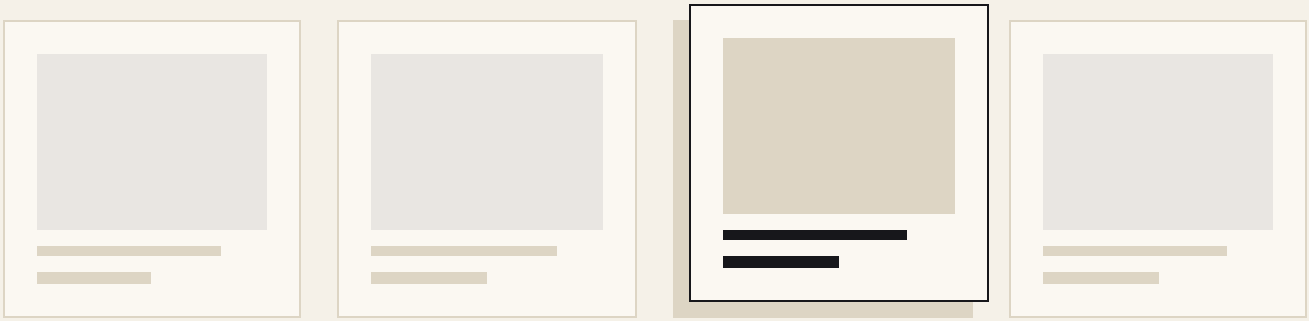
The Shop Launch *Playbook.*

Launch a digital product shop that looks established from day one.

FOR SELLERS ON ETSY · STAN STORE · GUMROAD · PAYHIP



WELCOME

Before you *begin.*

Hi, I'm Madhuka, the founder of RefineLeap.

I'm a designer who creates digital products every day, and I've helped other sellers turn scattered shops into ones that look established. Again and again I see the same thing: good products, made with real care, sitting in shops that don't show buyers how good they are.

This playbook is everything I'd tell a friend who was about to open their first digital product shop, or whose shop gets visits but very few sales. It won't promise you sales; nobody honestly can. What it will do is help you make sure your product, your shop and your listings aren't what's holding you back.

How to use this playbook

- **About to launch?** Work through the chapters in order, then follow the 30-day calendar in Chapter 6.
- **Already selling?** Start with the First Impression Scorecard in Chapter 3. Your score tells you which chapter to read first.
- **Short on time?** Read Chapter 7, the 10 most common mistakes, and fix the ones you recognise.

Every chapter ends with a short checklist. Tick it off, then move on.

TIP: UNDERLINED WORDS WITH ↗ ARE CLICKABLE — THEY OPEN OUR SITE OR SOCIAL PAGES.

What's inside

01 Choose a product people search for

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08 Your next step

Small beginnings deserve big thinking. Let's make yours look the part.

— Madhuka

01

CHAPTER 01

Choose a product people *search for.*

A beautiful shop can't sell a product nobody is looking for. So before design, before platforms, start here.

Most first products are chosen the other way round: "What could I make?" A better question is: **"What are people already trying to find, and how could I make the clearest, most useful version of it?"**

You don't need a perfect idea. You need a product with three things:

1. **Demand** — people already search for it.
2. **A gap** — what's out there is messy, generic or hard to use.
3. **A fit** — you can make it well, and you'd enjoy making more like it.

Step 1: Start with a person, not a product

Write one sentence: *"I help [who] with [what problem]."*

- "I help new cleaning business owners look professional to their first clients."
- "I help busy parents plan a week of meals in ten minutes."
- "I help small-shop owners keep track of their stock."

A clear person makes every later choice easier: the product, the words in your listing, the look of your shop.

Step 2: Check demand in 20 minutes

You don't need paid tools for your first product. Use what buyers use.

WHERE	WHAT TO DO	WHAT IT TELLS YOU
Etsy search bar	Type the start of your idea (“cleaning business…”) and read the suggestions that appear	Phrases real buyers type
Etsy results	Search the idea. Note how many results there are, and look for “bestseller” badges and listings with many reviews	Whether people buy this, and how crowded it is
Pinterest search	Type the idea and read the suggested words under the search bar	What people are planning and saving
Google Trends	Compare two or three versions of your idea over the last 12 months	Whether interest is steady, growing or seasonal
Gumroad / Payhip / Stan Store creators	Look at creators in your topic on Instagram, TikTok or YouTube and what they sell	What people already pay creators for

A good sign: several shops sell something similar, some have plenty of reviews, and you can still see a way to do it better. **A warning sign:** almost nobody sells it (often there’s no demand), or the top results are hundreds of near-identical listings at very low prices.

Step 3: Find the gap

Open the five best-selling listings for your idea and read their reviews, especially the 3- and 4-star ones. Buyers tell you exactly what’s missing:

- “Wish it was editable.”
- “Too many pages, I only needed the basics.”
- “Hard to print.”
- “Looks dated.”

Each complaint is a product decision you can make better. Write down the three you see most often. Those are your gap.

Step 4: Choose a product format

Digital products that are simple to make, easy to understand and easy to deliver work best for a first launch:

- **Printables & planners** — checklists, trackers, worksheets
- **Templates** — Canva templates, business forms, social media kits
- **Guides & workbooks** — short, practical, step-by-step
- **Bundles** — a few products that solve one problem together (a “starter pack”)

Start with **one** product you can finish properly in one to two weeks. You can add more once you know what your buyers respond to.

Step 5: Test it before you build it all

Before you make the full product, make a small version: a one-page sample, a cover and two inside pages, or a free mini version. Share it in a group or with a few people who match your “who”. If they ask “Where can I get the full one?”, you’re on the right track.

Your first product checklist

- [ ] I can say who it’s for in one sentence.
- [ ] People already search for it (I found the words they use).
- [ ] Similar products sell, and some have plenty of reviews.
- [ ] I found at least three things buyers wish were better.
- [ ] I can make a clear, useful version in one to two weeks.
- [ ] Someone who matches my buyer has seen a sample and wants it.

Ticked five or six? Move to Chapter 2. **Three or fewer?** Spend one more day on Steps 2 and 3. It’s the cheapest day you’ll ever spend on your shop.

02

CHAPTER 02

Pick the right *platform.*

There's no "best" platform. There's the one that fits where your buyers already are.

The biggest question isn't fees. It's this: **will buyers find you on the platform, or will you bring them there yourself?**

- **Etsy** is a marketplace. People go there to search and shop, so it can bring you buyers you've never met. In return, you share the page with thousands of other sellers.
- **Stan Store, Gumroad and Payhip** are your own small storefronts. They look cleaner and keep the focus on you, but most buyers arrive because *you* sent them: from Instagram, TikTok, Pinterest, YouTube or your email list.

The four platforms at a glance

	ETSY	STAN STORE	GUMROAD	PAYHIP
What it is	Marketplace with built-in search	Link-in-bio store, made for mobile	Simple creator store	Your own store, with a free plan
Monthly cost	None	$29 (Creator) or $99 (Creator Pro), 14-day free trial	None	Free, $29 (Plus) or $99 (Pro)
Fees per sale	$0.20 per listing + 6.5% transaction fee + payment processing	No platform fee, only Stripe / PayPal processing	10% + $0.50 (30% on sales through Gumroad Discover)	5% (Free), 2% (Plus), 0% (Pro), plus Stripe / PayPal processing
Brings you buyers?	Yes, through Etsy search	No, you bring them	A little (Discover)	No, you bring them
Best for	Printables, planners and templates people search for	Creators with a social following	Testing a first product at no monthly cost	Sellers who want their own store and low costs

Fees checked October 2026. Platforms change their fees, so check each platform's own pricing page before you launch.

Which one fits you?

Choose Etsy if you don't have an audience yet and your product is something people actively search for: planners, printables, templates, worksheets. Etsy search can do part of the work for you, as long as your listings are clear (Chapter 4).

Choose Stan Store if you already post on Instagram or TikTok and people ask you "Where can I get this?". It's built for buyers tapping a link in your bio on their phone.

Choose Gumroad if you want to test a product with no monthly cost and you'll share the link yourself. Gumroad also handles sales tax for you as the seller of record.

Choose Payhip if you want your own clean store with no monthly cost to start, and you'd like to keep more of each sale as you grow.

Can I use more than one?

Yes, and many sellers do, but **not at the start.** Launch on one platform, learn what your buyers respond to, then add a second. A common path is to start on Etsy for search traffic, then add Payhip or Stan Store once people follow you on social media.

Before you sign up

- [ ] Check the platform works in your country and can pay out to you (bank, PayPal or Stripe).
- [ ] Read the platform's rules for digital products (some types aren't allowed).
- [ ] Work out what you'll keep from one sale after all fees.
- [ ] Pick a shop name you can use on every platform and social account.

Next: make the shop look worth trusting. That's Chapter 3.

03

CHAPTER 03

Your shop's first *impression.*

Buyers decide whether to trust a shop in a few seconds, long before they read a word.

A new shop doesn't look new because it has few products. It looks new when its pieces don't match: a banner in one style, a logo in another, listing images that each look different. The good news is that this is the easiest thing to fix, and you only have to do it once.

The five things buyers see first

1. **Shop name** — Easy to read, easy to remember, and it hints at what you sell. Avoid numbers, long words and names that are hard to spell.
2. **Logo or shop icon** — Simple enough to read at the size of a thumbnail. One or two colours. If you can't read it at 50px, simplify it.
3. **Banner or header** — Says in one line who the shop is for and what it helps with. *"Printable planners for busy small-business owners"* works better than a pretty picture with no words.
4. **Listing images, side by side** — Your shop page shows them as a grid. They should look like they belong to one family: the same colours, the same fonts, the same style of mockup.
5. **About and profile** — A real person, a short story and a clear reason to buy from you. A face (yours, not a stock photo) builds more trust than anything else on the page.

Pick a simple look, and keep it

You don't need a full brand. You need four decisions, written down so you use them every time:

- **2–3 colours** — one main colour, one neutral (cream, white or grey), and one accent for highlights.
- **2 fonts** — one for headings, one for body text.
- **1 mockup style** — the same desk, tablet or flat-lay look for every listing.
- **1 tone of voice** — friendly and plain, or calm and elegant. Choose one.

Save these as a Canva brand kit or a simple one-page note. Every banner, listing image and social post comes from it.

The First Impression Scorecard

Open your shop on your phone, as a buyer would. Answer each question honestly:
Yes = 2 · Partly = 1 · No = 0.

A. NAME & IDENTITY	YES · PARTLY · NO
1. Is the shop name easy to read and remember?	2 1 0
2. Can you read the logo or shop icon at thumbnail size?	2 1 0
3. Do the shop name, logo and banner use the same colours and fonts?	2 1 0
B. BANNER & ABOUT	**YES · PARTLY · NO**
4. Does the banner say who the shop is for in one line?	2 1 0
5. Is there a real photo of you (or your hands, your workspace)?	2 1 0
6. Does the About section explain why you started and who you help?	2 1 0
C. LISTINGS	**YES · PARTLY · NO**
7. Do all listing thumbnails look like one family?	2 1 0
8. Does each main image show the product clearly, even at small size?	2 1 0
9. Do the listing titles start with what the product is, in the words buyers search?	2 1 0
10. Does each listing have images that show what's inside (pages, examples, sizes)?	2 1 0
D. TRUST	**YES · PARTLY · NO**
11. Are your shop policies filled in (delivery, refunds, how to download)?	2 1 0
12. Is it clear the product is digital and nothing will be posted?	2 1 0
13. Do you reply to messages quickly?	2 1 0
E. CONSISTENCY	**YES · PARTLY · NO**
14. Do your social media profiles use the same name, logo and look?	2 1 0
15. Would a buyer recognise one of your products without seeing your shop name?	2 1 0

Your total _____ / 30

Your score

SCORE	WHAT IT MEANS	WHAT TO DO
24–30	Your shop looks established.	Focus on new products and getting found (Chapter 4).
15–23	Good bones, but a few gaps show.	Fix every "No" in section C first, then section A.
0–14	Buyers may not trust the shop yet.	Start with the four look decisions above, then redo your banner and your top 3 listings.

Fix order: listings (C) → name & identity (A) → banner & about (B) → trust (D) → consistency (E). Listings come first because buyers see them in search before they ever reach your shop.

*Not sure how to score your shop? **Send us the link** ↗ and we'll tell you what we'd fix first. It's free.*

04

CHAPTER 04

Listings that *sell.*

A listing has one job: help the right buyer feel sure, quickly.

Buyers can't hold a digital product in their hands. Your images and words are the only way they can "see" it. When a listing gets views but no sales, the cause is almost always here: the buyer clicked, looked, and still wasn't sure what they would get.

The 7 listing images every digital product needs

#	IMAGE	WHAT IT SHOWS	WHY IT MATTERS
1	**The hero**	The product in a clean mockup, with a short headline (*"Weekly Meal Planner — Printable"*)	It's the thumbnail. It has to work at small size, in search.
2	**What's inside**	A spread of the pages or templates, with the number of items	Answers "How much do I get?"
3	**Close-up**	One page or template up close, readable	Shows quality and detail.
4	**In use**	The product on a desk, a tablet, a fridge, a phone	Helps them picture it in their life.
5	**Who it's for**	3–4 short benefits: *"For busy parents • Saves an hour a week"*	Speaks to the buyer, not the product.
6	**How it works**	Download → open / print → use. Formats and sizes (PDF, A4 / US Letter, Canva link)	Removes doubt about the digital part.
7	**The reminder**	*"Digital download — nothing will be shipped"* plus your shop look	Prevents disappointed buyers and bad reviews.

Keep the family look: the same background, fonts and colours across all seven, and across every listing in your shop. In search, a consistent set of images is what makes a small shop look established.

Mockups: simple beats fancy

- Choose **one** mockup style and use it everywhere (Chapter 3).
- Light, clean backgrounds show the product best. The product should fill most of the image.
- Avoid mockups where the props (flowers, coffee cups) get more attention than the product.
- Check every image on your phone. If you can't read it there, buyers can't either.

Titles: say what it is, first

Start with the exact words a buyer types, then add what makes it different.

- **Weak:** *"Sunshine Bundle — Get Organized & Feel Amazing!!"*
- **Strong:** *"Cleaning Business Forms Bundle, Editable Canva Templates, Invoice, Quote & Checklist"*

Use the search phrases you found in Chapter 1. Keep the most important words at the start, because that's the part people see in search.

Descriptions: answer the buyer's questions

Write the first two lines as if they're the only lines anyone will read. Then answer, in this order:

1. **What is it?** One sentence.
2. **Who is it for?** One sentence.
3. **What's included?** A short list with numbers (*"12 pages, 3 colour versions"*).
4. **How do I get it and use it?** File types, sizes, Canva account needed or not, how to print.
5. **What it isn't.** *"This is a digital file. No physical item will be shipped."*

Short lines and lists are easier to read on a phone than long paragraphs.

Tags and keywords

On Etsy you can add 13 tags to each listing. Use them all, and use **phrases**, not single words: *"cleaning invoice"*, *"cleaning business forms"*, *"editable canva template"*. Don't repeat the same word in every tag; cover different ways buyers might search.

On Stan Store, Gumroad and Payhip, search inside the platform matters less. Put that effort into the words on your product page and your social posts instead.

Before → after: one listing, refined

	BEFORE	AFTER
Hero image	Screenshot of page 1 on a white background, small text	Clean tablet mockup, headline *"Cleaning Business Starter Pack"*, *"20+ editable templates"* badge
Image set	3 images in 3 different styles	7 images in one look, following the table above
Title	*"Business Bundle Pack"*	*"Cleaning Business Starter Pack, Editable Canva Templates, Invoice, Flyer, Checklist"*
Description	One long paragraph	What it is → who it's for → what's included → how to use it
Tags	6 single words	13 search phrases

Same product. Now the buyer can see what they'd get, who it's for and how to use it, in under ten seconds.

Listing checklist

- [ ] The hero image reads clearly at thumbnail size.
- [ ] All 7 image types are there, in one look.
- [ ] The title starts with what the product is, in buyers' words.
- [ ] The first two lines of the description say what it is and who it's for.
- [ ] Formats, sizes and "digital download" are clearly stated.
- [ ] All 13 tags are used, as phrases (Etsy).

05

CHAPTER 05

Pricing & *bundles.*

Price is part of your first impression. Too low can look as unsure as too high.

Most new sellers price by guessing, or by copying the cheapest listing they can find. Neither tells buyers anything good about the product. A clear price, set with a reason, does.

Step 1: Look at the market

Search your product on your platform and write down the prices of:

- **5 bestsellers** (most reviews or "bestseller" badges)
- **5 newer shops** with a look you like

You'll usually see a range. The cheapest listings are rarely the ones selling most; buyers often choose the listing that looks clearest and most trustworthy.

Step 2: Place yourself in the range

IF YOUR PRODUCT…	PRICE IT…
Is similar to most others, and your shop is brand new	In the **middle** of the range
Is clearly more complete, editable, or better designed	In the **upper part** of the range
Is a small, single item (one page, one template)	At the **lower end**, as an easy first purchase

Avoid being the cheapest. It's hard to raise a price later, and a very low price can make buyers wonder what's missing.

Step 3: Check what you keep

Before you settle on a price, work out what's left after fees (Chapter 2). A simple sum:

Price − platform fees − payment processing = what you keep

If what you keep feels too small for the work, the answer is usually a bundle, not a lower price.

Bundles: more value, one decision

A bundle groups a few products that solve **one** problem together. It's easier for a buyer to say yes once than to choose five separate items.

- **Good bundle:** *"Cleaning Business Starter Pack: invoice, quote, flyer, checklist and price list"*. One buyer, one goal.
- **Weak bundle:** *"Mega Bundle: 500 random templates"*. Big numbers, no clear reason to buy.

A simple 3-step shop:

1. **Small single product** — low price, easy first purchase.
2. **Main product** — your best, most complete item.
3. **Bundle** — the main product plus 2–4 related items, priced below the total of buying them separately.

Buyers can start small and come back for more, and the bundle makes the main product look like good value.

Launch discounts: use them carefully

- A short launch offer (one week, a clear end date) gives people a reason to buy now.
- Keep it modest. A permanent "70% off" makes the normal price look unreal.
- Use a discount code for your email list or followers, so the reward goes to people who already trust you.

Pricing checklist

- [ ] I checked the prices of 5 bestsellers and 5 newer shops.
- [ ] I know where my product sits in the range, and why.
- [ ] I know what I keep from one sale after fees.
- [ ] I have a small product, a main product and a bundle planned.
- [ ] Any launch offer has a clear end date.

06

CHAPTER 06

Your 30-day launch *calendar.*

About an hour a day. One clear task at a time. Print this page and tick each day off.

The calendar follows the chapters in order. If a day takes longer, that's fine: move on when it's done, not when the date says so.

Week 1 — Product & platform

DAY	TASK	DONE
1	Write your "I help [who] with [what]" sentence (Ch. 1)	☐
2	Check demand: Etsy search, Pinterest, Google Trends (Ch. 1)	☐
3	Read reviews of 5 bestsellers. Write your 3 gaps (Ch. 1)	☐
4	Choose your product format and plan its contents	☐
5	Make a small sample and show it to 3 people who match your buyer	☐
6	Choose your platform and check payouts in your country (Ch. 2)	☐
7	Rest, and note what you learned this week	☐

Week 2 — Make the product

DAY	TASK	DONE
8	Decide your look: colours, fonts, mockup style, tone (Ch. 3)	☐
9	Build the product: first third	☐
10	Build the product: second third	☐
11	Build the product: final third	☐
12	Check every page: spelling, layout, links, print test	☐
13	Export the final files (PDF, Canva links) and test the download yourself	☐
14	Rest	☐

Week 3 — Shop & listings

DAY	TASK	DONE
15	Create the shop: name, logo, banner, about, policies (Ch. 3)	☐
16	Score your shop with the First Impression Scorecard (Ch. 3)	☐
17	Make listing images 1–4 (Ch. 4)	☐
18	Make listing images 5–7 (Ch. 4)	☐
19	Write the title, description and tags (Ch. 4)	☐
20	Set your price, plan your small product and bundle (Ch. 5)	☐
21	Rest. Look at the shop on your phone with fresh eyes	☐

Week 4 — Launch

DAY	TASK	DONE
22	Set up social profiles with the same name and look	☐
23	Make 3 launch posts: what it is, who it's for, a look inside	☐
24	**Publish the listing.** Buy it yourself (or ask a friend) to test checkout and download	☐
25	Share your launch post and launch offer (with an end date)	☐
26	Join 2–3 groups where your buyers are. Help people; don't just post links	☐
27	Make 5 Pinterest pins that link to your listing	☐
28	Start your second product: the small one or the bundle	☐

Days 29–30 — Look back

DAY	TASK	DONE
29	Check your numbers: views, favourites, clicks, sales, messages	☐
30	Re-score your shop. Pick the **one** thing to improve next month	☐

If launch week is quiet

That's normal. Most shops grow slowly, and the first weeks are for learning, not judging. Look at where buyers drop off:

- **Few views?** Work on titles, tags and sharing (Ch. 4, Week 4).
- **Views, but no favourites or clicks?** Work on your hero image (Ch. 4).
- **Clicks, but no sales?** Work on the other images, description and price (Ch. 4–5).

One fix at a time, so you can see what made the difference.

CHAPTER 07

07 The 10 most common *shop mistakes.*

Every one of these is fixable, and most take less than a day.

#	THE MISTAKE	WHY IT HAPPENS	THE FIX
1	**Making a product nobody searches for**	Starting from "What could I make?" instead of "What are people looking for?"	Check demand before you build (Ch. 1).
2	**Trying to sell to everyone**	Fear of missing buyers	Write one "I help [who] with [what]" sentence and design for that person.
3	**A shop that doesn't look like one shop**	Each listing made on a different day, in a different style	Decide your colours, fonts and mockup style once, and use them for everything (Ch. 3).
4	**A hero image you can't read in search**	Designed on a big screen, never checked on a phone	Check every thumbnail on your phone at small size (Ch. 4).
5	**Not showing what's inside**	"The cover looks nice, that's enough"	Show the pages, the number of items and a close-up (Ch. 4, images 2–3).
6	**Titles that describe a feeling, not a product**	Writing like an advert instead of like a buyer searching	Start the title with what it is, in buyers' words (Ch. 4).
7	**Buyers unsure it's digital**	It feels obvious to you	Say "Digital download, nothing will be shipped" in an image and in the description (Ch. 4).
8	**Being the cheapest**	Hoping a low price makes up for being new	Price in the middle of the range and add value with a bundle (Ch. 5).
9	**Launching and waiting**	Expecting the platform to do all the work	Share your launch, help in groups, and pin to Pinterest (Ch. 6, Week 4).
10	**Changing everything at once**	A quiet first week feels like failure	Change one thing at a time, so you know what worked (Ch. 6).

The pattern behind them

Almost every mistake above comes from looking at the shop as the seller, not as the buyer. The seller knows what's inside, knows it's digital, and knows it's good. The buyer only knows what the shop shows them in a few seconds.

So before you change anything, ask one question: **"If I'd never seen this shop before, would I understand it and trust it right away?"**

If the answer is "not quite", the Scorecard in Chapter 3 will show you where to start.

08

CHAPTER 08

Your next *step.*

You don't need to do everything at once. You need the right next thing.

If you've worked through this playbook, you already know more about your shop than most sellers ever stop to look at. Here's how to keep going:

1. **Pick one chapter** where your shop scored lowest.
2. **Fix one thing** from it this week.
3. **Re-score your shop** in 30 days and compare.

Small, steady fixes add up to a shop that looks established.

Want a second pair of eyes?

It's hard to see your own shop the way a buyer does. That's where we can help.

Ask anything — it's free. ↗ Send us your shop link or your product idea and tell us what feels stuck. You'll get an honest answer and a suggestion for what to do first. No obligation, no sales pitch. Replies come from Madhuka, the founder, not a bot.

→ **refineleap.com/ask** ↗

When you'd like it done for you

	WHAT IT IS	GOOD FOR
Shop Audit	We review your shop as a buyer sees it and give you a clear, prioritised list of fixes	Shops with views but few sales, and anyone about to launch
Listing Refresh	New listing images, mockups, titles, descriptions and tags for your key products	Good products that don't look as good as they are
Shop Launch Kit	Product design, storefront branding and your first listings, built to work together	New sellers who want to launch looking established

Everything comes with editable Canva files, so you can update it yourself.

→ **refineleap.com/services** ↗

RefineLeap

WANT A SECOND PAIR OF EYES?

Refine. Then *leap.*

Send us your shop link or product idea and tell us what feels stuck. You'll get an honest answer and a suggestion for what to do first. It's free, with no obligation.

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