

THE FREE WORKBOOK

The Etsy-to-Shopify Launch Checklist

Twelve weeks. Forty-two steps. One owned business.

A complete pre-flight, launch, and 90-day plan for Etsy sellers graduating to their own Shopify store — written by the team that has built more than 1,000 Shopify storefronts.

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BOOK A 30-MIN CALL

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INTRODUCTION

Why we wrote this

A practical workbook from the team that built the storefronts.

Every week we hear from Etsy sellers between \$5K and \$50K in monthly revenue who can feel the platform working against them. Fee creep. Algorithm whiplash. A customer list they cannot email. Offsite Ads that become mandatory at \$10K. The Star Seller treadmill.

The graduation isn't dramatic. It's a sequence of small, ordered moves — and the order matters. This checklist is the sequence we use with our own clients. Forty-two steps across three phases: pre-flight (weeks 1-4), launch (weeks 5-8), and own-the-channel (weeks 9-12).

1,000+ 36× 50% 60-70%

Shopify stores
Blackbelt has built

ROI per \$1 of email
marketing

Higher conversion with
Shop Pay

Repeat-purchase rate
(vs. 5-20% on
marketplaces)

How to use this workbook

Print it. Write on it. Each box is a single, verifiable action — not a slogan. The milestones at the end of each phase tell you whether you are ready to move on. If a step feels obvious, skip it. If a step feels impossible, that is the one to delegate.

Stuck on any step? Book a free 30-minute call with the CEO of Blackbelt:

calendly.com/blackbeltcommerce/30mins.

PHASE ONE · WEEKS 1-4

Pre-flight

Take inventory before you take action. Most failed migrations are failures of preparation.

1. Audit your Etsy reality

Before you can replace Etsy, you have to see it clearly — every fee, every dependency, every weakness. Pull the numbers. Do not estimate.

- ☐ Export the last 12 months of Etsy orders to CSV (Shop Manager → Settings → Options → Download Data).
- ☐ Calculate your true fee load: listing + transaction + payment + Offsite Ads + shipping label markup. Express as a % of revenue.
- ☐ Identify your top 20 SKUs by revenue and by margin (they are usually not the same list).
- ☐ Pull your conversion rate from Etsy Stats — last 90 days.
- ☐ Count repeat customers in the last 12 months (Shop Manager → Orders → search by buyer).
- ☐ Screenshot your shop's About, Policies, FAQs, and Shipping settings for reference.

2. Own your customer data

Etsy's terms restrict marketing to buyers without explicit opt-in. Build the opt-in list you are allowed to have, starting today.

- ☐ Insert a printed thank-you card in every Etsy order with a QR code to a landing page.
- ☐ Build a simple landing page offering a discount in exchange for an email opt-in.
- ☐ Choose an email platform (Klaviyo for ecommerce; Mailchimp if budget is tight).
- ☐ Set up double opt-in and a basic welcome sequence (3 emails minimum).
- ☐ Export any past buyer emails you legitimately collected outside Etsy (from your own site, events, wholesale).

3. Lock down the brand basics

You can't build a moat without a brand. A clean wordmark, a consistent palette, and a vetted domain are non-negotiable.

- ☐ Register your .com domain (and the .co/.shop defensively if affordable).
- ☐ Finalize a vector logo (SVG + PNG, dark + light variants).
- ☐ Define a primary color, a secondary color, and a neutral. Three is enough.
- ☐ Pick two fonts maximum: one for display, one for body. Test on mobile.
- ☐ Photograph your top 20 SKUs on a consistent backdrop (white or neutral). Three angles each.
- ☐ Write a one-sentence brand promise. Memorize it.

4. Choose the right Shopify plan

Shopify Basic (\$39/mo) covers most sellers under \$20K/mo in revenue. Shopify Plus is for \$1M+/yr or complex multi-channel needs. Do not overbuy.

- ☐ Start a Shopify free trial. Pick the Basic plan unless your accountant says otherwise.
- ☐ Enable Shop Pay during checkout setup (it lifts conversion ~50% on returning shoppers).
- ☐ Connect your domain. Set the www → root redirect.
- ☐ Add your legal entity details for tax and payouts.
- ☐ Connect a bank account and verify a test payout.

PHASE 1 MILESTONE

You can answer four questions in writing:

1. What is my real Etsy fee load as a % of revenue?
2. Which 20 SKUs drive 80% of my profit?
3. How many email subscribers do I currently own?
4. What is my brand promise, in one sentence?

PHASE TWO · WEEKS 5-8

Launch

Build the store. Migrate the catalog. Open the doors quietly before opening them loudly.

5. Build the store

- ☐ Pick a Shopify theme. Dawn (free, official) is the right answer for 80% of stores.
- ☐ Set primary/secondary colors, fonts, and logo in Theme settings — match brand basics.
- ☐ Build five core pages: Home, Catalog, Product, About, Contact.
- ☐ Write your About page in first person. Tell the maker's story. No corporate voice.
- ☐ Configure mobile menu, footer, and a sticky cart icon. Test on a phone.
- ☐ Install Shopify's free SEO basics: alt text on images, meta titles, meta descriptions.

6. Migrate the catalog

- ☐ Import top 20 SKUs first. Don't migrate everything — migrate the 80/20.
- ☐ Rewrite product titles for Google (not Etsy). Lead with what it is, then who it's for.
- ☐ Rewrite product descriptions: benefit, then feature, then dimensions. Short paragraphs.
- ☐ Set product variants (size, color) cleanly. One variant per SKU.
- ☐ Upload at least three images per product. Include one lifestyle shot.
- ☐ Add weight + dimensions for accurate shipping rates.
- ☐ Tag products by collection (e.g. 'best-sellers', 'new', material).

7. Wire up payments, shipping, and tax

- ☐ Enable Shopify Payments + Shop Pay + Apple/Google Pay.
- ☐ Set up real-time shipping rates from USPS/UPS, or use flat-rate zones.
- ☐ Configure free-shipping threshold (test \$50, \$75, \$100 — pick what protects margin).
- ☐ Add an automated tax calculation (Shopify Tax handles US states).
- ☐ Set up abandoned-cart recovery emails (built into Shopify or via Klaviyo).
- ☐ Place a test order with a real card. Refund yourself. Verify the receipt + tracking flow.

8. Pre-launch QA

- ☐ Run Google PageSpeed Insights on home + product pages. Aim for 80+ on mobile.
- ☐ Click every link on every page. Yes, every one.
- ☐ Read every line of copy out loud. You will find typos.
- ☐ Verify favicons, social-share previews (Open Graph image), and 404 page.
- ☐ Submit a sitemap to Google Search Console.
- ☐ Confirm Google Analytics 4 is firing on purchases.

9. Soft launch to your email list

- ☐ Send a personal email to the subscribers you collected in Phase 1. Three sentences. Honest.
- ☐ Offer a launch-week-only discount code (e.g. LAUNCH15).
- ☐ Listen. Watch the first ten checkouts. Fix any friction within 24 hours.
- ☐ Ask three customers for a review. Manually. Use their words on the homepage later.

PHASE 2 MILESTONE

Your store is live and selling.

You have completed ten real (non-friend) orders, two five-star reviews, and a working analytics pipeline. Your Etsy shop is still open — but it is no longer your only roof.

PHASE THREE · WEEKS 9-12

Own the channel

The store works. Now build the traffic and the loyalty that Etsy can never take from you.

10. Build organic traffic

- ☐ Publish your first three editorial blog posts. 1,200+ words each. Useful, not promotional.
- ☐ Target a long-tail keyword for each (use Google Search Console queries you already rank for).
- ☐ Add internal links between blog posts and product pages.
- ☐ Add schema markup: Product, BreadcrumbList, FAQPage, Article (Shopify themes include most by default).
- ☐ Submit each new URL to Google Search Console manually.

11. Build email as a real channel

- ☐ Welcome flow: 3 emails, sent over 7 days. Story, social proof, soft offer.
- ☐ Abandoned-cart flow: 3 emails, sent at 1 hour / 24 hours / 72 hours.
- ☐ Post-purchase flow: 2 emails — thank you + review request.
- ☐ Weekly newsletter: pick a day, ship it without fail for 8 weeks. Show, don't sell.
- ☐ Segment by purchase recency (0-30 days, 31-90, 91+) and behavior (browsers vs. buyers).

12. Diversify discovery

- ☐ Set up Google Merchant Center + free product listings (organic shopping results).
- ☐ Connect Instagram Shopping and Facebook Catalog through Shopify.
- ☐ Test one TikTok Shop video per week for 4 weeks. Measure, don't guess.
- ☐ List on Pinterest with Rich Pins enabled. Pinterest still drives buying intent.
- ☐ Pitch three small podcasts or newsletters in your niche. Offer story, not sponsorship.

13. The Etsy handoff

Don't close your Etsy shop yet. Shrink it. Let it become a discovery channel that feeds your owned store. Many of our clients keep Etsy at 20-30% of revenue indefinitely — as a source of new customers, not as a business.

- ☐ Remove your weakest 50% of Etsy listings. Keep the SKUs Etsy buyers actually search for.
- ☐ Update Etsy listing photos to subtly include your brand wordmark (within Etsy's rules).
- ☐ Include your thank-you card in every order. Always.
- ☐ Add a clean, branded shipping insert — not just a generic note.
- ☐ Once 60% of monthly revenue is on Shopify, pause Offsite Ads on Etsy. Reassess monthly.

PHASE 3 MILESTONE

You own a business, not a stall.

Your Shopify store is producing more than half of monthly revenue. Email is your second channel. You have a brand, a domain, an audience, and the data to grow them — none of which can be revoked by a marketplace.

APPENDIX

Five mistakes we see most often

Even with a clean checklist, the same five mistakes recur. Pre-mortem them now.

— Migrating everything.

Most Etsy shops have a long tail of listings that have never sold. Don't recreate them on Shopify. Migrate the 80/20.

— Copy-pasting Etsy product copy.

Etsy copy is optimized for Etsy search. Google reads differently. Rewrite for clarity and intent — short paragraphs, clear hierarchy.

— Discounting forever.

A launch-week discount builds momentum. A permanent discount trains your audience to wait. Set an end date.

— Closing Etsy too soon.

Etsy still drives discovery for many categories. Use it as a top-of-funnel asset until Shopify reliably produces 60%+ of revenue.

— Not asking for reviews.

Etsy automates reviews; Shopify does not. Build a manual or automated review-request flow into your post-purchase sequence from day one.

YOUR NEXT STEP

Skip the trial-and-error.

Blackbelt has built more than 1,000 Shopify stores. If you are already past \$50K on Etsy and want a partner who has done this dozens of times before, book a free 30-minute discovery call with our CEO, Victoria Beltran. We will look at your Etsy data, identify the three highest-leverage moves, and tell you whether you should hire us or do it yourself. Either answer is fine.

Book your free 30-min call →

calendly.com/blackbeltcommerce/30mins

SOURCES & FURTHER READING

- Shopify Pricing (verified June 2026): shopify.com/pricing
- Etsy Fees & Payments Policy: etsy.com/legal/fees
- Email marketing benchmarks: shopify.com/blog/email-marketing-trends
- Customer retention benchmarks: shopify.com/blog/customer-retention-retail
- The full pillar article (web): blackbeltcommerce.com/graduate-from-etsy-to-shopify