



# HOW (& WHEN) TO RUN A SALE



# WHY do you want to run a sale?


Most of the time, the answer is:  
because I want to sell more stuff NOW.



It's tempting to just run a sale  
when things are slow.

But we need to be strategic about our sales  
so we're not devaluing ourselves and our  
work - and potentially losing money.


# First Things First... are your prices correct?



- Before you even THINK about having a sale, you need to make sure you are charging ENOUGH at your full retail price.
- The last thing you want to do is actually LOSE money during a sale because you're already undercharging.
- How do you know? You need to first and foremost do the maths!
- Take the [pricing workshop](#). Or, for a faster breakdown, watch [this video on my YouTube channel](#).
- You need to know HOW MUCH less profit you'll be making by running any particular sale.

# Briefly...


- $\text{Cost Price} + \text{Markup} = \text{Price}$
- OR
- $\text{Cost Price} \times 2 = \text{Wholesale Price} \times 2 = \text{Retail Price}$
- Cost Price includes:
  - Materials
  - Time
  - Overheads



Once you're  
confident that  
your pricing is on  
point...


- You can start thinking about your sales strategy.
- **How are you going to use sales to your advantage going forward?**
  - To take advantage of the marketing of larger events (such as Black Friday?)
  - To get a regular boost in sales?
  - To clear out old stock (end of season)?
  - To drum up interest in your shop?
  - To promote a certain product at a certain time (seasonal, holidays, launch)?
- How often do you want to run sales, and how much of your shop will you discount?
- Are you running a sale to get rid of already made items that aren't moving - or just to get more sales of made-to-order items?

# Made-to-order vs. Ready-made



- **The sort of products you make will impact this.**
- Traditionally, sales are run in stores because they want to get rid of old inventory to make room for new.
- This only makes sense if you have ready-made stock lying around.
- If, however, you are a made-to-order business, you're literally only running a sale to get more orders through the door.
- You may be a mix of both, but they require different strategies.

# Made-to-order vs. Ready-made




- **Ready-made**
  - You might have seasonal or regular releases, and after a period of time, you then put these items on sale.
  - MAKE SURE this is not close to launch, and that it's not super-predictable, or savvy shoppers will get to know your patterns and 'wait for the sale'.
- **Made-to-order**
  - You can literally design any sale strategy you like, as you're not trying to move old stock.

# Certain products vs. all products.



- Do you want to run a sale on your whole shop, or just on certain products?
- I have used 'monthly specials' before to drive sales and have something to promote on social media (*bonus: only offer specials to mailing list subscribers, and use this as incentive to get people on your list.*).
- So, you do a discount or deal (20% off this item, or buy 1 get 1 free (buy 2 get 1 free) etc.) on one item or a set of items for a period of time.
- This gives you something to promote on your socials and via email, too - so if you struggle with what to talk about, this will help.
- And you can also potentially get upsells and cross sells, too.

# How much of a discount to give?



- You want to find a sweet spot between:
  - Enticing enough to encourage a sale
  - Not so much you're losing money
  - Not so much you're devaluing your product
- The type of product and the purpose of the sale will impact this, too.
- For example - I would consider running a 50% discount on a digital product, but generally never more than 30% off a physical product.
- For example - if you're selling off old stock, maybe you WILL want to offer 40-50% off just to get rid of it, but if you're running a sale to get more customers through the checkout, then a smaller discount will suffice.

# Put a time limit on it...

- You don't really just want to discount something indefinitely (i.e. you want to sell old stock so you just drop the price...)
- **Put a definite time limit on your sale to encourage conversions - shorter is generally better.**
- People are motivated by a time limit.
- For an Etsy sale (or whole-shop sale), you might want to do a weekend, or a few days (when do people purchase from you the most already?).
- If selling off old stock, maybe a week or 2.

# Put a time limit on it...

- If you run a regular special, perhaps a week, or a month, but make sure to really promote heavily at the beginning and especially END of the sale period.
- If you do a flash sale (only a few hours/a day) make sure to promote it beforehand!
- Whatever type of sale you do, make sure you have time to do the promo... more on that shortly.

# Etsy-specific sale strategy...

## Set up a new special offer



### Run a sale

Shoppers can discover your sale in search, on your listings, and from shop home.

[Need help getting started?](#)

Run sale



### Send offers to interested shoppers

Automatically send a coupon to shoppers who've added one of your items to their carts or favourited something in your shop.

Set up offer



### Create a coupon

Share it with anyone you like — don't worry, shoppers can't discover it on their own.


[Tips for using coupons](#)

Create coupon

- There are 3 ways to discount things on Etsy: sales, offers, and coupons.
- Running a whole-shop sale gets you a sale badge in search AND your price is highlighted in green.
- **AU\$11.96** ~~AU\$15.94~~ (25% off)
- AND as it gets close to your sale ending, they add a note about that, too (*sale ends in x hours*).
- People can filter by 'on sale', too!
- So running a short sale (like 1 day) is a good way to get a short boost in search.


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[Tips for using coupons](#)

Create coupon

- Perhaps you want to use an offer to remarket to people who've added something to their cart but have not purchased (most other online platforms allow you to do this, too). Or send an offer to someone who's favoured something (but I'm not a fan of this, personally, it feels a bit spammy to me).
- Or - create a coupon! Offer this to a buyer as a discount on their next purchase, or to encourage them to sign up to your mailing list (I offer 10% off next purchase to people who sub to mine).




## 2 Minute Activity

- **WHEN** would it make sense for you to run sales in your shop?
- Are you going to discount some or all of your stock?

# How are you going to market your sale?

- Ideally, you want to shout your sale from the rooftops to encourage orders!
- So - you want to not only decide what you're putting on sale and when - but how you're going to market it.
- This will depend on the type of sale, but make sure you have planned any email marketing, ads, and social posts beforehand to make the most of the sale!
- **Remember to market it:**
  - Before (build anticipation)
  - During (announce and remind)
  - And a flurry right at the end to get those forgetful or hesitant customers over the line!
- ALWAYS remember to include your deadline in marketing messages - take advantage of countdown timers on Insta for example.



# Finally - make sure you're prepared!

- Make sure you've got the materials and time you need to fulfil the orders you will receive.
- Same with packaging.
- You do NOT want to be slow to fill orders - treat your sale customers really well, and they might turn into repeat customers at full price!

# Planning a Sale!



- ❑ **Follow this checklist:**
  - ❑ Why are you running this sale/what's your GOAL (more sales, more awareness, more signups to your mailing list?)
  - ❑ What are you putting on sale?
  - ❑ Where are you running your sale?
  - ❑ What's your time frame?
  - ❑ What's your marketing plan?

# Further Resources

- [Get your First Etsy Sale!](#)
- [Pricing Workshop](#)
- [Pricing Formula video on YouTube](#)