your potential students are, and what kind of materials you need.

6. Register on italki.com. Italki is a marketplace for online students and teachers, where students can find teachers. If you have teaching certification, you can register as a professional teacher, otherwise register as a conversational partner. Add a video and a description to your Italki profile, and mention your niche clearly. Keep your fee low at first. You can raise it later once you have built a good reputation. While you won't get the best pay rates via Italki, it's a good way to get started and find students quickly. But don't stop here! Keep going...

7. Create a Facebook page for your online teaching business. A Facebook page is separate to your profile, although it's a good idea to link them. You can create a good-looking Facebook page in minutes. You should also describe your teaching service there. A Facebook page gives you a point of contact on the Internet. (Ideally, create a simple website too).

8. Find Facebook pages related to your niche. If you're going to teach IELTS, search for IELTS groups and pages. If you're going to teach business professionals, search out groups and pages related to this profession. Incidentally, it's much easier to search for exam preparation groups and pages because their acronyms (IELTS, TOEIC, TOEFL, FCE, BULATS and so on) make great search terms, another reason why exam preparation is such a good idea. You should also search on the Internet for groups on other social media sites, such as LinkedIn, and also online forums.

9. Contribute to these groups and sites. Read the discussions in the groups and find out what people's problems. Using your Facebook page profile, contribute to these discussions: give advice and tips, answer questions, engage with your learners, post useful information. You may find your first student at this point, as people contact you via Facebook for a lesson. If not...

10. Create a Facebook advert for your teaching service. Facebook adverts can be directed to highly targeted markets using people's interests (another reason why you should teach a niche. These adverts will appear in people's news feeds. You don't need to spend a lot on Facebook adverts, and they can be very effective.

Good luck with getting your first student!

Best wishes, Charlie

online ENGLISH TEACHER STARTUP GUIDE



software

install Skype
and set up a
user account

hardware

get a
webcam and
a headset

Internet

check your
speed - is it fast
enough?



Facebook

create a
Facebook
page for your
teaching
business

italki

register on
italki.com

Niche English

decide what you
are going to
teach

PayPal

set up a
PayPal
account



Find students

find Facebook pages
related to your niche

Contribute

get noticed by
contributing to Facebook
pages and groups

Advertise

if needed, make a
Facebook advert

brought to you by :



the online english teacher

helping teachers teach English...online



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