



HOW TO SUCCESSFULLY SELL OAK ITEMS ONLINE



Can you have a profitable business selling OOAK online?

Yes.. but it's VERY hard, and you will struggle to make as much as someone who offers reproducible designs.



What is your goal?

Full-time living?

Part-time?

Hobby Business?

Cons of Selling OOAK Items Online

- For every item, you have to design it, make it, take photos, edit them, do keyword research, write a description, upload/create a listing, market the listing.
- This is a LOT of work, that will limit the time you have to work on your business.
- Those who sell reproducible items can skip most of these steps - *they just have to make the product when it sells*. This saves a LOT of time.
- For Etsy: You won't get 'ranking juice' via sales, because once your item is sold, it's done. Video on Listing Quality Score [here](#).

Why OOAK becomes harder over time...

- When starting out there is ample time, energy and enthusiasm to experiment and create OOAK items but as your business grows this **becomes less sustainable**.
- (As your creativity ebbs and flows, having a line of reproducible items provides you with breathing room, as you don't always have to be creating something new. You can also have OOAK 'designs' - i.e. you make the same thing, but it's unique each time - to deal with this issue somewhat.)
- Ideally, you should have the freedom to make and list OOAK items when the inspiration strikes and you have the time. ***But this is not possible when running a viable full-time business.***

Honestly, the best approach if you want to make a full-time living...

- **A hybrid approach**, where you sell online, but you also do regular markets/shows, and possibly do consignment/wholesale.
- Utilise price points to support these creative endeavours. **Your OOAK items should have pricing that reflects their elevated and unique status.**
- (P.S. Remember - reproducible designs **do not mean** that the piece is not handmade or a labour of love.)
- If you have OOAK items, **list them on your best selling venue and deactivate the listing when at markets.**

There are 2 parts to making a full-time living creating and selling OOAK items online.

1. **Sell expensive items priced in the mid to high hundreds of dollars.** These need to be quick to make, have a good mark up and sell multiple times a week (depending on how much you need to make).
2. **Become a maker with a large and dedicated following.** Time is invested in building a presence, batch making items and managing a big release. Product still need to be priced on the high end.

1. Sell Expensive Items

- You **CANNOT** do this selling cheap items.
- You must charge a premium for OoAK items.
- Do the maths to work out how much they need to sell for - don't just wing it.
- Start from what you need to earn and work backwards.
- Figure out how to work **faster** and **reduce** the price of your materials in order to increase profits.

2. Build a dedicated following of collectors.

- **Build a following who will snap up each release.**
- Rather than listing as you make things, consider having 'releases' on a regular basis of collections.
- You can then tease these on social media/ mailing list (get a mailing list!!!) and then do a 'drop' at a pre-scheduled time.
- This takes advantage of marketing psychology - **scarcity, loss aversion, urgency.** *"If I don't buy this now I'll miss out."*

2. Build a dedicated following of collectors.

- So - you need to work on building a community - on social media and/or on a mailing list.
- Share behind the scenes.
- Share works in progress.
- Share work that is upcoming in the next release.
- Some examples of people doing this:
 - <https://www.etsy.com/au/shop/katwise>
 - <https://muldpottery.com/>
 - <https://ritualremains.com>
 - <https://thepotteryparade.com>



2 Minute Activity

- **Is this possible with your business and products as they currently stand.**
- **What would you have to change in order to make this work?**

Further Resources

YouTube, Workshops
& Podcasts

- Podcast: [\[120\] Can you make a successful living selling OoAK items online?](#)
- Podcast: [\[179\] Selling One-of-a-Kind Online with Kriket Broadhurst](#)