



# The Ultimate Guide To Selling

DMC 6032

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## On Etsy

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## Introduction

If you're a cross stitcher, making patterns is a natural part of your hobby, however as time goes on you're likely to amass quite a pile of patterns. With a small amount of work, you can put those patterns up for sale, and make enough money to cover your hobby expenses at the least.

In recent years development of online selling platforms such as Etsy have taken off, becoming some of the easiest ways to purchase cross stitch patterns. This guide goes over how to turn your hobby into a small business.

## Why Etsy?

I get asked about what platform is the best a lot, and frankly there are loads out there you can choose, however in my mind Etsy always wins. Why? Two simple yet dramatic things about Etsy.

1. It costs \$0.30. Whilst this is just the cost to list an item, and there are other charges associated, if you don't sell anything, all you pay is \$0.30. All the other platforms require higher upfront costs, meaning Etsy is the best place to sell if you're unsure.
2. Etsy has 80% of the handmade market. Whilst Amazon has a massive following for consumer items, anything handmade fails to sell on Amazon, or its handmade platform. Etsy has such a market share now, that you're simply very unlikely to find cross stitch patterns anywhere else.

Incredibly low cost, and massive market share means Etsy is the clear winner.

## How much time does it take?

Whilst lots of people will tell you that you can make loads of money on Etsy, they all fail to say how much time it requires. For most people, the time is in production, that isn't a concern for the automatically relisted cross stitch pattern store, however it still takes time to think about brand, make the right choices on photos, do social, A/B test, etc. However, it can easily be done as a side project.

## How much does it cost?

30¢

Honestly, that's what it costs. Upfront you will be required to pay \$0.30 from paypal. On each purchase they take an extra 6% of the price, and you need to pay another \$0.30 to display again.

This is the only costs for the basic Etsy. We'll also look into paid options for advertisements, and plugins, which do cost, however you should only use these if you have the profits coming in to cover them.



## A note on taxes

You shouldn't be surprised to hear that any income is taxable in your country. Etsy doesn't do this for you, so you need to self-notify your tax authority.

### **If you live in the EU**

EU law states you don't have to pay taxes on businesses that sell homemade products with less than 1 person running the company, with less than €10,000 a year turn over. It's unlikely that you'll exceed this, however Etsy will inform you if you need to take action; just make sure you fill out your address correctly.

In addition, all shops based in the EU must provide an address the shop is based from (most likely your home address).

### **If you live in the US**

Depending on your tax code, you may not have to pay any taxes, however all profits should be declared.

## How much can you earn?

You will see lots of Etsy guides and blog posts telling you how someone made \$100k in a year using Etsy. There are half a dozen out there that achieved this. However by a half a dozen I mean exactly 6. And there are 16,000 stores on Etsy.

In reality, it's hard to make a living off Etsy, the costs of international shipping, creating items, etc make it a poor profit business. However the benefit of cross stitch patterns is they are digital downloads, avoiding postage costs, and you only have to make them once, reducing production times massively.

Once you're set up and going, you can add more and more patterns to your shop, which will earn you more and more money. After a year and at least 50 patterns, you can make 300-500 sales. I would estimate this is about \$3000-5000. However, this is not a sit back and count the money deal; you have to work at it. As soon as you stop working, money no longer comes in. However, of any Etsy store, cross stitch patterns are without a doubt the most profitable.



## Creating a brand

Creating a brand for your new store can be the best part of your new adventure sometimes, and it's easy to get carried away. However, it's important to think about the branding, as once it's up, it's very hard to change.

Above everything else, the main thing you need to have in your head is connection with buyers; you need to make sure you're going to be a good fit for their needs.

### Brand Personality

Most people jump straight into the naming part, and forget the most important step; personality. Let's say you want to produce Harry Potter cross stitch patterns; and you pick a name like "Potter Patterns". Sounds great! But what if you want to create patterns of something else? And will Harry Potter fans prefer an in-joke as a name? Brand personality is one of the most important steps in making sure you don't regret your decision. To start, ask some simple questions:

*What type of patterns will you create?*

*How complicated will they be?*

*What's your USP?*

A perfect example is "WeeLittlePeople". It's short and sweet. Most people initially think it's bad as it doesn't mention cross stitch, however we'll explain later why that's not needed with the help of SEO. Instead, anyone can see that they are a Scottish shop producing small people. And they do; they make small people cross stitch patterns. The exact name doesn't matter, but without seeing their products, you can already see what they're about.

### USP

If you read the section above and asked "USP!?" don't fear! It stands for Unique Selling Point. Basically, why would someone buy something from you? If you're reading this, then you might think selling cross stitch patterns is enough. It's not. There are loads of people out there already selling cross stitch patterns.

The simplest way to think about your USP is the type of patterns. Are they simple or complicated? Are they themed? Are you a British producer?

Once you've looked at every side of your stock and yourself, you have a list of things that make you; YOU. Cut these down until you have just the most important, and that is your USP.

### Think of a name

Once you have a personality and USP, you need a name. This can be a bit daunting, however once you have the above two, you start making it easier. If you Japanese, start looking into words foreigners associate with Japan. If your selling point is flowers, list words people associate with flowers. By the end you'll have a massive list.



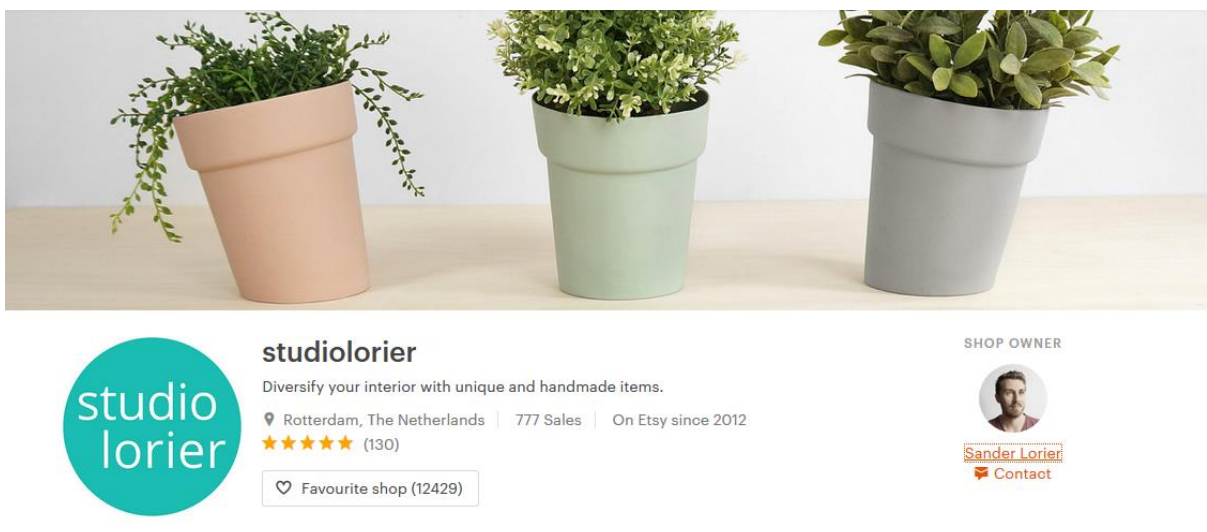
Here's the fun bit; combine your words. "ShintoPansies" "ScentedTorii" have some fun creating names until you find one that you love.

## Design a logo & banner

Now you have a name, you can design logos and a banner. However, before you get ahead of yourself, think about more than just what looks cool. For a logo, you'll need something that fits into a circle. You'll need it to be recognizable, and unique.

There are loads of shops on Etsy that can create fantastic designs for you, and I would strongly suggest spending your first \$100 of profit on one.

In the meantime however you're going to need a killer design. The best are easy to read, clean, show off what you sell, and are professionally made. The below example is a perfect balance of all of these elements.



But just because you make cross stitch patterns, this is still achievable. Show off your completed stitches, show threads in a box, the options are endless and are as specific to you as your name.

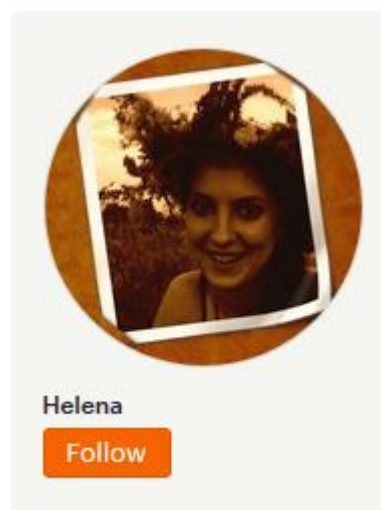
## Take a few photos of you

One thing not many people realise is Etsy gives you a space for a personal picture. This helps you resonate with the buyer, giving them a personal face to the brand. You'll need a few of you smiling, close up, with a plain background.





*An example of a great photo*



*An example of a terrible photo*

## Decide on pricing

I know it might seem a little weird to think about pricing before you've even made a pattern, however it's a massively important step to creating a brand.

If all the items in your store are within £20 of each other, then a buyer knows what to expect, however if they're within £200 of each other, no one is sure how many anything is, and you'll lose interest of the buyer straight away.

My suggestion for cross stitch patterns is a tiered approach. An example of costings taken from my own store are below:

*Less than 100x100 stitches is \$5*

*Between 100x100 stitches and 500x500 stitches is \$12*

*Larger than 500x500 stitches is \$20*

This sets up a simple key that anyone can see, and any buyer knows that anything they see is likely to be under \$20. However, you still need to think about the profit margins.

Each Etsy listing cost \$0.30 and each sale is 6%. This means if you had an item for sale at \$10 you would lose \$0.90 to Etsy; giving you a \$9.10 profit. Whilst for most Etsy sellers this seems like a terrible idea (as they spend hours creating the item), when you create cross stitch patterns, you only make one, and resell without any extra work. This means you can keep making the same profit over and over again. I work on the estimation that if the pattern takes me an hour to create I want to be paid at least \$10 on each sale for my time.





## Setting up a store

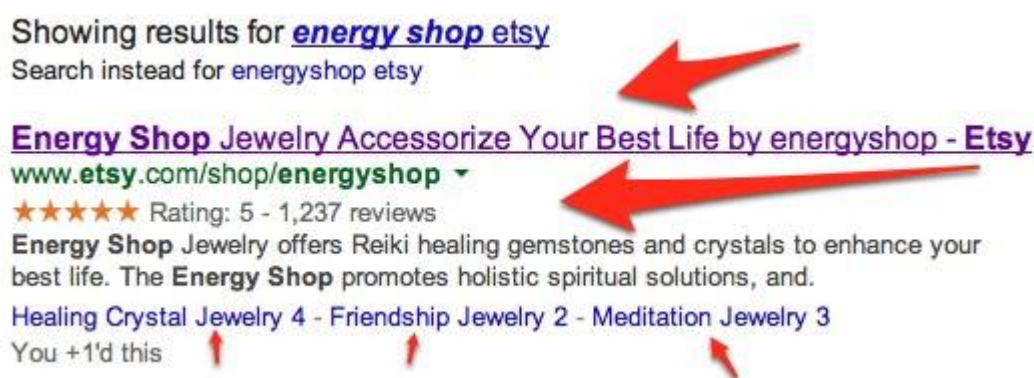
Hard work out of the way, it's time to set up your store. This is the final step before you can create items to sell.

### Branding

Connection with buyers

### Tag line

Tag lines used to be a big part of the Etsy storefront, however in recent updates they've removed it. Most store owners therefore forgot about them. BIG MISTAKE! Whilst they aren't on your storefront, they are on Google.



On the above image you can see the description is "Energy Shop Jewellery offers Reiki healing gemstones and crystals to enhance your best life. The Energy Shop promote holistic spiritual solutions and." This person has clearly thought about their description, and they've created one, however not only does it not read well, but it ends with "and."

You need to create a description that will interest the buyer into clicking. However, you need to think about length too. The description is 160 characters long, *including* the name of the store.

### Setting up categories

If someone wants to buy a flower pattern from your store, where do they find it? Categories are important navigation found on your store that segment up your inventory. At first, you won't have a lot of items so this won't matter, but as time goes on, more and more items will be added, making it super important.

The best way to split up categories for cross stitch patterns is the theme. This might be a big theme, like "flowers" or more specific like "poppies" depending on what your stock looks like, however you should always be careful not to have too many. The sweet spot is about 10.



## Set policies

I know this isn't very interesting, but setting up your policies goes a long way to making you trustworthy to buy from. It takes 5 minutes with Etsy's new tool, and isn't complicated. I would personally accept all payment forms, refunds and shipping policies (these don't matter as your items will be instant delivery).

## Create 'stories' and personal information

An option in your store is to create stories and fill out your profile with more information. This doesn't seem like a massively important step for most, however if you read the example below, it's hard to not fall in love with their story, and to want to buy something from them, even if you've not seen what they sell.

### About



our busy little studio

### Neal Pottery - Greg and Amy Neal

Every day, we talk about how lucky we are. We are fortunate to work together, travel together and do what we love.

Our story is one of travelling full circle.....Greg and I met and dated when we were young, yet went our separate ways and had no connection for 26 years. When we found each other once again, I came to work with Greg both in the studio and on the road.

When we opened our Etsy shop early in 2010, we had no idea that our pottery would find a home all over the world! We have shipped Neal Pottery to all 50 states as well as to such far away places as Australia, Italy, Ireland and many more.

Our Etsy shop philosophy is simple; offer our quality, functional handmade pottery accompanied by outstanding customer service. We would be so pleased to have you come back to us time and time again.

Here, a fantastic image, and a simple story of why you're opening a store go a long way. If you really want to appeal to your future customers, add a story, another section on your profile, about a specific item, or why you chose to make patterns about a specific theme.



## Make an item

You might have made loads of patterns in the past, however when creating for a store, you need to keep a few things in mind to ensure they work for everyone.

## Know your audience

Something people often overlook in any business is their audience. You need to make products that your audience are going to want to buy. If you plan to make flowery patterns, you're likely to have an older buyer, so modern in jokes won't cut it. Always keep in mind who the buyer is, and if it will fit with your brand.

## Theme

The theme for a lot of your early patterns is likely to be very well connected to your USP. However, as time progresses, your pattern making may also. In this case you need to make sure that somehow, every pattern you make at least fits into your wider brand theme. This might be as simple as adding some flowers, but may require you to look at your brand and relaunch. Or possibly open two stores, one for each type of pattern.

## Copyright

Copyright is a big issue when it comes to cross stitch, and it's very likely that at some point a copyright issue will occur (if that's happening to you now, we have a guide on what to do later on). However, there are a few things you can do to ensure this doesn't keep happening.

If your planned theme is a movie, you don't own the copyright. As a result you need to make something totally original, and not just converting a poster, image or likeness.

If you plan to make patterns based on images you find online, always ask for permission from the website the image is on. Most people think you can use google images without an issue, however this is not true.

Finally, if you plan on making your own patterns, it's a good idea to check out Etsy after you've created yours to make sure if anyone else has done something similar, it's not too similar.

## Keyword research

You might have a fantastic idea for a pattern, but will it sell? You can actually find that out before you make it. Using tools such as the [Etsy Keyword Dominator](#) you can check what people search for. Using this technique you can work out how to improve your pattern to sell better, or work out a killer title to help it sell.

It's best to use an example; let's say you want to make a 'floral cross stitch pattern'. We type this into the keyword tool and it informs us it has a ranking of "3" out of 5 (1 being highest volume searched for, 5 being lowest volume). However also in the tool it tells us that 'cross stitch pattern flower' is search for more. Maybe you should only have



one flower in the pattern, or change the title from floral to flower? These are the insights that can help you sell hundreds instead of tens.

<input type="checkbox"/>	Rank	Keyword
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	1	cross stitch pattern baby
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	2	cross stitch pattern bird
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	3	cross stitch pattern books
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	1	cross stitch pattern cactus
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	2	cross stitch pattern cat
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	3	cross stitch pattern christmas
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	1	cross stitch pattern disney
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	1	cross stitch pattern elephant
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	3	cross stitch pattern floral
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	2	cross stitch pattern flower
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	4	cross stitch pattern fox

## Size

You might love stitching massive patterns, but most Etsy buyers tend to prefer small patterns under \$5. However, patterns with a lot of focus, such as Harry Potter, Pokemon, Game of Thrones tend to have massive followings, and bigger patterns may sell better; however still not as good as small patterns.

That said, you also have to think about your price point, you can't have a pattern that's too small and charge \$15 for it.

## Detail/Colors

One of the biggest issues I see when looking at Etsy stores is their patterns are super detailed, and have hundreds of colors. Whilst this appeals to a very small amount of people, the store do this as it's easy. Shove an image into a pattern creation program and you're away; even if it looks terrible.

That's why you need to think about the detail level and colors. Based on the size, you need to work out what looks good, but isn't crazy complicated.



## List an item

The store is open, the pattern has been created, and now you need to list the item; the last step before you can sell.

### Photos

Photos make or break most Etsy sellers. In fact, Etsy has its own guide of taking photos of your products, it's THAT important. However if you're selling patterns, you can't use these. So, you need to come up with an alternative set of images.

#### The example shot

There can be two ways you take this shot; either with a stitched example (if you've stitched it), or a mock up. You might think that you have to stitch all your listings, but it rarely make a big difference if someone buys it.



You need to set up a plain background, and feature a mock up design (an output from the pattern creation software) on a frame or embroidery hoop. The two above are fantastic examples of clean simple design. I prefer the one on the right as it has a slightly more interesting background, however white is always a good option. These photos are well lit, and consistent. And that's the key; consistency.

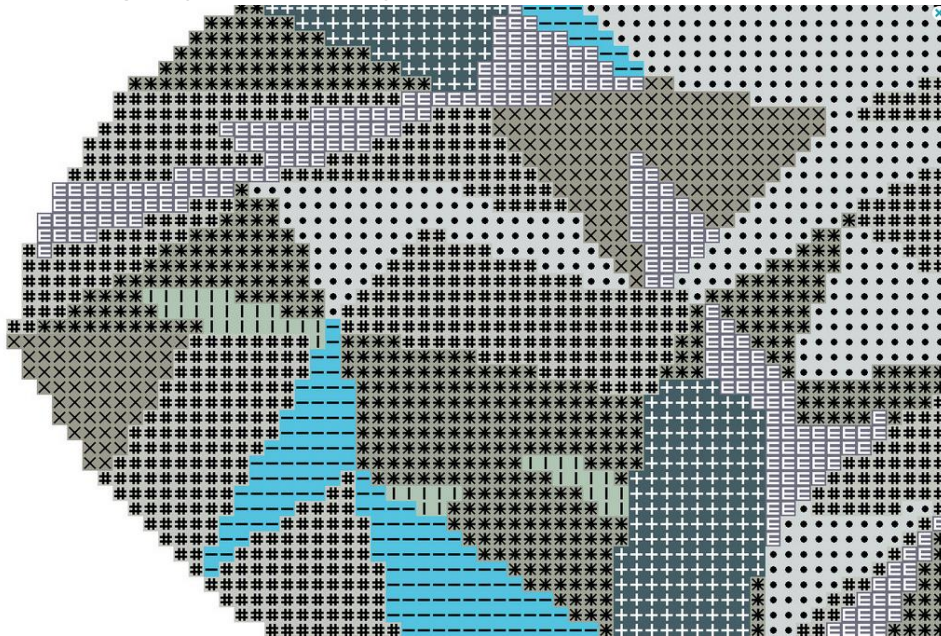
In reality both of the above images are a hoop with aida in, photographed once. The shop owner then puts the mock up stitch on top each time using photoshop. This means if you look at their store, they're all the same, clean design.





## Pattern example

You often see people adding pattern example segments to their listings images. It shows how the pattern is put together, and just adds an extra element to settle any nerves someone might have about purchasing your item. I wouldn't spend too much time on this, however if you do be aware that you don't want to put too much on show; you don't want to give your item away for free.



## The customer photo

This is something a lot of people don't add, but it makes a MASSIVE difference. Buyers love to see how other people have got on with the pattern, and adding in a more realistic, less well lit image can actually help a lot. There are two ways to go about this; either you can contact your old purchasers and ask for an image (we talk about this later), or you can take a photo of one you stitched up and add it as a 'customer photo'. The second option is a little cheeky, but it still helps people get an idea of what the finished item looks like.

## Setting prices

If you've branded your site how we've described you've already got a good idea in your head about the price of your items. However, some items might be slightly out of sync. If your item is a 3D pattern, or a very complicated one, or a custom item, then you need to change your prices accordingly.

My personal guide is for every hour extra I work on the pattern, I increase the price by \$10. This might not seem like a lot, but you resell the same item over and over and over again, meaning each hour actually gains you hundreds of more dollars. But each buyer only takes a small share of that extra cost.



## Make a perfect description

A lot of people will tell you that a description will make or break an Etsy sale, however for a digital cross stitch pattern, this isn't necessarily the case. Having already seen what the pattern looks like, they're checking it fits their needs before buying.

Whilst people think about the pattern details, there is one more thing you need to think about; ranking. The first thing in any description should be a quick description of your pattern, including all keywords you can think of.

The basic construction of a description is as follows:

*Catchy tag line for the product*

*Product description (have fun with this, say how people can frame it, how it might look good, etc)*

*Finished cross stitch size (I suggest inches on 14 count, and stitches high and wide)*

*Amount of colors (and brand of threads)*

*What is included in the purchase (a list of the patterns, if there are any instructions, etc)*

*Buying instructions (advise it's a digital download)*

*A message to any buyers to put their mind at rest you'll always be there to help with issues (customer care is important)*

*Any copyright information you might want to add*

Once you've created your first, it should be easy to change a few sections and reuse the same description over again.

## Make the perfect title

Having done some research about keywords, the title should be fairly simple to construct, however you need to keep some things in mind.

Most titles are shortened to about 36 characters in most situations, so make sure that the first 36 characters say the most important pieces of information. 'cross stitch pattern' makes up 30 characters however you're unlikely to come up unless someone wants a cross stitch pattern, so you don't need to include this. Instead, the theme, any words the pattern includes, or the color are a great choice.

Secondly, you should think about description. After the first 36 characters, you have space to describe your pattern better. This should include a word on size, colors, and that it's downloadable. A great example is:

**Modern Geometric Electric Blue Elephant Cross Stitch Pattern, Instant Download, PDF pattern**

This title has a simple "modern geometric electric blue elephant" start, before ending with "cross stitch pattern, instant download, pdf pattern" a simple title that clearly shows the core information.

## Tags

In every item you have the ability to add 13 tags. These tags work as SEO for your item. Simply put, what do people search for to find your item? There are some obvious ones



here, such as 'cross stitch pattern', however you want to be as descriptive as possible. Add the color, that fact it's downloadable, its theme, its size (especially if it's 'epic' or super small).

Finally, you want to use all of the tags. If you've only got 12, think about what else people might search. Some people call cross stitch xstitch, should you add that?

## Materials

In addition to the tags and categories you'll have the option to state what materials make up your product. This worked very well for non-digital downloads, however as digital downloads have got more popular patterns started to emerge. Buyers search under specific terms that you can use in your materials section. We suggest:

*pdf*  
*download*  
*cross stitch*  
*pattern*

This should allow you to be seen by anyone searching using the materials section.

## Style, Recipient & Occasion

Finally, there are also sections for style, recipient and occasion. Style and occasion are going to be set massively for your patterns theme, so simply select the best options from the dropdowns.

Recipient however can be standardised. Thanks to market research we know some things about the average Etsy buyer:

*67% of the site's visitors are female*  
*43% were between the ages of 18 and 34*  
*62% have a college education*  
*88% are Caucasian*

When it comes to cross stitch patterns we also know that the likelihood changes slightly to:

*82% of the site's visitors are female*  
*63% were between the ages of 18 and 34*  
*58% have a college education*  
*66% are Caucasian*

As a result you can fill in the recipient section with the above information in mind. Select female, age range of 18 and 34.



## Future Designs

Once you're up and running your site should hopefully start making headway, and most importantly, sales. However there are regular tasks you can do to help your site along.

### Idea gathering

You might have a good idea of what patterns to make next, however there's a tool called the [Etsy Keyword Dominator](#) that looks for what buyers are searching in that month and gives you a list, based on a term you put in. Put in 'cross stitch pattern' each month and you get a tailored list for what patterns to make.

If you keep a record of these each time you can also get a get insight into shopper behaviour. An example of this is that most people buy Christmas cross stitch patterns in early December, meaning that Christmas patterns should all be up in November, but also small, as they won't have enough time to stitch before Christmas.

### If it works...

Sometimes items sell really well. But you don't know why. Is it simply that people love flower patterns? There is only way one to check, make another one. If something works, try to repeat the success.



## Ongoing actions

Once you're up and running your site should hopefully start making headway, and most importantly, sales. However there are regular tasks you can do to help your site along.

### Social

Being proactive about your store is important. Create a Twitter, Facebook, Instagram, get posting.

Whilst this seems a little forced at first, it helps people see your brand, see your items, and gets them interested. Studies have found that those shops using social media have an increase of 200% of sales against those that don't. Figures don't lie; get those social fingers going.

### Check SEO

SEO is a scary word for most people, and even those in the know see it as complicated. Etsy has its own SEO though, they shouldn't be confused. Simply put, Etsy SEO is the title, and tags you give your item. These should be perfectly in line with your product. You'll often revisit a listing and check the tags and think 'wait I missed one'; well that's missed sales. Go back and check them over regularly.

### A/B testing

Another SEO tactic is A/B testing, the comparison of different things. If your product isn't selling well, change the image. If it starts picking up sales; great, if it doesn't change it back and change something else, like the title.

Keep testing new ways to sell your items and eventually you'll hit a sweet spot for that item.

### Follow up with buyers for reviews

Follow up. Do it now. It's SO important. After someone buys a pattern, you get their email. Send them a quick note 3 months after purchase and see how they got on.

If they didn't like it, you have comments that you can work on.

If they liked it, ask for a review (an important show of trust for new buyers) and ask for a photo to use on your listing.

### Check out competitors

Sometimes competitors have found something amazing. You could be twiddling your thumbs in annoyance about this, however if you regularly check your main competitors you can get a great idea of what might be working for them, so you can copy it. This might be patterns, titles, tags or images, all things you can easily do too.





## Advertising & Sponsoring on Etsy

Etsy has its own advertising built into its design. In short, it looks at your product tags and advertises them when these words are searched for. This can be massively helpful for new stores, and I would strongly suggest setting up promotions when you first open your store (if you can afford it), however there are some things that you need to keep in mind.

Firstly, the cost. There's no getting away from it, advertising costs loads. Even with small values, the lowest cost for advertising on Etsy is \$10 a day. This can rack up to \$300 in a month, so you need to make sure if you're getting sales from it, that it's worth that investment. In most cases I would say it is, however occasionally you'll make a pattern that just doesn't resonate well, and you end up just spending money for nothing.

Secondly, is it needed? If you do a quick search for your pattern theme followed by "cross stitch pattern" if you come up in the first page, there's no need to promote the item. Its wasted money. However if you come up on the 6th or 7th page, it might be worth doing to get more people to see your pattern.

Finally, you need to monitor it. Advertising costs can easily spiral and so you should check on a daily basis to see if it's working, and if it's economically viable to keep it going. Ranking is linked to how many products you sell too, meaning if promotion works well, you'll sell loads of patterns, and make your way to the first page of results without the advert; meaning the advert is no longer needed.

Advertising can cause a major head ache, however there is a great deal you can get out of it if you're successful. If you're thinking about advertising your items, I would suggest starting with Etsy first. You can select specific items, and set daily costs, and you can limit times of day or specific months to help you sell to specific customers.

## Advertising on other platforms

If you choose to sell on other platforms, there are quite a lot of choice. This is far harder to sell though, and I would strongly suggest you monitor your spending.

### Facebook

Whilst not a lot of people realise it, Facebook makes all its money for adverts. It takes large amounts of detail about every user and serves them adverts based on their likes, age, sex, etc. This means that you can be REALLY specific about who you advertise to, meaning higher chance to convert sales, however it also means that it costs a lot. Whilst it's cheaper than google adverts, and super easy to set up, Facebook adverts are ignored by a lot of users, meaning it's hard to get clicks in the first place. Facebook keeps redesigning to ensure users see their adverts, but this has caused people to boycott adverts (you can rate adverts in Facebook) just to spite the platform. If you're making an advert, make it something people will want to click on.



## Instagram

Instagram advertising has got really popular lately, and frankly, I'm a big fan. The average Etsy buyer tends to use Instagram, and the cross stitch community is really strong, making it a good place to advertise. However, be aware that Instagram ads aren't targeted in the same way Facebook ones are. This means you advertise to people that don't cross stitch, so you need to make it clear what you're selling (you don't want someone clicking to find out what you're selling, as this costs you money). You also need to have AMAZING photography for this to work, you want to get people interested. Unless you stitch examples of all your patterns, I wouldn't suggest this approach, as computer generated examples don't interest most Instagram users.

## Twitter

A lot of people think twitter is a great advertising platform, however sadly, for selling single products; it's not. In fact, twitter is actively against you advertising single products, meaning getting through their internal advertising team is going to be hard. However, if you're content with selling your 'brand' you can do this through twitter. Just be aware you need to have a custom domain (This can be purchased through people like [GoDaddy](#)) pointed to your Etsy store.

## Google

Alternatively, you can try google adverts on its own. Owning 30% of all internet traffic, it does seem like a great choice, especially considering the options you have to segment, and advertise on specific keywords, however google is by far the largest investment when it comes to advertising. Not only do they have a \$100 minimum buy in, with a \$10 per day minimum cost, but each click costs on average \$1. Meaning you might spend \$300 a month and only get 1 or 2 sales; definitely not a profitable option. Only look into google adverts if you've done this before, it's a minefield, and has a very steep learning curve.

## Selling on Facebook & Instagram (Spresy)

One option for Facebook is advertisements, however another, far better option is a Facebook store. I know that might scare a lot of people off, but before you run off screaming; let me tell you about [Spresy](#).

In short, you link your Etsy store with your Spresy account and you never have to think about it again. In the background however Spresy opens a Facebook store for you and lists all your Etsy items with the same descriptions and everything. Not only that, but the store it opens is 'aware' too, so if someone adds something to their cart, but doesn't buy, Spresy will send them a follow up email. It's completely free to open and set up, and they take 3% on all your sales (note that you still have to pay the Etsy fees too). This means that in totally you make a sale and lose 9% in fees, however you gain a massive market on Facebook, so it should easily make up the difference.



## Future Development

A time will come in every store owner's time when they wonder if they should move away from Etsy. Is there greener grass somewhere else? Personally, after having over 6 stores, and making more than £20,000 one year in my spare time, I'd say no.

However, others have found leaving to be advantageous. If you do go, there are two real options.

### Your own store

If you want to move away from Etsy's store, then you can. In fact, Etsy make it super simple with their [Pattern](#) sites. It basically exports your entire shop and makes a website for you. In addition, your Etsy store stays open and takes care of all the hard work for you.

It does cost though; \$15 a month to be specific, and testers haven't been convinced by its usefulness yet, so it's something you should think hard about before shelling out all that cash.

### Your own website

If you don't fancy shelling out for [Pattern](#), then you can create your own website, for next to nothing with all the same functionality. It's a steep learning curve and so you'll need to investigate someone who can help you out.



## Issues you might have

It's no secret that Etsy has a massive issue with copyright. However this doesn't mean it will necessarily effect you. If you've found someone has copied your work, or someone has suggested you've copied their work, there are solutions!

### Copyright Infringement Notice/Cease and Desist

You've just read the scariest email of your life. Whilst it reads like a legal letter, it's not. So firstly, take a few breaths to calm down. You've either received a Cease and Desist letter, or a Digital Millennium Copyright Act (DMCA) notice. What this means is someone thinks the content you've put up is against copyright. This might be a big company, or a small Etsy seller.

#### **A large company**

The short answer here is the big boys run the world; if you get a cease and desist or a DMCA notice, take the offending content down.

This will be the last you hear of the notice, however you should note that if you get 3 of these on Etsy, your store will be closed permanently and you won't be able to open a new one under the same email address.

#### **Another Etsy seller says you've copied their patterns**

If Etsy have contacted you (not the Etsy seller) then Etsy have investigated and found that the other person put up their pattern before you did. You have one of two choices at this time; either take it down, or put in a counter claim.

If your pattern has been created using a free to use image on the internet (note that most google images are NOT free to use), then the likelihood is you've both made a similar pattern. In this case fill out a counter notice (the link to do this will be in the mail Etsy sends you), and send them the link to the image you've created the pattern from. Etsy will investigate and nether seller will have to remove their pattern.

If you've created your own work entirely, you need to think carefully about your next steps. If the two patterns are similar, but at least 50% different, then I would suggest filling out a counter claim. However, if your patterns are more that 50% similar, then you've been unlucky, and you should take your pattern down. This will be the last you hear of the notice, however you should note that if you get 3 of these on Etsy, your store will be closed permanently and you won't be able to open a new one under the same email address.

Finally, if the Etsy seller has contacted you, DO NOT contact them back. Take no further action. If the other seller chooses to they can appeal to Etsy staff and they may contact you (which is where you follow the above advice).

### Someone has copied your work

If you're reading this, you've found someone has copied your work. That might take the form of an Etsy listing from another store, or someone has posted it up online without your permission.



Sadly, this is a regular occurrence for anyone using Etsy for digital downloads. Etsy however are aware of the issue, and thanks to some big issues in the past, there's now some simple options for solving these problems.

### **Another Etsy posting**

If someone else has created a similar posting on Etsy to you, the first thing to do is your homework. There is one big question you need to answer; could the other store have made their own pattern?

This mostly depends on what your pattern is. If you've come up with your own idea totally off the top of your head, the likelihood that someone else has come up with something similar is very slim. However, if you've used a copyright free image to make your pattern, then they've probably found the same image themselves.

If your idea is of your own creation, seek to remove the copied work by filling out the form found [here](#) and Etsy will investigate. Note however that it can take up to 3 months for them to take action.

If the pattern has been created using a free image, the options are very limited. You can contact the other store and ask them to take it down (they don't have to), you can try to undercut their price, or, which is what I would do, make a more trustworthy option for buyers to pick.

### **Someone published it on Pinterest**

There are many Pinterest users out there that will display content they paid for. This is strongly against Pinterest's user policy and as a result they take it super seriously. You can fill out a form [here](#) and Pinterest will take action within 1 week. You can suggest Pinterest also warn the user who posted it, which I would strongly suggest doing; it means they might be banned from Pinterest and you no longer have to worry about them posting your patterns.

### **Someone is offering your pattern for free somewhere else on the internet**

If you find someone is offering your pattern for free, the first thing you should do is contact them. Appeal to their reason and ask them to politely take it down. This normally gets the situation resolved, however if choose not to, then you might have to take legal action. This is something you really need to think about though, as it's likely to be VERY expensive.





## Etsy seller tools

### General tools

[Marmalead](#) – A fantastic tool that helps you optimise your Etsy listings.

[EtsyRank.com](#) – Very similar to Marmalead this tool optimises your Etsy listings.

[Etsy Keyword Tool Dominator](#) – Searches Etsy for commonly searched queries based on the keyword you put in.

[CraftCount](#) – A simple tool that counts up the sales from the last day of Etsy. A great way of working out what people are searching for RIGHT NOW.

[MarketPlacePulse](#) – A tool letting you compare your shop to your competitors, so you can always stay one step ahead.

[Words-To-Use](#) – Not actually an Etsy tool, this suggests nouns, verbs and adjectives to help sell your products for item titles, descriptions and tags.

[Etsy Gadget](#) – A neat tool helping you track likes (hearts), favourites, ranking and lists. They add loads of tools regularly, and set up ‘favorite-athons’ allow you to get loads of favorites in a short space of time (which in theory helps you rank).

[Seller-tools](#) – For the serious seller only, this tool does everything from working out conversion rates, rankings, etc all in one platform. It costs \$10 a month.

### Calculators

[Price your postage](#) – A simple Etsy tool for working out postage costs.

[Profit calculator by EtsyRank](#) – The easiest to use profit calculator, with simple inputs.

[Profit calculator by SaleCalc](#) – Slightly more advanced than EtsyRank and only in US dollars, providing a better breakdown of costs so you can work out where you need to make savings.

[Profit calculator by CraftyBase](#) – My preferred calculator as it converts everything to the currency of choice using up to date currency conversion tables.

### Websites

[Handmadeology](#) – The Handmadeology website teaches artists how to effectively sell their products online, with great Etsy guides.

[Etsypreneur](#) - This website focuses on the business of selling online, diving into all areas of online marketing.

[Craftsposeure](#) - Through everything from biz tips to inspiration, the site is dedicated to helping you turn your small business into a success.

[Everything Etsy](#) - A resource for everything from Etsy business How-Tos to creative DIY ideas and tutorials.

[Oh My! Handmade Goodness](#) - A creative community and has heaps of useful resources.

[Found Made Modern](#) - A website that highlights the modern side of the handmade space through shop features and giveaways.

[Handmade Is Better](#) - A valuable resource for Etsy sellers who want to build and accelerate their businesses.



[Dear Handmade Life](#) - This website will help you strengthen your business skills and advance your Etsy career through workshops, helpful tips & tricks and even an upcoming conference.

[Hello, I'm Handmade!](#) – A gathering space for creative types who are looking to develop their business skills.

[The Merriweather Council Blog](#) - Danielle is the driving force behind this blog, showing makers how to craft a business out of their passions.



## Tips from Etsy store owners

We asked 40 of the biggest Etsy store owners what their tips would be for any new Etsy store owner:

"Photos do the work. If your photos are interesting, then your product has a chance to sell. If the photos are old and lame, then your items won't sell. Periodically refresh your pics." ([KanduBeads and KanduDesigns on Etsy](#))

"Use a neutral background for photos. White is best, and allows your items to POP." ([Dapper Dane Beard Co.](#))

"Good Photos – People are automatically drawn to images that are more bright and vibrant; not dark, cluttered photos that look like they were taken from your phone. Using your phone for photos is great – but utilize editing apps like Snapseed or Lightroom to brighten them up and make them look like they weren't taken from a phone. And remember – the best photos are taken in natural light (not in direct sunlight), with a solid background so your product really stands out." ([Aria Paperie](#))

"Use professional-looking photos! When shopping online, the customer is totally relying on accurate photos to get an idea of what they're buying. If you can't spend the money on professional photos (although, I think that's probably the best use of your money besides supplies for your actual product), you can take your own using natural lighting." ([Jack Jack & Co.](#))

"#1 Tip: Make your photos look awesome. Clear, bright, sharp and in natural light." ([Gaffren Graphics](#))

"Be prepared to give time to your shop and be friendly. Etsy is a community as well as a marketplace, so get out there and share!" ([My Printed](#))

"Make sure you do some customer and competitor research before you launch. That way you can make an informed decision based on facts and figures as to what you sell in your store. A great foundation to build on!" ([Lily Mo Jewellery](#))

"Join different Team Groups offered through Etsy and promote your items through the different games they offer. It has always helped me to be more noticed through Etsy in general and has resulted in sales, too." ([DogGone Cute Apparel & Accessories](#))

"You first have to learn a lot about marketing strategies outside the Etsy. I've lost a bunch of time for random ineffective activity." ([Milulaki](#))

"The concept of "If you build it, they will come" no longer holds true; you can make an amazing product, but just opening a store and listing your items won't guarantee they sell. Once your store opens, spend time sharing, marketing, and networking your products – as well as learning from the experts – to really reach the customers!" ([Faith and Fabric Design](#))

"My tip (there are many!) would be to promote yourself. Don't list it and leave it, take an active part in your shop getting found!" ([Delta Moon Soap](#))

"Share you site as much as possible. Advertising is/can be expensive." ([Ladybugs229](#))

"My tip is don't expect sales to happen just because you open an Etsy shop. It takes time, hard work, marketing, amazing photos, a product people want and top notch customer service. Be prepared to work hard." ([SpringwoodPorcelain](#))



"My tip for success: be in love with what you do and love your products, it does show. You must work it, to make it work. Set aside time daily even 15 minutes to connect and network with all sources available, social media and other sellers, most sites are all free!" ([Angel Heart Designs](#))

"Be passionate! If you love what you do, it will show in your work." ([The Whimsical Sweet](#))

"Don't underestimate your value! The work that you do is valuable, don't be afraid to charge an amount that makes you money!" ([Palmetto Engraving](#))

"Great photos, fast and excellent communication with potential customers, keep working on new product, social media, and work in the teams and forums. For us, there's not just one tip, all of the above go hand-in-hand. An Etsy shop goes way beyond just selling in your shop. It really is a "we're always open" type of shop. This means that you are working on weekends, & evenings as well (for us). Even if we are not painting and packing late at night, we are always available to answer questions any time. Come busy season, we do end up working nights and weekends, too. We're thankful to be doing this for a living, for the last 5 years." ([Mahzer+Vee](#))

"My number one tip I would give to someone who is interested in selling on Etsy is to not sell yourself short. You are selling your art, your craft, your time, and a part of your soul in each piece you create. When you are confident in your products, and showcase them in a way that portrays that confidence, then your listings will stand out among the rest and get the attention they deserve." ([CherylsThingMaBobs](#))

"My advice for selling on Etsy is to have great pictures, clear and detailed descriptions and to have a coherent overall look and feel. Be unique, be you, be handmade. Your only limit is you!" ([Cobalt + Corundum](#))

"My No. 1 tip I would give someone who wants to sell on Etsy is be patient! Success doesn't come over night. Quality products will get noticed, it just takes time!" ([Aud + El](#))

"Number one tip is to have A LOT of patience! Etsy takes a lot of work and definitely doesn't happen overnight. Stay persistent and work hard and it will pay off!" ([Sally Daisy Ink](#))

"You have to work on your shop. Set it up beautifully. Make it super (appearance, photos, titles, descriptions, tags... everything) and never stop working, studying, learning about it. Be patient. Believe in it. And above all love it!" ([Prints by Stella Chili](#))

"Start somewhere and never give up! Keep learning, testing, tweaking, overhauling, beautifying and improving. Focus on a short and long term goal and just don't give up." ([Eco Collective Australia](#))

"My No. 1 tip for someone who wants to START selling on Etsy would be – get your business 'ducks in a row' (registration, PayPal etc) and then JUMP!" ([Made for YOU by Fi](#))

"My tip for anyone wanting to sell on Etsy is to first just go for it! It's easy to second guess yourself or be scared because maybe your idea is already out there, but as long as you're true to yourself, think outside the box and you put your own twist on things, there's nothing to worry about!" ([HelloChiqui](#))



“Just Do It! Your shop does not have to be perfect to start – just make it the best you can. You will have time to improve pictures, descriptions, and SEO as you go, it is a continual process.” ([Karen Tyler Designs](#))

“My number one advice for selling on Etsy is PATIENCE. It’s not a hocus-pocus magic trick. It takes time to learn how to do things right – tag correctly, put the right photos up, and wait for the shop to be discovered by the right people. So don’t be discouraged if the first sale is not coming when you think it should – just learn as you go and improve your game.” ([Zozidesign](#))

“I think the number one tip I would say to someone who wants to sell on Etsy is to do their research. There is so much helpful advice in the seller’s handbook and on blogs that can help you be successful in your business. There’s information on photography, pricing, social media, product descriptions... the list goes on! That being said, don’t be afraid to just start. Put a few items in your store and continue your research, you can always change what you have up there and improve as you go. Try to read as much as you can while you are starting out and always keep this helpful information in mind as your business grows so you are constantly improving. ” ([Sew Auntie Sew](#))

“My tip to someone who wants to sell on Etsy is: your Etsy shop is built on progress not perfection. So many people I know spend a lot of time thinking and planning before they open their shop in Etsy. They want to make it just right, just perfect before they start their shop. Planning is great but unless you have something for people to see, a place for people to go, and a few items for people to get excited about, it’s all just talk and you are not likely going to get traffic or sales from just talking about an Etsy shop. Overtime your shop will evolve, your products may change or streamline and your buying crowd will continue to gather. You want those sales? Open your shop, ask friends to visit it and give you feedback. I’ve had my shop for YEARS but it’s only been this year that I actually started putting products up for sale and actively marketing my monsters. I started as a paper crafter and I didn’t think people wanted to buy my cards. Now I work with fabrics and I’ve learned so much by just doing it (to use a famous phrase). Open your shop. Take photos, write a description, list your item. Tweak as needed. Repeat.” ([It’s Handmade by Andrea](#))

“Do your homework: price yourself to the value of your work, not the price of your competition, and know what search terms people are using to find it – SEO is your friend. And have excellent photos of your work – if you wouldn’t buy it based on the photos, neither will someone else.” ([Lemesto](#))

“My No. 1 tip is: Potential customers will come through Web searches, so making sure that your Etsy shop is set up for really great Search Engine Optimization (SEO) is a must. Consider everything from your shop name to your section titles. Keeping your shop frequently updated will help with search engine results as well.” ([Under Her Spell Designs](#))

“After having two different shops on Etsy over the past 10 years, my #1 tip is learn search engine optimization. With strong and diverse keywords, your products will come up in numerous searches by potential customers. Learn it yourself, have someone else do it for you, but once it’s done you’ll see an increase in traffic and sales.” ([Bound & Wound](#))





"I'm sure many people will say your 1st photo is the most important thing, so I'll jump to the next: a clear description of your item in the first 3-5 words of your title. Too many titles I see don't make it clear enough what your product is at the start and as a customer I might not read further to try and uncover your product. Include sizes, materials, customization options in your description. Help the customer visualize what else can be done with your product." ([Off on a Whim](#))

"Get as many describing words into the title of your listing as possible. Along with tags, this is the best way to get at the top of people's searches!" ([Clay & Clasp](#))

"Look at stores that are successful; and make a long descriptive title that uses the same keywords as your tags (I make my title, then copy and paste that into the 'tags' line). If you duplicate it then Etsy 'finds' your items better." ([Six Chickens Vintage](#))

"I would tell new sellers to make sure and fill out every listing to the max. I don't think there is such a thing as "too much" in this case. If they get stuck I would say, "imagine having to describe your item to someone over the phone. What would you tell them to make fall in love and buy your product on the spot without ever seeing it?" ([The Harvest Trail Journey](#))

"I think that a good tip its to sell creative and unique items. Not just something that you can find in the market. Being open to custom orders and to create new designs along with your costumers." ([Casita de Lana](#))

"Number one tip would be to always reply back to convos in a timely manner and do whatever it takes to make the customer happy! I know this seems obvious, but going the extra mile and making some sacrifices, whether it be a discount or refund where need be, keeps people coming back and reviews positive. :) I've owned brick and mortar stores and not unlike these, your customers have to feel special. Many people use Etsy solely because of the one-on-one interaction with the maker. Make it a great experience for the shopper!" ([RawBoho Jewelry](#))

"Since buyers feel more comfortable buying from shops that have some sort of track record and, at least, a few sales under its belt, find ways to use the Sell Now feature on the app and be sure to end the transaction with emailing them a receipt so they can leave a review (they must have an Etsy account to do this)! I noticed that once I got to 25 sales and 5 reviews online orders started picking up. It only took two craft fairs to gather momentum." ([Sublime Signs Studio](#))

"My tip is to find your niche. In my case, there may be 100 people on Etsy selling masks, 50 selling patterns to DIY, but only 1 making them 3D. Find a point of difference and revel in it! Celebrate it. Advertise it. And most importantly – make sure you enjoy it!" ([Ebony Shae Designs](#))



## Quick answers

### **Should you stitch each of your patterns?**

Most people don't. I personally think those without stitched examples sell better.

### **I want to sell finished cross stitch too, is that OK?**

Yes! Just make sure it's in its own categories of your store. Sadly, finished cross stitch doesn't sell for a lot of money, you're likely to only sell for the price to make it.



## Checklist for opening a store

Opening a new store can seem like a daunting task, however with this checklist you'll have your store open, and making sales in no time.

Task	Done?
Create Etsy account	
Create PayPal account (needs credit/debit card)	
Work out your brand personality	
Work out your USP	
Think of a shop name	
Design a shop logo	
Design a shop banner	
Take a photo of you	
Decide on basic pricing structure	
Upload logo	
Upload shop banner	
Upload personal photo	
Write a personal bio	
Fill in the 'about' shop section	
Write shop tag line	
Create product categories	
Fill out shop policies	
Set payment options (set all on if possible)	
Write message to buyers	
Add social media links to your shop (if you have any)	
Upload products	
Promote new products on all social media channels	
Advertise on any platforms	
Follow up with any buyers for reviews	



## Checklist for each new item

Once you've researched your idea and created your pattern, make sure you give it the best chance of selling by following the below checklist.

Task	Done?
Create black and white & color versions of the pattern	
Create an image of 'finished' pattern	
Create a sample image of pattern	
Work out price	
Upload photos	
Create enticing product name	
Create fantastic product description, including dimensions	
Set product category	
Fill out 'about this listing' sections	
Set price	
Set quantity	
Set up renewal options if product is sold out	
Upload pattern files	
Create a list of 13 tags	
Fill out 'materials' section	
Fill out 'occasion' section	
Fill out 'style' section	
Fill out 'recipient' section	
Share new product on social media	
OPTIONAL set Etsy advertising to promote product	
OPTIONAL add link to non-Etsy advertising platform	



## Item description example

Elephants never forget; and you'll never forget this beautiful Elephant Cross Stitch!

Instant download PDF cross stitch pattern of a beautiful low poly elephant with blue highlights to really make it pop. This pattern is perfect for beginners and experts alike, as its pure cross stitches (and none of those pesky half stitches!).

Easily framed in an embroidery hoop or picture frame to be displayed, made as a gift or turned into a pillow or throw!

Finished size:

- 9' wide x 9' tall on 14 count Aida (126 x 114 stitches)
- 8 Colours (DMC)

PDF includes:

- Color pattern (split into multiple pages for ease of reading)
- Black and white pattern (split into multiple pages for ease of reading)
- List of thread colors (DMC)
- A guide for beginners to cross stitch, and cross stitch tips
- Also optimised for on-screen use if you don't want to print it!

You will receive this as an instant download! It will be sent by Etsy to the email address on your Etsy account within 5-10 minutes after payment is accepted.

If you have any questions, concerns, or comments feel free to message me I'll get back to you as soon as possible!

Happy stitching!

The boring bit:

This listing is for a digital pattern only, and as a result I'm afraid no refunds can be made. All patterns are made from royalty free images, however all patterns are for personal use only. Please don't photocopy, redistribute, sell or share the patterns (I put a lot of hard work in, so no being a meany!). All patterns and designs of the patterns are protected under copyright laws.

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