

How to Make Money as a Freelancer

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1. Introduction



Ana Blazic – Fotolia.com

Joining [freelancer.com](https://www.freelancer.com) is a great way of working from home and setting up a profitable freelance career. If you do have any kind of talent in writing, programming, even analyzing data, or customer service, you can set up your online business. There is a lot of talk about freelance jobs, and many

websites are offering guaranteed work after you pay them a fee. You should never fall for these offers. After you read this guide to working for freelancer.com, you will never have to pay anybody to find you freelance projects.

Setting up a freelancer business does require some organizational skills, unlike many home based businesses. You will need to be able to manage your time, keep an eye on your deadlines, and market yourself as well. The success of your business is going to depend on how you can position yourself on the market, and how impressive your profile is to your future employers.

There are different types of online projects you can complete, and Freelancer is the largest site, featuring over 1000.000 small or larger jobs. Registering on the site will open a door to endless opportunities, but you will have to learn some simple rules to be able to create a customer base and build your business from the ground up.

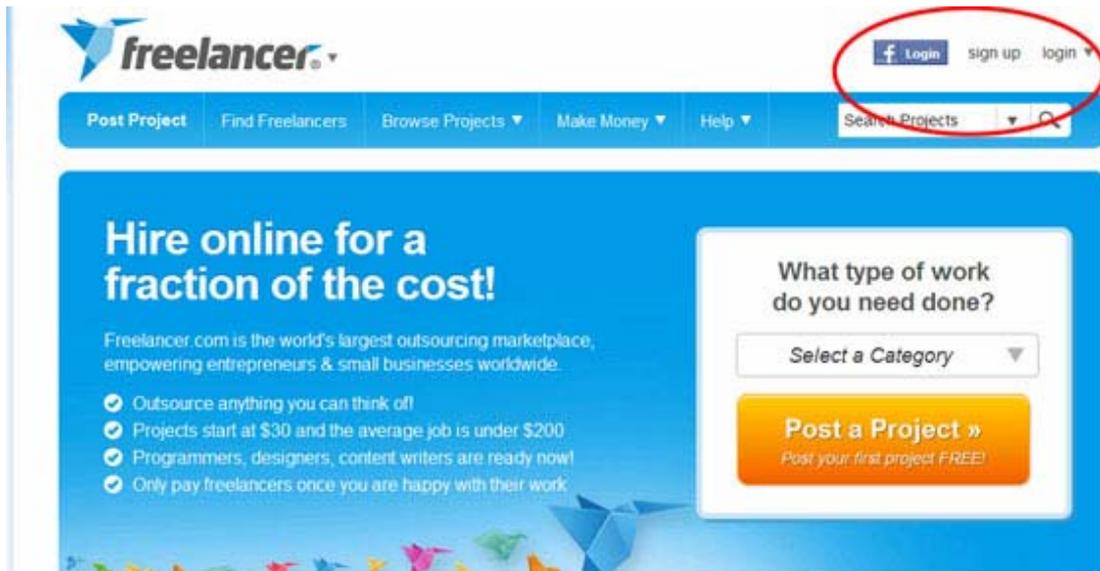
Freelancer.com is a site having been set up to connect project owners with freelancers. You can complete different types of online work, from writing content for websites, programming, graphic design, to build whole websites. The variety of jobs is great, so you will have to choose the field you want to work in from the beginning.

In case you are serious to start an online freelancer career, you need to read this guide to freelancer.com You will see that this is a business for everyone, and you can set it up even if you hold a full time job, and completing online projects can be done in your free time as well. If you are just thinking of replacing your current job, but want to give working from home a try, you can easily do that. Later on, you might decide to leave your current employment and work only from home or you can keep your current employment, plus have a great income generated or money maked from your free or part time. This e-book will help you how to make money as a freelancer on freelancer.com.

In the next chapter of “How to Make Money as a Freelancer” we will learn about registering on the site.

2. Registering on the site

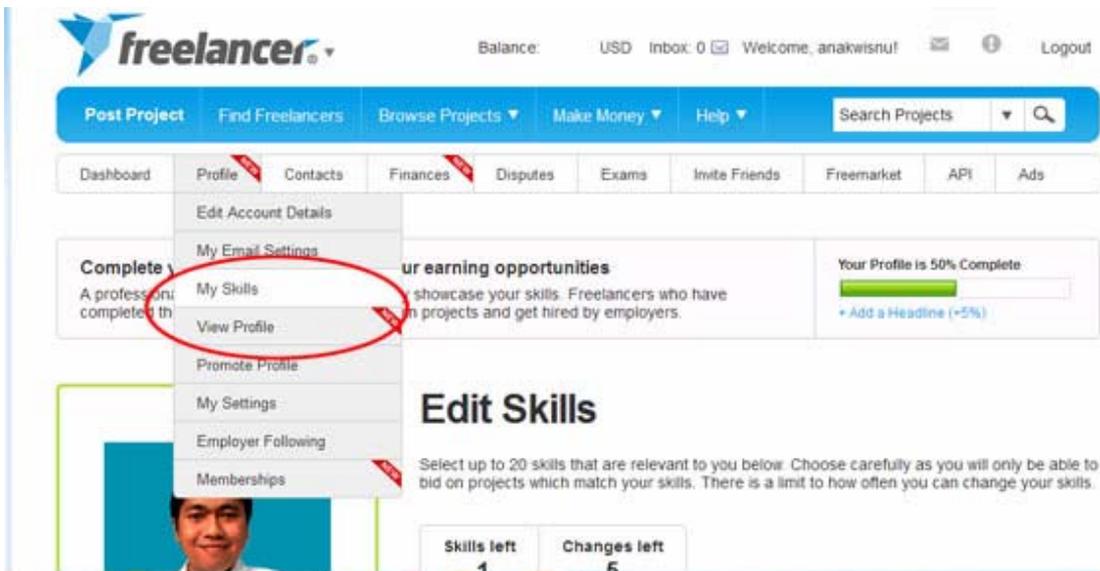
If you want to be able to review projects and bid on them, you need to be registered with freelancer.com. It is free for employees, and you should not underestimate this step. There is more to it than just filling out your details and picking some qualifications.



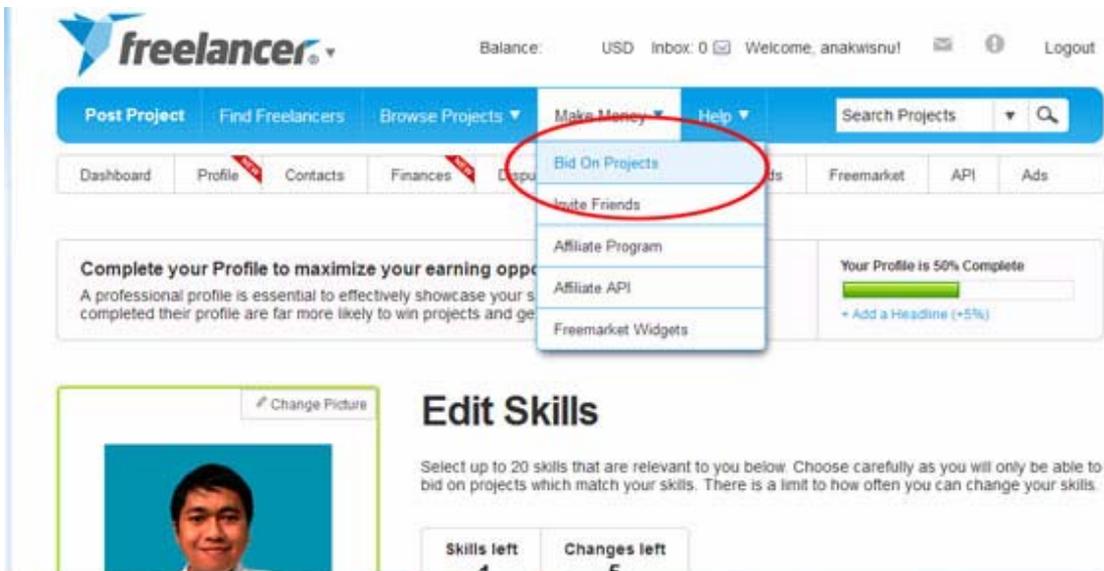
Five steps how to register and start freelance jobs now (within 5 minutes):

1. Go to [freelancer.com](https://www.freelancer.com)
2. Click **Sign Up**, fill the form
3. After submitting, check your email and click link in the email to validate registration.
4. Choose your **skill** or **qualifications** (Menu **Profile** -> **My Skill**)!
Completing profile is important key to make money as a freelancer.
5. Start **bidding on projects** (Menu **Make Money** -> **Bid on Project**) to make money.

Complete your profile:



Bid on project:



You need to review the types of projects featured on the site, and accordingly choose the expertise needed for your preferred freelance projects. It is important that you will be able to choose a limited number of these initially, so ensure you will pick the ones you are more likely to be able to complete projects on.

You also have to clearly state if you have any qualifications relevant to different types of projects, like a degree in web design, or a formal journalism degree. It is going to count, and you cannot keep on changing your profile too often. You might also want to include some references, if you have them, as you will not have any reviews when you are bidding on your first project. You need to give employers a reason why to trust you.

Next you will have to write your short introduction paragraph, detailing why the employer should pick you. You should tell them about your background, previous jobs related to your profile. It is also extremely important that you include a real profile photo, that increases credibility and builds up trust.

After you have set up your profile, you can view it any time clicking on “my external profile”, from menu “**my profile -> view profile**” You can also subscribe to job alerts matching your expertise and profile. It is a useful feature, as freelancer.com will find you projects automatically, and you can save a lot of time by not having to search for relevant jobs.

In the next chapter of “How to Make Money as a Freelancer” we will learn about bidding on your first project.

3. Bidding on your first project (price, completion)

After you have found a project that is matching your expertise, profile, and you think you could complete it in a reasonable time, you have to place your bid. But bidding on projects has more to do with communication than giving a price and deadline.

When to bid?

If you want to place your bid as soon as the project is placed on the site, you can use the email alerts Freelancer sends you or open from menu “**browse jobs -> latest project**”. You will have to carefully read the project description and the reviews of the employer. You have to give a price for the whole project, a reasonable timescale you can complete the work within, and ask for any upfront payments if possible. If it is an urgent project, you can be lucky enough to win the bidding if your profile matches the requirements.



Forca | Dreamstime.com

Bidding early is very good choice, but you can also wait until the project is close to ending. Open menu “**browse jobs -> ending soon**”. That way you will have more chance to review the competition. If there are many bids from freelancers with high rating and loads of feedback, you will need to adjust your pricing to be below theirs, if you want to win the project. Just remember that you also have to be comfortable with the price paid, and get a reasonable hourly rate. Freelancer recently introduced a feature called: “ending soon”. When you are looking for projects to bid on, you will need to click on this link and you will find the projects finishing soonest. The least number of bids a project has, the more chances you will have.

PDF to HTML URGENT

PDF to HTML is project number 978013 posted at [Freelancer.com](#). [Click here](#) to post your own project.

[Recommend](#)

[More](#)



POST A PROJECT JUST LIKE THIS



FREE TRIAL FOR NEW USERS

Status: Open

Bid Count: 83

Ends: 03/10/2011 at 15:06 WIT (55m left)

[BID ON THIS PROJECT](#)

Selected Providers:

Average Bid: \$34 USD

Project Creator: [pankaj4web](#)

Budget: \$30-\$250 USD

Last Login: 03/09/2011 at 16:47 WIT

Created: 03/09/2011 at 15:06 WIT

Employer Rating: (No Feedback Yet)

Description

Hi there,
I have a really easy PDF to HTML job.
I need it done in 2-3 days. I will only be selecting new freelancers who don't have any ratings for this project.

I only need on page done. I'll provide you with:

- 1) the PDF
- 2) the images
- 3) the text

Please only bid in this project if you are a new freelancer with no ratings.
Thanks

My budget is \$30

[Report Violation](#)

Job Type

- [CSS](#)
- [HTML](#)
- [PDF](#)
- [PSD to HTML](#)

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PROJECT CLARIFICATION BOARD 3

[BID ON THIS PROJECT](#)

All Bids (83)

Freelancers	Msg	Bid (USD)	Time of Bid	Freelancer Rating
sandy1000		\$30 in 1 day \$30 Milestone Requested	22 hours ago new bid	★★★★★★★★ 155 reviews 71% Completion Rate
expert in css/html works, can do your work perfectly, have done many similar projects, can provide u with w3c validated, css based layout, cross browser supporting, tableless, neat and clean css codes, seo optimized ... more				
maldini		\$55 in 3 days	12 hours ago new bid	★★★★★★★★ 38 reviews 85% Completion Rate
Hi, I read your specs, I have done this before, if you accept my bid we'll start right away				
Culjaya		\$30 in 1 day \$30 Milestone Requested	21 hours ago new bid	★★★★★★★★ 4 reviews 100% Completion Rate

How to check out the competition?



Cflorinc | Dreamstime.com

You will have to check other bidders' profile, the number of ratings and the overall score. You might want to click on their profile to review your chances. That way you will get an idea how you can make a better offer than them. Remember, if you have no rating, your bid is going to be placed under others', who already have feedback. Therefore you will have to give plenty of good reasons to the employer to pick you over them.

How to determine your bidding price?

Determining the price is a tricky thing on Freelancer. There are some project owners clearly stating the pricing for the project or per site/article. If you just bid at the lowest price, you still have to state your pricing in a private email, to avoid misunderstanding. Make a prediction of how long the project would take you to complete and what your hourly rate would work out. Never work at a price you are not comfortable with. We will explain more details in chapter 8.

In the next chapter of “How to Make Money as a Freelancer” we will learn about how to make sure you get selected for the project..

4. How to make sure you get selected for the project

It is not enough to bid lowest and offer the shortest deadline for the projects. You need to ensure you are selected by the employer. A good way to do that is to send a private message to the project owner, stating why you are the best candidate to complete their work. Many people just include general information in the message, and it does not help the employer with making the choice. Your message should be confident, personalized and related to the project.



olly – Fotolia.com

Do not only state that you are fast, cheap and very good, every other freelancer is going to say that. You can send them information about previous work -similar to theirs- you have completed, and tell them more about your background on that particular field.

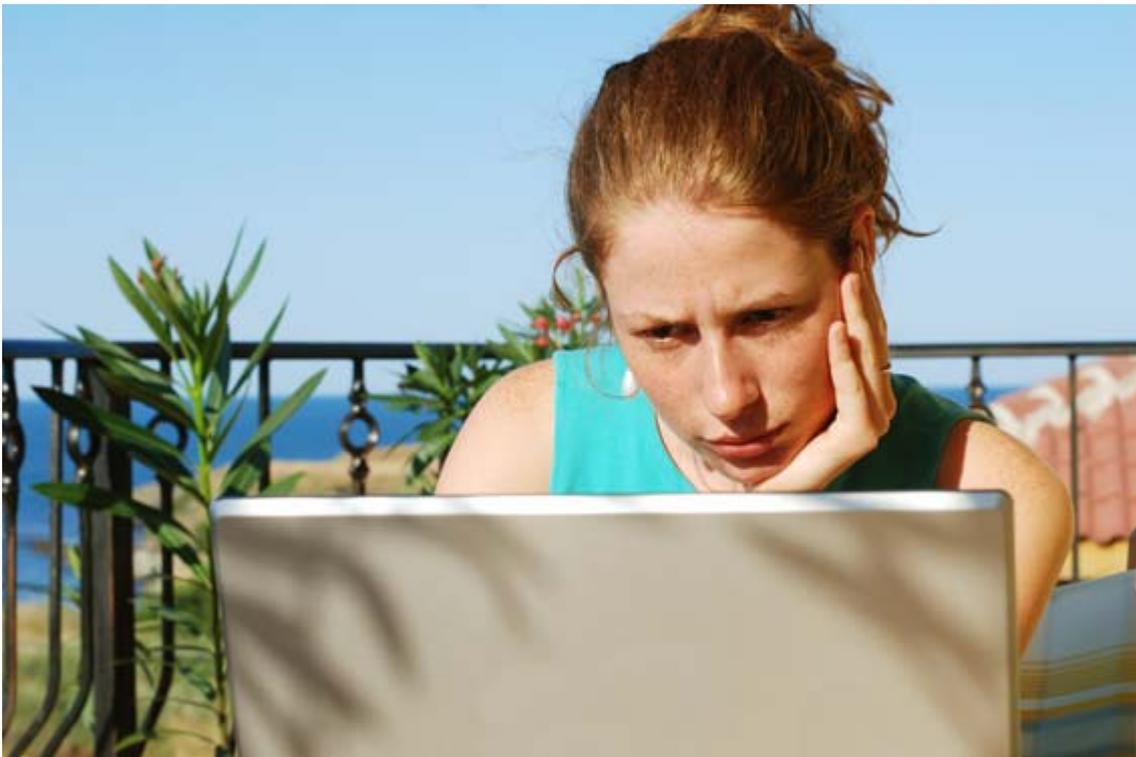
You can send related sample work in your private message. But you need to take precautions, as you will never know what they are going to use it for. If you are comfortable, you can send links to your completed sites, projects, feedback

on other sites, but never send them anything you have completed for other employers. If you send a design, you should add a watermark, and if you send articles, state the copyrights in the email. Also add that you are able to create similar projects easily for the employer, too.

In the next chapter of “How to Make Money as a Freelancer” we will learn about how to avoid scam and scam.

5. How to avoid scam and spam

As with every type of online business, there is a risk that you might be tricked into an illegitimate business or lose money. Freelancer.com is doing everything to protect your identity and payments, and provides a range of tools to help you do business on the site safely. But if you want to ensure you are also doing everything you can to spot scams on the site, you will have to follow the guidelines below.



Gingergirl | Dreamstime.com

- Ensure you are aware of the deadlines you take on, and can meet them. Do not just bid the shortest completion time just because you want the project badly. You can have difficulties later. You will need to know what the task is exactly, and how much time you have to complete it. Misunderstandings are the source of many disputes on Freelancer, and they can easily be avoided. If you do not fix deadlines before accepting the project, you might be given unrealistic ones you cannot meet.
- If you are dealing with a client you have never worked before, feel free to

ask for an escrow payment schedule. Freelancer introduced this feature of the site to protect you, as an employee. If you will have a problem with the project, Freelancer has the tools to force the release of the escrow payment. But if you never asked for it, there is a chance you will not get paid.

- You should never complete any trial work, unless you are paid for it. You should also not send over an overview of how you would be completing the job, or step by step instructions. Using your outline the employer can complete the work themselves or give it out to a cheaper freelancer.
- Only deal with employers through the website before you are selected. Although you will have to pay a small fee for accepting and completing work (usually \$5 or 10%, whichever is greater), you will get the protection by the site in case anything goes wrong. Many people will be contacting you via email, messenger or phone after you have accepted the project. This can be improving the communication between the employer and freelancer.



Nikola Hristovski | Dreamstime.com

- Look through the project description and search for trigger words that may indicate that the project is not real or a scam. There are some jobs like form filling that should warn you. If an employer is looking for people to fill out forms, they are more than likely to work for a CPA company, and get paid by leads. Offering incentives to sign up is prohibited on these sites, and once the CPA affiliate program owner finds out about this activity, the employer gets banned from the network, so you will not get paid either, as they will get no money. It is also an unethical way of doing business, and you should not participate in it in any way.
- If you work as a content or article writer, you do not want to get involved in spamming search engines. You should be looking for quality projects, and not keyword stuffing. It is your reputation on stake, so ensure you need to provide content instead of just text with loads of keywords stuffed in it.



lunamarina – Fotolia.com

- Be aware of “transfer money” jobs as well. These are never real, and hardly ever pay. There are some projects that state that the owner's Paypal account got closed down and they are looking for someone to process payments. Never fall for these, they are similar to the traditional Nigerian 419 scams. You will fail to make money as a freelancer if you fall for these scam.
- Only accept payment through the freelancer.com payment system. Steer clear if the project states “payment through Paypal only”. There is no guarantee to get paid, and you will never know what are the intentions of the project owner.

- Another common type of scam, starting up freelancers fall for, is when the employer is asking for a deposit or upfront payment to win the project. As stated before, you should never pay anyone upfront to give you work, and you should report the project immediately to the site.
- If you want to appear professional and protect yourself, you should ask the employer to sign a contract and place escrow or milestone payments as well. You will have the proof in your hands if anything goes wrong, and Freelancer is looking for proof when you are submitting a dispute.

In the next chapter of “How to Make Money as a Freelancer” we will learn about how to settle disputes.

6. How to settle disputes

You have to know that according to freelancer.com most of the disputes are the result of misunderstanding alone. They can be avoided by clarifying all the details before you are accepting the project. This should include milestone payments, escrow, deadlines and pricing. Ensure you are also given clear instructions, otherwise you will have to guess what the employer is looking for, and you can end up submitting a dispute, if it does not meet the requirements.

Freelancer is treating their users as adults, so the majority of disputes are starting with a request of clarification from both parties. Most of the disputes are settled without the site's intervention or arbitration. If it cannot be resolved between the employer and freelancer, an arbitration fee should be paid by both parties to get the issue resolved.



olly – Fotolia.com

There is a fairly new dispute system in place, and it is helping website users to resolve problems and disputes fast.

- The first stage is submitting your dispute. You need to select the project, give the support desk a clear description of what happened, and send in any supporting documentation. You will also have to state what is the amount of payment you are disputing.
- Next you will be asked to give more details and try to resolve the problem with the employer. If this is not bringing you results, either party can request arbitration.
- After the arbitration has been started, the other party will be asked to pay an arbitration fee and submit evidence. If there is no answer from the employer, the site is going to rule in your favor.
- The team will review the case and will rule in 24 hours. This is a great improvement Freelancer has introduced, and makes submitting and resolving disputes much faster.

If the employer submitted an escrow or milestone payment, and you can prove that the work is completed according to the description and requirements, the site might opt for releasing that payment into your account.

In the next chapter of “How to Make Money as a Freelancer” we will learn about feedback system of the site.

7. The feedback system of the site

There is an advanced feedback system on the site that helps employers and freelancers find the best partners. You should always check out the project owner's employer profile and rating before you accept a job, and look for disputes or low ratings. The more feedback the employer has, the better chances you have for effective communication and on time payments.

After completing a project, you will be asked to leave a feedback. It is important that you will not get to see the employer's rating about you until you submit a feedback. Likewise, the employer will not see your feedback until they submit theirs. This is a good feature, unique to Freelancer.com and helps getting a real opinion instead of just answering others' reviews of you.

The site has a 5 star feedback system at the moment. You are able to rate the employer and the project from different aspects, these are :

- Clarity in Specification
- Communication
- Promptness in Payment
- Professionalism
- Would you work for them again?

You can also submit public and non-public comments about the project, and that is a good feature. If you have any feedback you think would be useful for other freelancers or the employer, feel free to submit them. You can also message Freelancer.com if you have anything to share.

In the next chapter of “How to Make Money as a Freelancer” we will learn about how to determine your pricing.

8. How to determine your pricing

You will have to ensure that you are setting a competitive price you are also comfortable to work at. The main aspect you have to look into is to be able to have a decent hourly rate. You can ensure that, if you are able to determine how long the project would take you to complete. For example if you are getting paid \$50 for writing ten articles, you can do the job in two hours or five hours. If you do it in two hours, your hourly rate works out \$25 minus the \$5 fee you pay Freelancer, which is good. But if you are completing the work in 6 hours, your rate is \$45 per 6 hours, that is \$7.5.

You have to check out other people's bids, as well as their reputation. If freelancers without feedback are bidding \$30, you can bid higher, however if some of the other bidders have hundreds of ten star ratings and bid low, you might not have a chance. If you are not comfortable with bidding at the lowest price, you can submit a higher amount, but you will have to rationalize it in your private message.

In some cases employers are looking for workers with a proven background. You should for example have a formal certificate, or an article writing project owner might be looking for native English freelancers. In this case the competition can be eliminated, and you can place a higher bid, if you can meet these extra requirements.

In the next chapter of "How to Make Money as a Freelancer" we will learn about fees and charges.

9. Fees and charges

If you are a free member, you are going to be charged 10% of the full project price. Remember, only accept a project if you are sure you are able to complete it and get paid for it. If you do not get paid, and the project owner did not place a milestone or escrow payment, you will have no chance to get this fee refunded.

30 Day FREE Trial!
When you verify with
Paypal.

Features	FREE \$0	FREE TRIAL BASIC \$4.95/month	POPULAR STANDARD Only \$24.95/month	PREMIUM \$49.95/month
Freelancer Fee* ?	10%	10%	5%	3%
Employer Fee* ?	3%	3%	0%	0%
Bids per month ?	10 bids	50 bids	150 bids	500 bids
Skills ?	20	30	60	100
Portfolio Size ?	5 entries	20 entries	100 entries	Unlimited entries
NEW FEATURES Express Withdrawals ?	✖	✔	✔	✔
Project Bookmarks ?	✖	Unlimited projects	Unlimited projects	Unlimited projects
Employer Following ?	✖	5 employers	20 employers	Unlimited employers
Free Priority Projects ?	✖	✖	✖	✔
	Your Current Plan	Start Free Trial!	Choose Plan!	Choose Plan!

If you choose to become a paid member, fees will be reduced, and you can bid more. It is advisable that you look at your projects after working for Freelancer for a couple of weeks, and decide if the paid membership would be beneficial for you. It costs \$4.95 – \$49.95 per month, so you should save more than that each month to make the membership fee pay off. However, there are more advantages of becoming a paid member, like featured bids. You will also be more likely to win bids as a paid member. You can start 30 days free trial Basic membership when you verify with paypal.

You will not be charged for bidding on projects, only if you accept the work. There are no other charges or fees involved, other than the Paypal transaction fees detailed in the next chapter.

In the next chapter of “How to Make Money as a Freelancer” we will learn about withdrawing money.

10. *Withdrawing money*

There are four withdrawal methods you can use on freelancer.com. The most popular one is Paypal payments. You will be charged a \$1 processing fee, and the timescales are quite long. It takes about 15 days for Freelancer to process your first request, so ensure you are requesting it in time. The next withdrawals will be processed the next Monday or Tuesday. The minimum amount you can withdraw to your Paypal account is \$30, and the maximum is \$10,000. You can register paypal in paypal.com. It's free!

If you apply for a Freelancer debit card, your payments can be put straight on the card balance, and you can also check your statements online. You can use the card to pay anywhere in the world you see the Mastercard logo. You can also withdraw money from the account at any ATM machine, worldwide. There is a monthly fee of \$4 and you will still have to pay an activation fee as well as loading fees. Depending on how soon you want your payment to be on your account, you have to pay between \$2 and \$5 each time. You are also charged for cash withdrawals. The Daily withdrawal limit for the card is \$2500.

The third option to receive your money is through Moneybookers. You have to have a registered email account with them, and there is no fee taken for transactions. The minimum and maximum withdrawal amounts are the same as with Paypal. You do have to check out how much Moneybookers is charging you for withdrawals, though, as it changes depending on the country you live in.

You also can have a wire transfer directly into your account, and the conditions are depending on which country you live in.

In the next chapter of "How to Make Money as a Freelancer" we will learn about managing your project and deadlines.

11. Managing your projects and deadlines

Working for freelancer.com will have to get as organized as possible. The website does keep track of your previous and current projects, also payments, however you will need to have your own system set up, too. Ensure you are keeping an eye on your projects, employers, deadlines and most importantly your payments. There are some great project software on the Internet, even for free. However, you can also keep track of your freelancer products, by setting up an Access database, and that will do the basic job and you can also write queries.



Theodor38 | Dreamstime.com

What are the records you need to keep?

- You have to have the start dates and the deadlines of every project. It is important that you are not missing any deadlines just because your system is not working. You should be able to clearly view all the projects ending soon, so you can manage your time wisely.
- You also have to give every project a unique name, and have to know who is the project for. It is useful to know who are your best customers, and you will be able to rank projects by importance. If an employer has already spent a couple of hundred dollars on your work in the past month, you will have to ensure you are not losing him by being late of not completing the project on time.

- Most importantly, you will have to have the price of the project on file, and have a system to mark the payment received. You can use a system that is adding up the total price of all the projects you are working on, and also the amount received. If you see which completed projects are awaiting payment, you can send the employer a friendly reminder, and if you do not get an answer, you can start a dispute in time.
- If you are completing freelance projects for a living, you will have to be registered as self employed, or set up your own company. Therefore you will need to keep track of your payments, as well as your invoices from Freelancer for project fees. There are many programs that do the work for you, they are called project management systems, for example GanttProject or Microsoft Project.

In the next chapter of “How to Make Money as a Freelancer” we will learn more useful tips to get started with Freelancer..

12. More useful tips to get started with Freelancer

- You will have to take on less work initially, to ensure you are able to complete the project to a 120% satisfaction of the client. You also have to be careful with short deadlines, as you would not have experience on the field, you might not estimate the timescales correctly. You should aim for positive feedback as soon as possible, so try to take on smaller projects you will get a fast feedback for.
- Always check out the employer's profile and feedback. By clicking on their username you will know what was the last time they posted a project or logged in. You can also have a look at current projects, and how long they have been going on.
- Deduct Freelancer fees from your remuneration to work out your hourly rate. That way you will have a real picture of your earning potential.
- As your reputation grows, after some positive feedback, you will be able to increase your fees or set different conditions. You can request the whole amount to be placed as an escrow payment to protect yourself from scammers. When sending any work as a sample, or submitting links for employers, it should include a watermark or copyright statement.
- If you want your profile to appear more professional, you can choose to complete some online tests offered by the site. Depending on your expertise, you can choose different tests to take for free or a small nominal fee. It is going to help you prove your abilities and the icon will be displayed next to your bids as well as on your profile page.
- You should never take on projects at a price you are not comfortable with, and don't let the competition confuse you. There are some countries where there are huge teams set up to complete projects fast, and the cheap price does not always come with the best quality. Obviously you will come across competition that is cheaper than you and provides good quality, you should still be confident of your own potentials.

In the next chapter of “How to Make Money as a Freelancer” we will learn final tips to make money as freelancer.

13. Final tips: how to make money as a freelancer

If you read the above tips, you might be seriously considering getting started on [freelancer.com](https://www.freelancer.com) you have to know that the right approach is going to get you the best results. You should be proud of your abilities, qualifications, and handle employers as equal partners. That is the beauty of working as a freelancer.



Arestov Andrew – Fotolia.com

Once you will complete your first few projects on [freelancer.com](https://www.freelancer.com), you will see that it is much easier than working in an office and asking for permission to take holidays or time off. You will have the freedom you always wanted, and you only have to do the work you want to accept. If you work on building up your reputation on the site, you will notice that you are getting more and more invitations every week, and will have returning customers providing you with constant flow of work.

It is possible to create a full time income through [freelancer.com](https://www.freelancer.com), even more. The hours you work are your choice, you set your own terms, and if you have the right entrepreneurial attitude, you will become a successful freelancer.

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