

ART NOISE

BECOMING A FREELANCE ARTIST

While it may be tempting to work at home in your pyjamas, becoming a successful freelance artist is not an easy task. It takes lots of hard work, preparation and determination.

Here is what to do:

1 - Assess your abilities as an artist.

Before you begin planning to work as a freelance artist, you first need to honestly assess your abilities. Taking an objective view of your skills can help you decide if freelancing is the right option for you.

- Compare your work to other artists who use similar mediums in your area. Is your work comparable or better?
- Do you frequently have people asking or complimenting you about your work? If so, this might be a good sign that your skills are in demand, especially because word of mouth can be a powerful advertising tool.
- Would you be willing to spend money on your creations? If you don't offer something people—or you—might want, you're likely to not be a successful freelance artist.

2 - Be Prepared

Your first several months can be spent just trying to find clients. This can mean a long period with no source of income. It can be hard to be creative when you're worrying about where your next meal is coming from, so being prepared with some money up front can help.

3 - Set Goals

Each month, write down a description of the projects you'd like to complete. Break down your month long goals into four week increments. Create a vision board for your lifelong career goals, and put it in a prominent place where you can be inspired by your dreams daily.

4 - Set a Schedule

As a freelance artist you're pretty much your own boss, so it's up to you to keep yourself accountable. One of the best ways to do this is to set a schedule for yourself.

- How many hours a day do you plan on working?
- How much time do you want to spend per day searching for new clients?

You should also establish the times when you want to start working and when you want to stop. If you want to work eight hours a day, start the clock when you start working and be sure to pause it for any breaks you might take. This way you're able to break procrastination and keep yourself inline to stick to a typical work schedule.

5 - Avoid Distractions

In order to stay productive and keep on schedule, you need to eliminate anything during your work time that might be a distraction for you. A great way to stay on track and avoid procrastination is to act the same way you would normally if you were working in a studio environment.

6 - Get out of the house and out of your head

Freelancers can be prone to overworking, since they are in control of their own output and income. To many freelancers, enough is never enough and burnout becomes imminent. Make yourself take breaks throughout the day. Talk long walks. Exercise in fresh air. Hang out with friends. Pack your work away and curl up with a good book or an exciting movie. Meditate. Schedule a massage. Create a healthy balance between work and play.

7 - Be Persistent and constantly Search for Work

Even when you're working on a project, you should still schedule yourself some time to be searching for new work and new clients. Join LinkedIn, forums, job boards, etc, anything you think will help get you noticed, because most often you'll need to find the clients and not the other way around.

8 - Have a Professional Attitude

Clients want to know their project is in the right hands. You should be maintaining a professional attitude throughout an entire project, whether it's through email, video chat, phone calls, etc.

9 - Don't Sell Yourself Short...or Not at All

Being an artist is just like any other job that requires a lot of hard work. You should be compensated for your effort.

10 - Keep Records

As a freelance artist, you will be constantly expanding your repertoire. Always memorialise your work in some way before selling it off. If you're a visual artist, take detailed pictures of your work. As you expand your repertoire and portfolio, your extensive proof of experience will draw more opportunities your way.

11- Pay Taxes

Most of the time, freelancers aren't required to pay taxes up front. It will be up to you to keep records of all the income you earn, and then pay the appropriate income taxes. Research the tax laws in your country for freelancers. Find out the approximate percentage you'll be taxed for your average yearly income; take that amount off the top of each sale and set it aside for quarterly payments and tax season.

12 - Think about it

Freelancing certainly isn't for everyone as it can be a very difficult path to take. However, if it's done right, it can be very rewarding as well.

A LIFE OF ART IS ITS OWN REWARD, ANYTHING ELSE IS A LIE.

Sources:

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