

## Getting Started With Shopify

So, you want to start an ecommerce business?

Great! But, do you know how?

With there being quite a few different ecommerce packages available, such as WooCommerce, BigCommerce and Shopify. I was not too long ago was asking the question, 'how do I start an ecommerce business'?

After much research I decided to join the 384,000 plus users (as of November 2017) that use Shopify to host their ecommerce business.

But what makes Shopify so unique and a popular choice for entrepreneurs and business owners?

### Getting Started with Shopify

Shopify is an ecommerce platform that allows users to easily setup an online store in a matter of minutes. It requires no prior knowledge of coding and it has a built-in content management system for allowing you to easily add products and images.

To get started, head-over to [Shopify.com](https://www.shopify.com);

From there, enter your email address and press the 'Get started' button.

For those that aren't too sure whether this is the right platform for you, then don't fret; Shopify offers new users a 14-day free trial. No need to enter payment details either. This means that if you don't like you after two weeks, then you are free to walk away without paying a cancellation fee.

Tip: It is also good to search around online to find extended Shopify trials, such as a month-long trial; just in-case you feel as though 2-weeks is not long enough for you.

### Creating your site

First thing-first, you will need to come-up with a store name. For some already this may come as a slight-road block; but, just like any business, you should have done some research before you got started with creating your business. So, for example, if you are selling skateboards, your store name could be 'Skateboards R US'. You get the idea?

It is something that can be amended later, so don't worry too much if your imagination is letting you down.

Next, you will need to setup your account email and customer email addresses. These can be the same, but preferably they should be different. For the account email, I choose a personal address and for the customer address I use a professional email address, such as 'info@yoursite.com'.

The customer email address is what the customer will see when you send order information, including abandoned cart reminders. So, for this reason it is best not to use your personal information as you want to make your site appear as professional as possible.

You will also need to register your businesses' legal name, street address and phone number. Before choosing the business name, it would be wise to check with your government's company checker site to see if your business has already been taken.

### Payment Settings

You can choose from a wide-variety of payment gateways that suit your business needs, including accepting cheques.

I prefer to use Shopify Pay and PayPal.

Shopify Pay is great as it comes included with 0% transaction fees, a 2.2% credit card rate and the ability to easily save card details securely.

Shopify's in-built fraud protection system is another positive, as it will prevent fraudulent transactions from happening on your store. I for one have witnessed this first-hand, after a user tried to order over \$100 worth of items, only for Shopify to prevent it from being actioned.

You can also set the taxes your store too; if you aren't too sure, then it is best to do some research or ask an accountant.

### Customizing your store

Depending on your budget, you can set a free or premium theme available from the Shopify Theme store, or alternatively from another theme store; just do an internet search for 'Shopify Themes'.

Once you have chosen your theme you can customize how it looks on your store by adding a logo, motto, using your business branding color scheme, font, and also choosing how the pages are laid-out, such as displaying carousels and menu-items.

If you are someone that is not afraid to use HTML and CSS, then you can also amend the themes markup too.

### App and sales channels

The Shopify Store is loaded with tones of apps that will help you make sales and convince customers that your store is to be trusted.

My top 5 favorite apps:

1. AfterShip Returns Centre – Allows you to manage customer returns
2. Free Shipping Bar by Hextom – Alerts customers that your site uses free shipping
3. Oberlo – Great for those that are using a drop shipping business model as it allows you to import products with ultimate ease.
4. Countdown Cart – Creates urgency for customers during the checkout process
5. Kit – Your very own personal digital assistant. Has the ability to promote your products and create ads.

You can also add sales channels too, such as linking your site to your Facebook page – allowing you to sell your products on your Facebook page without the hassle.

## Anything else...

As you can see, you can do quite a bit with Shopify, but there is more...

You can use the in-built analytics tool to see how many visitors you are getting, not forgetting sales too.

You can view and amend your current inventory including making your product pages more seo friendly by creating meta titles and descriptions – great for attaining organic traffic.

Discounts are another great option within Shopify too. These are great for alluring potential customers to your store with lucrative money-off offers.

## Conclusion

For me, I am glad that I chose Shopify as my ecommerce platform. It's easy-to use and the apps that I have installed are great and really help make the site appear professional.

Shopify makes ecommerce easy. It takes away the hassle of setting up legal issues involved in creating an ecommerce business and the payment options are vital for creating a secure platform for making sales.

Shopify's support is also top-class too, with the Shopify Univeristy forum offering quality advice from Shopify users new and experienced. Not only are that, but the support team on Twitter extremely friendly and helpful too.

I do wish the theme store had more options to choose from and that knowing which apps are premium apps would be useful too.

To learn more, check Udemy and and YouTube for top advice from experts.