



START SMART

THE BEGINNER'S GUIDE

TO LAUNCHING YOUR RESELLING
BUSINESS

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ABOUT THE AUTHOR



Hi, I'm Maia.

I started my reselling business in 2020 during the peak of COVID, looking for a way to make extra money and stay creative. What began as a side hustle quickly grew into a full-time income—I now make over \$30K a year reselling clothing online.

With a background in graphic design, I've used my skills to build a strong visual brand, create content that connects, and grow a community of over 19,000 followers on Instagram. I've sold in person at events, markets, and currently sell through a brick-and-mortar antique mall.

This guide is for anyone ready to start their own reselling journey—whether you're looking for extra income, creative freedom, or a new path entirely. I'm excited to share what's worked for me and help you build something you're proud of.

@freckleandfringe

INTRODUCTION

“YOU HAVE THE POWER TO TURN WHAT YOU ALREADY HAVE INTO SOMETHING MORE—BECAUSE WHEN YOU TAKE ACTION, EVEN THE SMALLEST SALE CAN LEAD TO YOUR BIGGEST BREAKTHROUGH.”

Hey there! I'm so glad you're here.

If you've been thinking about starting a reselling business but have no clue where to begin—this guide is for you. I created it with beginners in mind, because I remember exactly what it felt like when I first got started in 2020. I was listing clothes from my closet during the pandemic, just trying to make a little extra cash. Fast forward to now—I've turned reselling into a real income stream, built a following of over 19k on Instagram, and even sell in a local antique mall.

This didn't happen overnight, and I didn't have a roadmap when I started. That's why I made this eBook—to give you the step-by-step guide I wish I had. Inside, I'm sharing everything I've learned to help you get started with confidence, from picking your platform to branding yourself like a pro.

Whether you're looking to start a fun side hustle, save for something special, or explore a whole new path—you're in the right place. Let's get into it!

CHAPTER I: SETTING THE FOUNDATION

Starting anything new can feel overwhelming — but the good news? Reselling is one of the most beginner-friendly businesses out there. You don't need a fancy degree, a ton of money, or even a huge inventory to begin. You just need a plan, a little motivation, and the willingness to learn as you go. In this chapter, we're laying the foundation so you can start strong and feel confident from day one.

Why Start a Reselling Business?

Here are a few reasons people (including me) fall in love with reselling:

- You can start with zero dollars by selling things you already own
- It's flexible—you can do it from home, on your schedule
- You're building a business around things you already enjoy (fashion, vintage, sourcing, social media, etc.)
- There's real income potential when you stay consistent

Whether you're looking to make a little extra cash, save for something big, or replace your 9-to-5, reselling can be the door that opens a lot of possibilities.

Choosing Your Selling Platform

There are so many different ways to start reselling—and honestly, there's no one-size-fits-all answer. The right platform really depends on your goals, your time, and how you want to show up. In this section, I'm breaking down the pros and cons of three popular options: selling on apps, using Instagram, and building your own website.

Selling on Reselling Apps (Poshmark, Depop, Mercari, etc.)

These platforms are great for getting your items in front of a big audience fast. They're built for buying and selling, so all the tools are already there.

Pros:

- Your listings are shown to thousands (sometimes millions!) of potential buyers
- They handle shipping labels and customer info for you
- Super beginner-friendly and easy to learn

Cons:

- They take a cut of every sale, and fees vary by platform
- You don't fully control the branding or shopping experience
- Algorithms can impact how visible your listings are

In 2025 - I have had the most like by far on Depop and Ebay - but *It depends on what you are selling.*

Selling Through Instagram (Posts, Stories, or DMs)

Using Instagram to sell is a more personal, community-driven approach. If you already have a following — or want to build one — it can work really well.

Pros:

- No selling fees or cuts taken out of your profits
- Great for building community and direct engagement
- Helps grow your brand visually and connect with buyers in real time

Cons:

- It's very manual and time-consuming — every sale is a convo
- You'll need to track payments, grab shipping info, and buy labels separately
- Mistakes can happen with names, addresses, and shipping if you're doing it all by hand

CHAPTER I

Selling on Your Own Website (Like Shopify or Wix)

If you're ready to really brand yourself and have more control, building your own site is a smart move. It takes more setup, but can make things run smoother long term.

Pros:

- Full control of your branding, layout, and shopping experience
- Invoices, order tracking, and payment processing are handled for you
- Less back and forth with customers — just checkout and done

Cons:

- You'll need to pay for your domain, design, and service (like Shopify)
- You have to direct your own traffic — people won't just "find" your site
- Requires some creativity and consistency to keep people coming back

There's no wrong way to start — what matters most is picking one and getting your feet wet. You can always expand, pivot, or change the game plan later. The key is to find what feels manageable and aligned with your energy, especially when you're just starting out.

I have pivoted SEVERAL times from starting on Instagram, to switching to a website and now to using the apps! At these different times, they all worked well for me. It all just depends on what aligns with you and the brand you want to build.

Setting Up Your Seller Profile & Building Your Brand

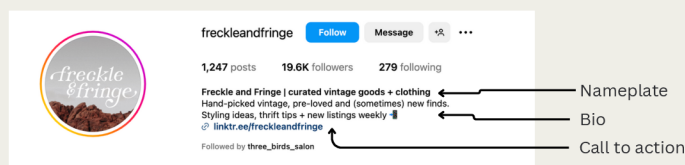
When I first started reselling back in 2020, my brand looked nothing like it does today — and that's okay. Your brand will grow and evolve as you do. But here's the thing: while it's totally normal to shift your vibe over time, changing your branding too often can confuse your audience. You want buyers to recognize and trust you, and consistency helps with that.

Let's talk about the basics of setting up your seller profile and building a brand that connects. Your brand is more than just your logo or colors — it's how people feel when they interact with your page, your products, and your voice. Make it simple, honest, and true to you.

Your Username & Bio Matter More Than You Think

Your Instagram bio is one of the most important pieces of your brand, and it should include three key parts: your **name plate**, your **bio**, and your **call to action**. Your name plate is the most search-friendly part — so instead of just your name, include keywords like “vintage reseller” or “thrifted fashion” to help people find you.

(I didn’t do this and kind of regret it.) Your bio isn’t really about you—it’s about what you offer your audience. Make it clear why someone should follow you and what kind of content they can expect. Then, finish with a strong call to action that leads people exactly where you want them to go, whether that’s your website, your sales platform, or your latest drop.



Why Having a Niche Is a Game-Changer

One of the biggest tips I can give: niche down.

Are you reselling vintage only? Modern basics? Kids' clothes? Y2K? Pick a lane — or at least a style vibe — and own it.

When I’m shopping on Instagram, I gravitate toward sellers with a clear aesthetic. I want to scroll their page and know instantly, “Yes, this is my style.” If the vibe is all over the place, I’m probably not going to stick around. That’s how most buyers are. You don’t need to sell everything — you just need to sell the right things to the right people.

Find Your Audience Early

The sooner you know who you’re selling to, the easier it is to attract them. Your branding, the way you style your photos, your captions — all of it should speak to your ideal customer. You’re not trying to be for everyone. You’re trying to be exactly right for your people.

Side Hustle vs. Business: Mindset Matters

Let's be real — reselling can start as a quick way to make some extra cash, and that's totally valid. But if you want to grow (and especially if you want to make consistent income), it's important to start thinking like a business owner — even if it's still just a side hustle for now.

The truth is, how you think about your reselling gig will shape how successful it becomes.

Here's what that mindset shift looks like:

- Track your sales and expenses. I use **Excel**!
- You don't need to go all in with accounting software — just start with a basic spreadsheet. Know what's coming in and what's going out. That alone will help you make smarter decisions. I use **Expensify** for tracking my spending!
- Organize your inventory. I organize by **color**.
- Whether you're storing five pieces or five hundred, keep them neat, labeled, and easy to find. It'll save you so much time (and stress) when it's time to ship.
- Show up consistently.
- Post new listings. Share your shop. Engage with your audience. Even when things feel slow, showing up regularly keeps the momentum going and builds trust over time.

You don't have to have it all figured out, and you don't need to be perfect. But thinking long-term from the beginning will help you avoid burnout, stay motivated, and see results faster.

Treat it like a real business — because it can become one :)

You're Off to a Solid Start

This chapter might be the foundation, but trust me — it's one of the most important parts of your journey. Choosing your platform, setting up your profile, and starting with the right mindset puts you ahead of the game. Don't wait until everything feels perfect — just start where you are with what you have.

CHAPTER 2: SOURCING

Once your profile is set up and you're ready to list, the next step is simple: you need inventory. But not just any inventory — you want to source items that will actually sell. This chapter is all about how to find the good stuff, avoid the flops, and start building your reseller's eye.

Start With What You Have

If you're just getting started, look around your own home. Go through your closet, storage bins, or even your partner's old clothes (with permission, of course). You'd be surprised how many things you've been holding onto that could bring in some quick sales — and quick confidence.

Where to Source Inventory

Thrift Stores

Still one of the best ways to find affordable, unique inventory. I always recommend checking out your local mom-and-pop thrift shops if you have them in your area. Prices are usually way better than the big-name thrift chains, and you'll be supporting a small business, which is a win-win. Look for clean, well-kept items, trending styles, and quality brands.

Garage Sales & Estate Sales

These are amazing for scoring big hauls at low prices — especially if you go toward the end of the day when sellers are ready to let things go for cheap. I use two apps to help me plan my weekends:

- *EstateSales.net* – Great for finding estate sales near you, with photos of the items ahead of time.
- *Garage Sale Map* – Plots out garage sales based on your location so you can hit several in one trip.

Pro tip: Bring cash, and don't be afraid to negotiate — especially if you're bundling multiple items.

Facebook Marketplace

You'd be surprised how many reseller-friendly deals you can find here. Search for clothing bundles, shoes, or even full resale lots from people who are decluttering or quitting reselling. Always be safe when meeting up, and try to stick to local pickups unless you fully trust the seller.

Consignment Shops

These stores are often slept on, but they can be a gold mine. The prices might be a bit higher than thrift stores, but so is the quality. You'll often find more upscale, curated pieces here—and sometimes even designer. I like to check in regularly because inventory turns over quickly.

Online Sourcing

I source from apps like Poshmark, Mercari, and eBay all the time. If you know what to look for and how to search smart, you can find items priced low enough to flip for a solid profit. Just make sure to factor in shipping and fees so you're not losing money in the end.

Unexpected Places That Deliver

Some of my favorite finds have come from places people overlook:

- Church thrift shops – Usually low prices and stocked by donation.
- Hospital resale stores – Higher-end donations, especially if they're in a well-off area.
- Flea markets – Tons of variety, especially for vintage lovers.
- Buy Nothing Groups – These are local Facebook groups where people give away items for free. You never know when someone's clearing out a closet full of gems.

The key to sourcing is to stay consistent and stay curious. Not every trip will be a hit, but the more you go, the better your eye becomes. **And remember—it's not about grabbing everything. It's about finding the right pieces that your audience actually wants.**

What Sells vs. What Sits

Let me be real: I've bought things that I thought would sell, and they sat in my inventory for months (or longer). The more you resell, the more you'll learn what your audience actually wants. In the meantime, here's what I've learned:

Items that usually sell well:

- On-trend styles (Y2K, minimalist basics, vintage Levi's, etc.)
- Quality brands with strong resale value (look up comps!)
- In-season clothing (coats in winter, sandals in spring)

Items that tend to sit:

- Outdated fast fashion, especially if worn or damaged
- Super niche items with no clear audience
- Anything overpriced for the market

If you're unsure about something, look up "sold" listings on Poshmark or eBay to see what it actually sold for — don't just go off what others are listing it at.

Spotting Trends Early

Here's the thing: the earlier you can catch a trend, the more money you'll make before everyone else catches on and the market gets oversaturated. It's kind of like being the first to show up at a thrift store on restock day — timing is everything.

So how do you stay ahead?

I hate to admit it, but scrolling TikTok and Instagram is one of the best ways to spot trends in real time. I'll be doom-scrolling and suddenly notice a shift — like everyone's wearing the same color palette, silhouette, or accessory. That's when I know something's brewing. It's up to you to decide if it aligns with your audience and your niche.

Another big one? Watching influencers and creators. I know — it's giving basic — but it works. They're often ahead of the curve because they're gifted PR, styled for shoots, or simply trend-obsessed. If they're all wearing cargo skirts this week, chances are you'll see those same pieces popping up in buyer searches real soon.

And finally, listen to your audience. What are people engaging with? DMing you about? Complimenting in your posts or stories? Sometimes trends show up in your own community before they hit the For You Page.

The more you pay attention to style shifts and buyer behavior, the more naturally you'll start to recognize what's about to pop off. It's half instinct, half observation — and it gets easier with time.

Tools That Help Me Source Smarter

You don't need fancy tools to be a great sourcer, but here are a few that make my life easier:

- **Google Lens:** Helps identify items and similar styles while sourcing
- **eBay & Poshmark comps:** Search the item name and filter by "sold" listings
- **Notes app or spreadsheet:** I keep a running list of trending styles, brands to look for, and past sales

These tools help me stay organized and make smarter buying decisions—so I'm not wasting money or holding onto stale inventory.



Want to Keep Learning?

If you're ready to take the next step in building your reselling business, the full version of *The Beginner's Guide* is where things really level up.

Here's a sneak peek of what's next:

Chapter 3: List & Launch

Learn how to take clean, scroll-stopping photos, write listings that actually sell, and price items the right way from the start. I'll also show you how to speed up your process and stay consistent.

Chapter 4: Grow Your Brand

Build a brand that stands out and keeps buyers coming back. From social media strategy to creating a cohesive vibe, I'll teach you how to show up with confidence and connect with your audience.

Bonus Chapter 5: Scaling & Staying Consistent

Take things to the next level by tracking your progress, creating efficient systems, and staying motivated—so you can grow your income without burning out.

Grab the full guide and turn your side hustle into a business you're proud of!