

Desktop reference business guide
500 Ways to Make Money

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500 Ways to Make Money

Business ideas and extra income ideas

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Introduction

Ever wanted to start your own business or wanted to make an extra income but were stuck for ideas? Well now you don't need to be. Our handy desktop reference guide can help inspire you with information about business ideas and extra income ideas that can help you make money. Whether you're thinking of starting a part time or full time business, or simply need a way to supplement your current income, our guide is here to help. Simply dip into it whenever you're looking for inspiration.

Many of the business ideas can be started and operated from home (to begin with at least) But there are some businesses that require you to be mobile. Some will need a financial investment in equipment which may or may not be convenient to use at home, but may require other premises. However, it's worth remembering that even some of the World's largest businesses were started from the founder's spare room or garage (like Amazon and eBay for example)

So no matter what type of business you start there is always room for expansion and some of the ideas in this reference guide could quite easily be scaled up into a very sizeable business. Or if you prefer, you may just want to run your business as a one-man operation. It's up to you.

Here are a few tips on how you might like to use this guide...

1. Choose a category that appeals to you and look for a business idea that matches your knowledge or skills
2. Alternatively, go through the whole guide and make a shortlist of all the ideas that you are interested in
3. If some start-up capital is required, consider how much you would need as a minimum investment, and whether you can afford to proceed without going into serious debt.
4. Look for ideas that require little or no capital to help you get started. Many of the online business ideas and opportunities to make an extra income can be started on a very small budget.
5. Businesses that require a larger investment could be started from income generated from a low cost business idea as outlined above.

The 500 Ways handy reference guide does not go into great detail about any particular business but can be used as a starting point to find a business that will suit you. Once you have found an idea that appeals to you then you can do further research online to find out more information about the subject. For example, you can search for answers to questions such as "do you need specific qualifications to run a (subject) business?" or "how much capital is required to start a (subject) business? If specific types of equipment or supplies are needed you can also search for these online and establish the costs involved.

Should you still struggle to find a business idea that suits you, visit the [500 Ways](#) website where you will find many more business ideas and opportunities that may be of interest. The 500 Ways 'Business Opportunity News' [blog](#) is also being regularly updated with new business ideas and business related information that may be of interest.

Another good source of information is the [Digital Information Products](#) website where there are hundreds of business related ebooks available online. Some are available to buy but many of the ebooks are free to download.

If you like this free guide or if you have any business ideas that you would like to share please join us on Facebook at www.facebook.com/500ways

Agency business ideas

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Start your own agency for entertainers

Up and coming pop groups, singers, comedians, magicians and various other speciality acts could all benefit from your services. You must be well organised and have a good knowledge of clubs and other venues, as well as an eye for talent. Visit the clubs regularly, talk to acts which you would like to represent, make an appointment with them to discuss business arrangements, and leave them your business card.

Set up an agency for new artists and illustrators

Find work for them by arranging general exhibitions to promote their work and contacting suitable organisations and businesses who may consider using their talents. e.g. to illustrate promotional products, paint interior murals, etc. Also have a selection of prints made to sell through shops selling inexpensive art prints and original art.

Start a famous `lookalike` agency

Advertise for people who look very similar to well known personalities. Anyone who has more than a passing resemblance to high profile movie stars, tv stars, pop singers or even politicians should be considered and added to your books. Lookalike stars can be hired out for special functions, private parties, advertising, promotions, grand openings, and even films. As their agent you will need to work hard to find them jobs, but a reasonable commission should give you the incentive.

Start your own dating agency

Use your computer to store details of clients' interests, personal qualities, likes and dislikes plus a recent photograph. Arrange by phone/email for compatible members to meet. Charge an annual membership fee or service fee for each arranged date.

Become an agent for one of the major catalogue firms such as Grattans or Kays (UK)

If you have lots of friends, work colleagues and relations, it's an easy way to make extra money. All you need to do is show people the catalogue and take orders for anything they would like to buy. Commissions are usually around ten percent. Not a lot, but it soon adds up if you can build a good customer base with regular orders. Apply by post to whichever company you want to be an agent for. Catalogue firms generally advertise in womens' magazines and through widespread leaflet distribution.

Establish an agency for talented photographers

Sell their work on commission on the internet, or directly to publishing houses who require stock photographs. Specialising in particular subjects, for example, fashion modelling, motor car racing, trains, motorbikes, fishing, travel, etc., would be the easiest way to get started.

Become an agent for promoting local events

For example, travelling theatres, circuses, stunt shows, music events etc. Organising local advertising in newspapers, posters in shops as well as ticket sales. Charge fees on a commission basis.

Start an employment agency.

Keep updated records of a whole range of companies who can contact you when they need to find new staff. Also keep records and cv's of anyone who is seeking work in a particular type of job. When you have a match between job vacancy and job seeker, contact both parties to make suitable interview arrangements. Computerised records will streamline the whole process. Charge a suitable fee to employers for your service or apply for government funding.

Become a freelance sales agent

There's a lot of companies who are willing to use freelance sales agents, particularly if they only pay you a commission when you make a sale. If you have a gift for selling, you should consider working for three or four different companies, providing they don't have any rules or objections against you representing other firms. As a freelance agent this shouldn't be a problem providing there are no conflicts of interest. Representing different companies who offer the same type of goods or services will not be acceptable. Start by writing a letter to various firms who might consider your services. Many MLM (multi-level marketing) firms will be agreeable. Also contact companies selling mobile phones, computers, insurances and mortgages.

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Become an agent for actors and actresses

An intimate knowledge of film and theatre production companies is a pre-requisite of this kind of business opportunity. It's not the easiest vocation to break into, but those with determination and a flair for dealing with people, could find this business immensely enjoyable. Getting a foot in the door won't be easy. Try to gain experience first with an established agency. Learn the ropes then branch out on your own.

Start up a business that organises holiday home swaps

This involves holiday makers in the UK and abroad, who wish to save money by agreeing to exchange homes for a set period. As an agency, your role is to help others find the right type of home and location that suits both parties. You will need to keep detailed records and be able to arrange times and dates that are mutually agreeable. For this service you will charge a set fee to anyone on your books for whom you successfully arrange an exchange. Here is a business that can best be started and run using the internet for advertising and email for efficient business correspondence.

Set up a modelling agency

Having a good knowledge of what different magazine publishers require from a model and having a good eye for the right type of people could make this the ideal business. As an agent you will be responsible for finding work for the models by presenting them to designers, photographers, and ad agencies. An agent is also responsible for booking the jobs, billing the client, and eventually paying the models for their time. By finding the clients and handling all the details, the advantage to the model is that they can focus on modelling and not on the business end of things.

Become an agent for a loan company

Excellent commissions can be made from helping people arrange loans and mortgages. Your main task will be taking phone enquiries, gathering information and filling in application forms. To get started you will need to contact a loan firm that uses independent agents. You will also need to pay for a licence to operate as an agent. Once established, advertise in your local and regional newspapers.

Start an agency for selling private motor cars

This would involve a walk-in shop with a number of display boards showing photographs and details about each vehicle for sale, in the same way that estate agents advertise property. You can also include adverts for motorbikes, vans and motor homes. Charge a small one-off fee for advertising and a small commission on each successful sale. Your service could also include press advertising, listing all the cars you currently have on your books, plus your contact number. Collective advertising such as this will save your customer money from advertising the car themselves.

Start up a Kissogram, Tarzanagram or Strippergram service

Employ suitable part-time candidates and advertise your service through local newspapers. It's quite a popular service that is often called upon to supply an appropriate surprise act to suit various situations and events, in particular, hen parties, stag nights and retirement parties etc. Advertise in your local regional newspaper and make suitable arrangements for interested clients.

Become an agent for sports personalities

Certain types of sports people often need an agent to arrange publicity events for their clients, as well as matches and inclusion in tournaments. As with the film and theatre business, an in-depth knowledge of how the business works, as well as useful contacts, is desirable, if not essential. Start by looking out for new talent that could benefit from your experience and knowledge. Retain a list of useful contacts. In particular, good trainers who can help develop your clients skills to a high professional level.

Start your own escort agency

It's not as seedy as it sounds. Some people are quite willing to pay for a friendly or attractive partner to accompany them to a special event, or simply for the company during a pleasant evening out. It will not be part of the agent's service to provide escorts for any other reason. A specified fee will be paid by the client, from which a percentage will be paid to the escort. Attractive people with a friendly personality should be taken on, and be able to be available when requested at short notice. Advertise your service in the personal ad columns of selected magazines.

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Produce a series of prints based on oil paintings of popular scenic tourist areas

Sell through shops located in these areas on consignment, framing each batch of prints as further orders are taken. If you're artistic, do the paintings yourself. If not, consider commissioning a good landscape artist to do the work for you, or pay them a royalty fee for each print you sell.

Buy and sell African craft items from a suitable supplier, or import them yourself

Craft items such as this can be sold by mail order, or directly from a well designed website using good clear photographs of each item. You might also consider selling them at craft fairs and from a craft stall.

Draw cartoons for profit

Send your designs to art agencies and greeting card manufacturers who accept cartoon illustrations. (refer to your local library for books which list the names and addresses of firms who do this) Alternatively, send copies of your work to publishing houses who publish magazines appropriate to the subject matter of your designs.

Sculpt and cast miniature models based on local historical architecture

Moulds can be made from latex, and the models cast in plaster. Obtain a catalogue from a good supplier of mould making products. Decide on the best materials for the job, based on quality and price, and price your finished designs accordingly. You can sell your work through local gift shops, collectors' fairs or even car boot sales, depending on your scale of operation.

Produce a set of designs for house names and numbers

Paint them on sliced wooden logs and varnished. Alternatively, have moulds made to reproduce a wide range of designs that are easy to cast and paint. Have an attractive colour leaflet designed and place them door to door. You could also stack them in a display rack in garden centres that are willing to sell your products.

Design a new board game based on a popular subject that is currently in vogue

e.g. Computer genius trying to take over the world. Use your imagination, there are thousands of possibilities. Take a close look at what makes other successful games so popular and incorporate some of their best features into your own design in a new way. Careful market research is essential for succeeding in this very lucrative marketplace.

Make and sell customised glass display cases and wood bases

These are often used by collectors of models, antiques, coins, stamps and stuffed animals etc. Advertise your business in the appropriate subject-related magazines and display your products at collectors' fairs.

Specialise in sketching stylish ink drawings of private residences

Canvas up-market areas with a couple of pre-drawn, framed samples, in different sizes and prices. This will allow potential customers a choice in what they would like to pay. The easiest way to proceed would be to first take a good clear photograph of each building, and then sketch and frame each one in the comfort of your own home. When finished, notify each customer and arrange for delivery and payment.

Become a supplier of unusual craft items

Preferably things that are not widely available. One way to do this is by importing craft work from abroad. If you are a regular traveller abroad, visit as many arts and craft shops as you can to scout for new products. Build up a selection of the best ones and make enquiries on how to place an order. Once established you could regularly import and supply these 'exclusive' items to customers of your own.

Make soft toys for children

If you're a dab hand at sewing, why not put your talents to good use by designing and creating a range of cuddly toys? If you specialise, for example, making giant teddy bears, dogs or elephants etc. you could soon gain a good foothold in this popular market. Alternatively, you might prefer to make smaller items in larger quantities. Whatever you decide, try to think up something different and out-of-the-ordinary.

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Make small garden ornaments to sell at car boot sales and craft fairs

Or through any of the numerous small garden centres that don't already sell their own. New designs have the best chance to succeed, so don't be afraid to experiment with new ideas. Once established, you might consider expanding into the area of large garden ornaments and statues, for which there are ready-made moulds available.

Sell arts and craft supplies by mail order

Research firms who can supply you at minimum cost. Libraries often have trade reference books that list suppliers. Approach firms for a catalogue and prices using a business letterhead. Once organised, advertise your own mail order catalogue in arts and crafts magazines and on the internet.

Make small and unusual sculptures

Take apart old fashioned tape recorders and clocks etc. Use the small mechanical components to make the sculptures by sticking or soldering them together in various ways. Display them in small glass cases and sell by mail or through art galleries and museum shops.

Make and sell cross stitch pictures or marquetry pictures

If sewing or working with wood is of interest to you, then you may find pleasure and profit in producing pictures using these skills in the form of needlecraft and marquetry. Tools and materials are readily available from good craft shops and mail order dealers. Start with one of the ready-to-make kits until you feel ready to make your own designs. Eventually, you can sell your designs at craft fairs and by mail order through craft magazines.

Sell glass sculptures and ornaments from a craft stall

Track down small manufacturers and craftspeople who specialise in this type of thing. Many of them sell from their own craft stall, but if agreeable, you could sell them on commission in a different location. Another option is to sell by mail order or from your own website.

Make and sell chess sets plus small ornaments, such as birds and small animals

Set up a small production line, reproducing them from moulds. The finished items can be painted and glazed and set on a wooden base. Have them packaged in a colourful box and sell them through gift shops.

Sketch artists! Draw quick sketches of people, or funny caricatures

You could easily set up a profitable business, working on the street at popular seaside resorts, or even in busy shopping centres. You may need a license for this however. All you need to get started though, is an easel, a supply of pencils and paper, and a chair for people to sit on. Apart from this, it's just a question of talent. A fast turnaround at reasonable prices will ensure good profits.

If figure painting is your forte, consider running an evening class in figure painting

Nude painting is always popular. But all types of figure drawing are an option. If you can teach others how to draw and paint, or help them with their technique, then you can offer a worthwhile service. Contact your local colleges and community training centres to see what arrangements can be made.

Make and sell kites. There's a whole range of designs you can choose from

The Chinese have kite-making down to a fine art. If you can reproduce their designs and techniques, you could sell them by mail or from a craft stall. Study their designs as well as others by referring to the relevant books, and any other literature available. Check the library and the internet for starters.

Explore the art of glass painting

Yes, you can still buy specially formulated paint to use on glass, which gives you the freedom to produce any amount of different designs. First you should plan your designs on acetate using a permanent marker pen. The design is then attached to the other side of the glass, i.e. window/door etc., which allows you to paint your design on the opposite side. Promote your business to householders as a specialised custom design service, with every design being different. Alternatively, you could produce a range of designs which could be printed on to clear sheets of acetate, and sell them to customers in kit form, including the paint, as a 'do-it-yourself' craft product.

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Design and make novelty paperweights

For example, small resin-cast ornaments, painted realistically, based around unusual or topical subjects such as croquet, archery, fly-fishing or more conventional sports like golf and tennis. The object could be as simple as a golf ball and club head mounted on a plinth or cast inside a clear resin cube. Alternatively, miniature statuettes of sportsmen and women in suitable poses. Sell through sports clubs, gift and souvenir shops.

Reproduce old prints using glazing and cracking techniques

Any modern print can be made to look old by giving it a yellowy stained effect, glazing it with varnish a number of times, and hitting it with a cloth covered hammer or mallet to crack the glaze. Add a suitable antique frame and hey presto! you have an authentic looking old master. Easy to sell and easy to make.

Make and sell unusual 3d sculptures

Working in the material of your choice, i.e. wood, stone, resin, clay etc., there are infinite possibilities for creating your own special brand of sculpture. Look to nature for inspiration and change it in various ways to create something different and out of the ordinary.

Offer a personalised portrait sketching service

This would involve drawing pencil sketches from photographs of people or pets. Working from a photograph is generally easier, quicker and more convenient than drawing from a live model. Taking the photographs yourself would enable you to get a suitable pose and a good enough photograph to work from. Finished sketches can be framed, mounted and individually signed by the artist. If you're a good artist you can do all the work yourself, if not, employ a talented art student to do the sketches for you.

Design and make novelty picture frames in resin

Unusual frames can be cast in resin from suitable silicone moulds. Designs with cute little animals and other objects such as hearts and flowers etc., can be added to the frame and duplicated from a sculpted original. The copies are then painted to add an individual touch. The frames can also be made in unconventional shapes, such as star-shapes or heart-shapes to add a bit more originality to each picture or photograph. Materials can be obtained from specialist craft suppliers by mail order. Finished designs can be sold at art and craft fairs or through selected gift shops.

Make and sell large wooden insect ornaments that double as something else

For example, a grasshopper lamp stand, a beetle ashtray, a ladybird candlestick holder etc. There are many more ideas that I'm sure you can think of. Sell via craft fairs or direct to retailers at wholesale.

Make and sell dolls houses

There's an amazingly wide range of designs available from specialist firms who can provide you with plans and materials to build these much sought after toys. Alternatively, you could design your own and make your own parts if you have the right tools. Check the internet and the Yellow Pages to see what's available in your area, and check out the competition. Once established, if your work is good, you're most likely to get the best part of your business through recommendations.

Make and sell toy forts, castles, farms and garages

As an alternative to making dolls houses, you might prefer to cater for young boys. Although electronic gadgetry and games have become more popular these days, there's still a place for the more traditional toys, especially for younger children. As previously described with dolls houses, there are also a number of hobby plans available for wooden toys that cater for boys. Check out the latest issue of the hobby supply catalogue and associated craft magazines. If you're particularly creative, with a good eye for detail and drawing skills, you might also consider designing and producing your own plans for other craft workers to enjoy. Advertise and sell your designs by mail order.

Design and make small soft toy lucky charms

These could be made to hang from key rings or as a car accessory. Or, if made a little bit larger, just a simple ornament to place on a bedroom cabinet. Sell through gift shops and toy stores.

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Design and make photographic gift items that relate to a particular subject

For example, photographs can be incorporated into the design of plates, clocks, barometers, wooden trays, letter racks, key rings etc. Suitable subjects might include pictures of certain breeds of dog, horses, cats, classic cars, steam trains and numerous other possibilities. Sell your designs through craft fairs and gift shops.

Produce and sell mosaic picture kits

With attractive designs and suitable packaging, your kits could be sold for mounting in frames, adding to pieces of furniture, such as table tops and food trolleys, or even as special designs for incorporating into tiled walls and floors. Sell by mail order catalogue and through selected retail outlets.

Design and make unusual bookends

The possibilities are endless. To start with, think of something that would appeal to a large group of people, such as movie fans or football fans. Your design could be based on a pair of movie cameras perhaps or an icon from a famous movie. For example, a movie monster or a superhero. The bookends could be made to match or be completely different, as long as they work as a pair. Sell through various gift shops.

Buy and sell arts and craft books

Advertise for books through local and regional newspapers. Set up a regular stall at arts and craft fairs, car boot sales and flea markets. When you have a sizeable stock, start a mail order business and sell through craft magazines.

Make and sell hand carved fish and birds from wood

Woodcarving is a long established craft that's still popular today. Good examples will easily sell through craft fairs and gift shops. If you've never tried woodcarving before, but have a good eye for detail, why not give it a go? You may be pleasantly surprised. It takes a lot of practise to become proficient, but the end results are generally worth the effort. There are many more possibilities for proficient woodcarvers.

Paint or illustrate industrial landscapes

Specialise in one particular medium such as charcoal, pen and ink or oil colours. Organise an exhibition and sell your work direct, or sell through selected art galleries on a commission basis.

Make and sell garden gnomes

Still popular, particularly in Europe. There are hundreds of design variations on the well loved garden gnome. If you would like to make your own, find a supplier of existing moulds and materials and try your hand at casting. Each one you produce will need to be hand painted, so don't expect to sell a lot, unless you take on extra workers and set up as a fully-fledged business. Consider making your own designs and selling them through garden centres as well as craft shops and craft fairs

Frame and sell old prints from books

There's a vast resource of pictures in old and unwanted books that can be cannibalised and turned into attractively framed prints. All manner of subjects are available. From Artists' botanical sketches to painted Zebras. It's just a case of finding anything suitable. Almost any kind of interesting pictures can be framed to look even better. Apart from books, look at old magazines and calendars. Even greetings cards can be used for the smaller prints. Sell your pictures from a market or craft stall.

Produce and sell framed decoupage pictures from a craft stall

Alternatively, supply the kits by mail order for other craft workers to make their own. Decoupage is becoming more popular, and striking designs can be produced using this technique. If you would like to learn more, and find a list of established suppliers, check your local library or the internet.

Make and sell wooden wishing wells and wheelbarrows

These relatively easy to produce items make ideal ornamental objects for holding a colourful arrangement of flowers and plants. You can sell them at car boot sales and craft fairs, or you could even approach some garden centres if you think your designs are good enough. And can sell them in suitable quantities.

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Set up your own web hosting service

Not as difficult as it sounds. If you can design websites this is an ideal way to make extra income. With a reseller account and a reputable web hosting company behind you there will be ample opportunity to make a good income on a regular basis. You don't necessarily need to have any experience in web design, but it's an excellent way to provide an additional income to your service if you do. To learn more about setting up your own web hosting service using a reseller account then [click here](#).

Teach people how to build their own computer

If building and selling computers doesn't appeal to you, but you have the knowledge and patience to teach others, why not start your own evening class? There are many people who would love to have a go at building their own, but don't have the confidence to do it. Personal instruction is much better than trying to follow a magazine article, or read instructions from a book.

Got a website? Earn money as an affiliate

Join an affiliate program to promote the products and services of established merchants on your website. You do this by adding their advertising banners and text links to your site. A personal recommendation usually works the best. You can earn commissions ranging from 3% up to a massive 50% depending on which affiliate scheme you join. [Click here](#) to learn more about affiliate marketing.

Design a website that appeals to a large identifiable group of people

One of the main aims of an ecommerce website is to try and achieve a high level of sales that wouldn't ordinarily be achieved without huge expense. A shop on the internet has the potential to reach a worldwide audience, and is always open for business. However, any site that can attract a lot of visitors can also attract high advertising fees by helping promote other businesses. Your site doesn't necessarily need to sell anything to make money on the internet. Providing your site is hugely popular, you make it pay through affiliate sales or contextual advertising

Set up your own internet store without having to find a product to sell

It's never been easier! You can create your own eCommerce online store in a matter of minutes, stocked with quality merchandise and equipped with credit card processing, order fulfilment and customer service. [Click here](#) for more details.

Sell computer upgrades and peripherals

There are hundreds of computer fairs operating throughout the country each month. Thousands of visitors attend these fairs regularly to buy computer products, and save some money at the same time. If you have a good knowledge of computers and what goes into them, you might consider the possibility of starting and running your own stall at a few of these fairs on a regular basis. If you've never been to one, then don't miss out. Visit a computer fair as soon as possible to see how things are run.

Design and produce a website for advertising homes in your region

Charge a standard flat fee to private advertisers, which could be for a set period, or canvas estate agents to offer your advertising services for a specified number of their properties. As part of the service you could offer to take interior and exterior photographs of the homes being advertised.

Learn computer programming.

There's a huge demand for people with good programming skills. Particularly those with knowledge of Perl, C, Java, Javascript and Html. Courses are widely available, and finding a job in this field shouldn't be a problem for candidates who successfully qualify.

Use your computer and printer to make artistic prints

Modern colour inkjet printers and laser printers are capable of producing excellent quality prints these days, good enough to sell if the subject is interesting enough. These prints can then be framed and sold to friends and relations, or from an arts and craft stall, or even a market stall. You can produce your own designs or purchase from other companies which sell a range of designs on CD-Rom. However, be careful that permission is granted to reproduce and sell the designs that you buy.

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Buy and sell internet domain names

As you might already know, domain names are becoming more affordable and in some cases a valuable commodity in which to trade and sell. However, it is generally known that most of the best names have already been taken, but many more are still available and quite a large number which have already been registered, come back into the public domain, as previous owners fail to re-register them. The internet is obviously the ideal place in which to trade. Most domain names up for sale are available through online auctions. Check out Ebay and Qxl. To find out what names are still available go to [GoDaddy](#). You can also register a name through these sites.

Produce and sell a correspondence course in basic computer skills.

There are a number of people who, for one reason or another, prefer to learn this way. It could be that they are housebound or live too far away from a suitable training facility. A well produced correspondence course would help them solve these problems. Advertise the course in computer magazines and general publications that have a classified advertising section.

Buy and sell computer books by mail order.

There are thousands of books available that deal with a whole range of computer subjects. Whether it's a reference manual for a particular piece of software, a guide to computer programming, a book dealing with web design, as well as a wide range of other computer-related subjects, there's something for everything. But many of these books are often discarded or put to one side, once the contents are read and no longer needed. You could buy and sell these books through classified advertising. Or even set up your own stall at a market or computer fair.

Design a website that specialises in supplying model parts

For example, you could specialise in supplying parts, tools and accessories for model boat builders, as well as complete kits. Or perhaps a stock of items that cater for remote control racing car or aeroplane enthusiasts. Whichever area you deal in, compile an online catalogue of products as well as a printed catalogue and price list. Once established, you might also try advertising your catalogue and website in suitable modelling magazines.

Produce an e-commerce website selling seeds and bulbs

These are items which are widely available through gardening centres, but they also make an ideal mail order product because of their durability, ease of supply and low postal costs. And because not everyone lives close to a gardening centre, a mail order service dealing in these products makes it possible for people living in remote areas to obtain them quickly and conveniently by post.

Design a website that specialises in advertising used photographic equipment

A number of auctions have this facility but a dedicated site for photographers would be more attractive and useful for this purpose. Various articles, links with sites of photographic interest, news of new equipment, and information updates relating to photography, could become a popular source of reference to amateur and professional photographers alike.

Open a training centre that offers courses in computing

This might include courses in basic computing, programming and specific software-related tuition. For example, training in the use of Adobe Photoshop, Microsoft Office, Wordpress etc. When established, arrange to offer a recognised certificate of qualification for some of the courses where possible. Advertise in computer magazines.

Design a range of personal greetings cards

Each design can be adapted to use the name of the buyer. Using a PC and a good quality printer, a variety of designs could be used based around popular themes. See also the 'design and print' section for more ideas.

Design a website that sells or tracks down spare parts for cars

There is always a huge demand for motor parts and accessories. A site designed to find parts quickly for enquirers should prove immensely popular. A good knowledge of car parts and prices is a major requirement. One option is to specialise in a particular type of make. This narrows the field, but targets a particular range of customers which can sometimes prove more effective.

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Build and sell computers for profit

Although computers are becoming more affordable with very competitive pricing among the major dealers, there is still room for the `custom-made` specialist who can build (and repair) computers for a reasonable fee and a reasonable profit. Discounts for parts when buying in quantities of 10 or more will allow you to incorporate a higher profit margin, but also ensure that all parts come with a full 12 months warranty that you can pass on to your customers.

Start a website that caters for people requiring rented accommodation

There`s thousands of people at any one time seeking a place to rent, including students and people working away from home. In most cases these people will have access to the internet, either at college, university, or at home. A site that lists places of temporary accommodation would be very useful in helping people in these categories to find a place to stay. Charge a small advertising fee to landlords to make the site pay.

Join a Multi Level Marketing program such as SFI

These type of programs are rife on the net but SFI is one of the best and most respected. It is being advertised by literally thousands of SFI associates, simply because it works. It`s FREE to join and the benefits of being a member are truly awesome! When you sign up you will get your very own personally coded web site to direct people to, just like the one you`ll see if you [click here](#)

Set up an activity holiday centre for retired people who want to learn basic computing skills

Lots of older people with time on their hands are beginning to realise that computers are not just for the younger generation. Many are considering buying their own, but would like to learn more about them before taking the plunge. A holiday activity centre for weekend or midweek courses in basic computing and an introduction to the internet is sure to attract some interest. If you already have premises in a nice location with suitable overnight accommodation, this would be ideal for combining courses with a mini-holiday to bring like-minded people together in a relaxed and friendly environment.

Produce a website for selling books of a specific nature

For example, only deal in books of a certain category such as science-fiction and fantasy, history of the world war, photography, contemporary art, the history of the movies etc. Selling online will enable you to reach a much wider audience than you could ever possibly achieve from a `bricks and mortar` bookshop.

Buy and sell used computers

There are many companies who often need to replace their computer systems with new and more powerful models. The old ones, which in reality, may only be one or two years old, are then sold off at low prices. By contacting various firms and educational establishments, and letting them know that you buy unwanted computers in lots of five or more, you can often pick them up at bargain prices. They can then be cleaned up and sold for a profit. Liquidated stock and computer auctions are also a source of cheap computers. If possible, test each one before buying to make sure they`re working correctly, and re-sell through classified ads.

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Personalised stationery makes a really nice gift for someone who loves to write

If you can dream up some unique or unusual designs for letterheads, cards and envelopes, then bring it all together in a nice attractive package, you could quickly gain orders by selling them through gifts shops and stationery outlets. Study the market and see what's available, then imagine how you could make something better.

Print plans for hobbyists who like to make wooden toys or soft toys from fabrics

These are always popular. If you can come up with some imaginative designs that are easy to make, you could be on to a winner. You can sell them from a mail order catalogue with photographs of the finished item. Advertise in woodworking magazines, hobbyist magazines, and sewing magazines, depending on the type of market you're aiming at.

Start your own leaflet printing and distribution service

There are always plenty of new and well established small businesses who rely on leaflet distribution to inform prospective customers of their services. Tree surgeons, double glazing firms, take-aways (menu/price lists), decorators, to name but a few, will always find this service useful. Design and print three or four different sets of leaflets at a time and deliver them together to save on distribution costs. Advise clients to offer some kind of printed discount voucher to get the best response and increase sales. A good result would mean satisfied clients will return again and again to use your service.

Design and print calendars based upon an astrological theme

The two ideas go well together. Suitable photographs or illustrations could be accompanied by astrological predictions for each month. A successful design could sell well through card shops and stationers, or any other shop that sells calendars. Alternatively, send your designs to firms who specialise in printing calendars.

Wedding stationery is always in demand, so why not design your own?

Start small by using your home computer and printer, to offer a cheaper alternative to the expensive stationery supplied through printing firms. Use the best cards and papers you can obtain however, to achieve a professional finish. Once established, consider purchasing a hot foil printer and eventually a lithographic printer.

Start a regular newsletter for small specialised businesses

These are normally well received, and potentially very profitable. Sold by annual subscription, thousands of copies could be printed, based on a few well presented articles. Double sided, full colour printing on A3 folded into an A4 size publication normally works best. Full colour is expensive however, so stick to 2 or 3 colours with black and white photographs until success is assured.

Print I.D. cards in laminated plastic

Photo business cards and club membership cards can easily be produced using a good home computer and printer. With the right kind of software, a supply of materials and a small affordable laminator, you can be in business in no time. Canvas small businesses and clubs with a good selection of samples to gain orders. Eventually, you may get enough repeat business to concentrate solely on the design and print work. You could then employ a rep to expand the business further.

Painting by numbers can be a very absorbing hobby for some people

If you have the artistic skill, why not design pictures for those less talented who like the idea of painting, but need a helping hand? A painting by numbers kit, properly packaged and sold through art shop supplies, hobby catalogues and numerous other outlets, could turn into a very lucrative business.

Print and sell a range of signs suitable for commercial and industrial use

These might include signs such as 'No Smoking' 'No Parking' 'Private Keep Out' 'Staff Only' 'No Admittance' 'Representatives by Appointment Only' etc. Send a catalogue and price list to potential buyers in the commercial and industrial sectors.

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Specialise in designing and printing menus for pubs and restaurants

Produce a competitive price list and samples for mailing direct to potential customers, or canvas local businesses first to test your ideas and designs. If successful, you could eventually offer a print and mail service to customers nationwide.

A book of poems or speeches for special occasions makes a simple, but effective mail order idea

Advertise in national newspapers and magazines to gain the best response. Test the market first using tried and tested mail order methods. (Read `Secrets of Super Success in Mail Order`) This idea could also work even better as an ebook that can be sold online, downloaded and printed by the customer.

Start a novelty advertising firm to promote businesses in your area

Using a hot foil press, various designs and wording can be printed on to blank pens, matchbooks, diaries, coffee mats, motor tax disk holders, key fobs and numerous other novelty items. Equipment and suppliers are often advertised in the Exchange & Mart and various business ideas magazines. To gain orders, canvas businesses, clubs, pubs and any commercial or industrial firm that may be interested. Alternatively, compile a mailing list and send out brochures by direct mail.

Produce a range of prints of dogs, cats and horses for animal lovers

Pictures could be based on detailed pencil sketches or colourful soft pastels. Alternatively, oil paintings or watercolours can be used for the original design. Sell prints unframed by mail order from a catalogue. Framed or mounted prints can be sold through art shops.

Start a screen printing service specialising in promotional t-shirts

Art colleges generally have courses in screen printing and fabric printing where you can quickly learn the skills involved. You could start your business with simple homemade equipment and purchase the other tools required. Once established, more professional equipment can be obtained to increase quality and output. T-shirts can be used as fund raisers for clubs, as well as promotional work. In these cases they're usually printed in quantity. 25 to 50 prints on average, sometimes a lot more. Charging around £3 profit per shirt means the profits soon add up. To find out more about screen printing, search for 'Screen printing' on the internet or see what books are available from Amazon.com. or Amazon.co.uk

Design and print a range of academic and sports certificates for clubs, schools and training centres

Your home computer and inkjet printer is all you need to get started. When possible, also obtain a laminator for laminating certificates up to A4 size, and a guillotine for trimming the edges. Promote your designs and a custom design printing service by direct mail to suitable prospects.

Produce a range of classic car prints and sell by mail order

You could sell your designs through classic car magazines. If successful, use the same method to produce a set of prints illustrating performance cars and racing cars. High quality photographs and stylish illustrations of cars are always popular with car enthusiasts.

Design and print bookmarkers for souvenir shops

Most popular tourist attractions have their own souvenir shop. You could produce designs that promote each attraction on to bookmarkers made of vinyl, plastic or leather using a hot foil printing device. The shops will then sell these to customers, making an excellent reminder of their visit. For details on where to obtain equipment and supplies, check out the Exchange & Mart and printing trade directories, available at your local reference library.

Design and print limited edition screen prints to sell through art shops or on the internet

Screen printing is an easy way to reproduce your artistic ideas. Remember Andy Warhol? If you have never tried it before, check out your local art college for course availability, or find a good reference book in your local library. Alternatively go to Amazon and purchase the book `Water Based Screen printing`. Equipment and supplies can be obtained from specialist suppliers, and you can easily make some of the printing frames yourself.

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Personalised storybooks for children

If you can write, illustrate and tell a good story, one that appeals to the imagination of young children, then you have the potential to start a good business. Initially, a home computer and inkjet printer can be used to help you get started. Adding a child's name and picture to a story, using a suitable software package, should be straightforward enough. The hard part is marketing and selling the books. Mail order advertising is one option. Another is selling through party plan, or bookshops willing to take orders for you on commission.

Set up a screen printing service that prints magnetic vehicle signs

Many small businesses use small magnetic signs that stick to their vehicle's side panels or doors. Driving schools, plumbers, electricians, mobile mechanics, window cleaners etc., are just some of the wide range of potential customers you would be catering for.

Design and print humorous signs for the workplace

Funny poems, quotations and posters announcing new rules and regulations, are just some of the ideas that come to mind. Colourful caricatures of management figures with witty descriptions are another possibility. A suitable range of designs can be packaged in cellophane and sold through various outlets, such as gift and souvenir shops. Alternatively, canvass shops and offices with framed and unframed samples.

Provide a badge printing service

Badge printing machines can vary in price from the easily affordable to the extremely expensive, but if you're starting out on a low budget then it's still a potentially good business. You can start small and grow as the profits start to come in. Pin badges come in various sizes and are still fairly popular. Once you have established a steady flow of customers selling button badges you could also move on to plastic ID badges which are often needed for special events and exhibitions. Direct card printers are available that print directly on to the card surface. Other types of printer include re-transfer printers which print onto a re-transfer film which is then heat laminated onto the card surface. All types of printer and materials can be sourced online.

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Start a small haulage business using a van to deliver parcels and other medium sized objects

Cater primarily for local businesses. Operate your service to cater for delivery within a 100 mile radius or less. Canvas firms who already have delivery vans but may need extra help during busy periods. Leave a business card and/or leaflet with a contact number.

Deliver cars for money

Offer your services to car dealers who regularly deliver or purchase cars from the motor auctions. Also, individuals who are going on holiday but don't want to leave their car at the airport. Business cards and word of mouth are usually the best way to proceed. An insurance which allows you to drive any vehicle is also essential.

Start your own mobile advertising firm

A large van or car with trailer can be used to advertise firms in your local area. Using a set of 4 x 6 foot boards made up in an A-frame, or fixed to the side of a van, a number of large printed posters can be displayed on either side to promote local businesses. Charge a reasonable set fee for each day, with a slightly higher rate on busy days such as Saturdays and market days.

Become a driving instructor

In the UK if you are over 21 and have at least three years driving experience on a full licence you could train to become a driving instructor. It can be a bit stressful at times, but with dual controls fitted, it's not so bad. Training is available (for a price) at centres throughout the country. Once qualified, a good way to get experience is to start working for an established driving school. When you feel you're ready to take the plunge, you can get your own dual-controlled car and start up on your own. (note: qualifications will vary from country to country)

Start a delivery service for food shops to customers

The trend is increasing for people to order goods by phone or the internet, so more companies may consider using this type of service. An alternative to food deliveries might be a delivery service for florists or chemists.

Learn to become a chauffeur

There's still a surprisingly wide range of opportunities to take advantage of in this enjoyable vocation. An ever-increasing amount of wealthy people emerging on to the scene, who require personal drivers due to busy schedules, loss of licence, no driving experience, or perhaps the lack of inclination to drive themselves, means there will always be an opening for this type of job.

Pizza parlours and chinese take aways are often in need of delivery drivers

They generally take on part-time drivers for their home delivery service. Contact the shop manager or owner direct to ask if there are any vacancies. In most cases you will be required to use your own vehicle.

Start your own wedding car hire business

A white Rolls Royce or Mercedes-Benz limousine, with chauffeur, make the ideal choice for a wedding car. Although prices have fallen to an acceptable level for cars like these, they're not always easy to get hold of. Keep an eye in the Autotrader and Exchange & Mart motoring section, and use the internet car search sites if you want to strike lucky. Maintenance costs are generally the main problem, but a wedding car service can absorb these prices easily if run effectively.

Provide a chauffeur service for disabled people

You will need a specially adapted vehicle that accommodates wheelchair access. For a single passenger this could simply be a small high-top van with a ramp and side windows, or a suitably adapted mpv. For multiple passengers a mini-bus with a rear hydraulic lift would be required. Your service could involve regular shopping trips, as well the occasional day trips to other towns and cities. Before embarking on this type of business however, check what rules and regulations apply in your particular region or country. In some areas, if you are charging for your service, the law will require you to have a suitable licence for this purpose.

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Start your own `banger hire` business

Car hire has always been a popular service, but getting a business like this off the ground means a fairly hefty investment where new or late model cars are concerned. An alternative is to hire out older cars around about ten years old. You do need reliable cars though. Japanese cars tend to be more reliable than others, and parts for older models are relatively cheap now and easy to get hold of.

Become a taxi driver

Throughout the world there exists taxi drivers trying to eke out a living, and some of them are doing quite well out of it. Taxi drivers in popular tourist areas are particularly well paid, especially if they are working for themselves. You can easily learn the ropes by starting to work as a driver for a well established taxi firm (preferably a good one) and then you can plan to start your own business after gaining the experience you need . Taxi firms can potentially earn a lot of money particularly when they have built up a fleet of vehicles. There are certain regulations and licences needed to adhere to legal requirements however and these will depend on where you are located, but you can find out all you need to know from the taxi company you work for and through information you can find online and through local government departments and council offices.

Start your own recovery truck business

Recovery trucks for sale can be found online through various websites and auctions including ebay. Prices can vary enormously depending on the age and condition of the vehicle so it pays to do your homework first before buying one. This type of business has lots of potential though. You can provide your own breakdown service, you can recover stolen cars for the police, you can collect scrap cars that people want taking away or for a low fee that enables you to scrap them for a profit. If you have the space and mechanical knowledge you can also take dismantle cars for parts and sell them for profit as well as getting paid for the scrap metal value. Part worn tyres and alloy wheels can sometimes fetch more than you can get for the scrap value, thus doubling your profit potential. Parts can also be sold on ebay for a quick sale.

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Hire out scaffolding to small decorating firms and home d.i.y. enthusiasts

Many people need this type of service to carry out exterior painting and maintenance work. Offer a free advice and delivery service. Advertise in local newspapers and yellow pages.

Rent out DVD's, Blu-ray and CD music disks

Here is a service which can be run from home as a mail order club, or from a small shop. DVD's and Blu-ray disks are always popular and are ideally suited as a means of providing entertainment for hire. They need little storage space, they are very robust and also make an ideal mail order rental product because of their light weight. Obtaining stock is the main hurdle to overcome in the beginning, but once established the business can become self-financing.

Start a barbecue hire service

A lot of people who would like to have a barbecue, perhaps for a special function or party, don't always have the skills or equipment to deal with a lot of people. With a good quality mobile barbecue, and a suitable chef's outfit, you could hire yourself out and ensure the party is a huge success. Your services could also include supplying a selection of mouth-watering barbecue food products.

Buy and rent out decorating tools and equipment to d.i.y. decorators and small businesses

Items for hire should include steam wallpaper strippers, folding stepladders and planks, paste tables, paint sprayers and small scaffolding platforms. Advertise in the local press classified ad section.

Start a picture hire business

Attractive but inexpensive pictures could be hired out for an annual fee or a membership subscription to a picture hire club. Renters could be given the option to change the picture up to three or four times during the year for a small extra delivery charge. Build up a large customer base until the business is self-financing.

Start a business collecting, making and hiring out props and costumes

Anything suitable for film and theatrical productions. Props might include replica firearms, old fashioned lamps, telephones, pictures, vases, plaster busts, statuettes, clocks, reproduction furniture etc., A wide range of costumes could also be made available. Advertise in the trade magazines for theatre and film.

Start a special effects service renting out smoke, fog, wind and rain machines

Other possibilities might include masks, wigs, fake human parts and break apart props for film and theatre productions. An operator may be required to use some machines for safety. This service could be run separately or in conjunction with the props and costume hire business. Advertise in the same magazines.

Start a business that hires out computers to small businesses

You would have to include a maintenance contract to make it an attractive proposition. A short training course for employees, in the use of selected software, might also be included in your services. Obviously a good knowledge of computers is required, and how to repair them if they develop a fault. As business increases, extra staff can be taken on to cope with any technical problems, leaving you to take care of customer relations.

Start your own skip hire service

To get established, if you think you can find a regular supply of customers, arrange a contract with a skip hire firm to supply an agreed amount of skips per month to addresses you specify. Contacts with regular users of skips such as small building firms will be an advantage in making skip hire arrangements in advance. Your profits will come from suitable discounts and any extra charges passed on to your customers.

Set up a bouncy castle hire business

With a reasonable investment you could set up this fun business that is relatively easy to run and very popular with children, especially in the summer. You will need a large van as well as essential insurance that covers you for public liability. Advertise in the local press and Yellow Pages.

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Supply and rent out re-conditioned pool tables

Hire out to pubs, clubs, holiday parks, colleges and recreation centres. The tables could be purchased secondhand from various sources, re-covered and painted where required. They could then be rented out on a six-monthly or annual contract. Contact prospective customers direct and advertise in the Yellow Pages.

Set up a secretarial services agency

Hire out qualified secretaries on a temporary basis as well as offering a typing service. This could include specialised letters such as legal documents, debt collection letters etc., for which there are ready-made templates available. Plus, a service for preparing correctly formatted manuscripts for authors, typesetting services for direct mail letters and other publicity material, and any number of other general activities that a secretary or typist is called on to do. Advertise your services to local businesses through direct mail and Yellow Pages.

Start your own sunbed hire business

There`s plenty of competition, but with effective advertising you can build and create more business. You`ll need at least three or four sunbeds to start with to make it worth while, plus a van to collect and deliver to customers` homes. Advertise your service through local newspapers and Yellow Pages.

Start your own tool or plant hire business

From light industrial equipment, such as electric and pneumatic drills, jigsaws, bandsaws, compressors, spray equipment, right up to heavier gear such as cranes and excavation equipment. The tool and plant hire business can be as flexible as you want it to be. There`s plenty of money to be made, but starting small and ploughing your profits back into the business for further expansion would be the safest route. The alternative is to make a fair-sized capital investment in heavy machinery. An option only worth considering if you have the contacts ready to pass their business your way.

Start a business hiring out wedding clothes

This would include wedding gowns, bridesmaid dresses, top hat and tails for the groom and best man, and kilts, for those who prefer the tartan touch. Advertise in the Yellow Pages and appropriate magazines.

Hire out marquee tents for special occasions and events

If you can afford to invest in a sizeable marquee tent, you should soon be able to recoup your investment by hiring it out for special functions. Make sure that your vehicle is large enough to carry the size of tent you acquire, as delivery and collection will be part of your service. Advertise in the Yellow Pages.

Start a business that hires out skiing equipment

I`m not suggesting you go and set up business in some far off snow-covered mountainous country. Though this is one possibility. Another is hiring out water skiing equipment and jet skis at a popular seaside or lakeside resort.

Set up a dune buggy hire service

Adventurous holiday makers love this type of thing. There are other exciting leisure options also. How about hiring out quad bikes? If you`re first in line to discover a suitable area of beach or countryside that has not taken advantage of these simple but lucrative business ideas, then why not be the one to make it work? Obviously, these kind of businesses require a certain amount of capital to get started, and they can be seasonal, but the rewards can be high enough to make it worthwhile.

Hire out keep fit equipment

Items such as exercise bikes, rowing machines and home gymnasiums can be hired out for a specified period, to cater for people who would prefer to work out at home rather than go to a gym.

Start a business that hires out canoes

Again, this is one for the popular tourist resorts. You could set up this business wherever there`s a suitably large, but safe river or lake. Being an experienced canoeist is almost obligatory, as many people will also require some tuition. If you don`t have the experience then you`ll need to hire someone who does, to make this business viable.

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Start or help run a business that hires out small rowing boats in popular riverside areas

Regular visitors and many tourists love to relax on a summer day, floating along on the river. And it's surprising how much they will pay for this privilege. To start up a business like this on your own will almost certainly require permission and permits, so contact the local authorities to check how to proceed. A boathouse to store the boats will be required, but first check for any existing buildings that can easily be converted to suit your needs. This business is mainly seasonal so take this into consideration when deciding whether it's worth your time and investment. Advertising is generally just a matter of placing a few good signs in the right place near where your service is run.

Set up a local hire service for renting out vibrating plate equipment

Vibrating plates have become extremely popular recently and have effectively shown that they have many health benefits such as toning muscles, reducing aches and pains and help in losing weight when applying a suitable diet. Amazon sells a number of models at very reasonable prices. Visit [Amazon.com](https://www.amazon.com) or [Amazon.co.uk](https://www.amazon.co.uk)

Start a mini bus hire service

This one requires a hefty investment but it is possible to start with just one vehicle and re-invest profits to expand the business. Eventually you could offer a van hire service as well, or start as a van hire company and expand into the mini bus hire. Either way, try to cater for various types of customers, and if you can arrange regular contracts with local businesses then your business will be in a good position for future growth.

Offer a local car hire service

It's difficult to compete with the national and international car rental companies but it can still be profitable to provide a local car hire service and build up a good reputation in your area. If possible, try to provide a selection of vehicles that cater for different types of customers who may be seeking either a manual or automatic vehicle, as well as a range that consists of compact and economical cars through to prestige and luxury cars. You might even prefer to specialise in the more luxury vehicle end of the market if you have the funds available.

Provide a bodyguard hire service

Hiring a bodyguard is not just a privilege reserved for the rich and famous. There's a variety of different types of people from various backgrounds that will be keen and willing to hire a bodyguard for certain occasions and events. These can include politicians, businessmen and women, local celebrities, actors and singers, and even just normal people who are in danger from known enemies and need a trained professional to receive personal protection. There are special bodyguard training courses you can go on if this is something that interests you. Do a search online for 'bodyguard training course'.

Set up a classic car hire business

Classic cars are in demand for all types of different events. One of the more lucrative opportunities exists in hiring out classic cars for film or TV productions that are filming a story set in the period when these type of vehicles were commonly available and often seen on the roads.

Fancy dress hire

One of the easiest types of rental businesses to set up. Fancy dress hire companies can be started on a relatively low budget by providing the most popular types of costume for parties and special events including marketing events. Costumes can also be made and hired out to local drama schools and theatrical companies. A good time to start this type of business is leading up to the Christmas period when there will be more opportunity to find customers and start to see profits rolling in which can then be re-invested to expand the business even further.

Rooms for hire

I'm not just talking about renting out your spare bedroom here, though that's one option if you have a spare room and you want to make some extra regular income. No, I'm referring to rooms that can be hired out for various events such as business meetings and seminars. Or in some cases, if the room or hall is large enough, you can arrange indoor flea markets or jumble sales, or arts and craft or antiques fairs etc. If you have access or can arrange a set fee to hire these type of function rooms and can find suitable clients who are happy to hire the rooms for their specific purpose then you could easily pocket the difference between the hire price you pay and the price you pass on to the client. If you're in the enviable position of actually owning the premises, then that's even better.

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Start your own ironing service

If you don't mind ironing and you're good at it, you should consider offering this, often detested chore, as a service to others. You could start by placing an ad in the local paper and display a small poster/leaflet in local shops until you build the desired number of customers. It's definitely an advantage to be able to drive so that you can offer a collection and delivery service.

Become a window cleaner

There will always be a demand for good window cleaners. It's a surprisingly well paid job and the opportunity to expand and take on extra workers will certainly increase your profit potential. Materials and equipment to get started is cheap and easy to come by. There are a number of firms who specialise in window cleaning supplies. Check the yellow pages for details. Build up a round calling door-to-door. Leave leaflets advertising your services for those not at home. Ensure you give a good service to your customers. You'll be surprised at how recommendations will help you gain more business. For beginners there are some very good Dvd's available which demonstrate the basic and advanced techniques used by window cleaners - see [Window Cleaning Essentials](#)

Set up a mobile car valeting service

Mobile car valeting is another cleaning service that could easily be started without too much difficulty. You can offer more than just a 10 minute car wash. Using good quality upholstery cleaning materials and polishes, plus a powerful vacuum cleaner, you can offer a full valeting service, with a smile. Like window cleaning, aim to build up a customer round and always be on standby to answer emergency calls when your customers need a quick clean.

Offer a 'timesaving' service

This would be a service designed for busy people whose lifestyles leave them little time to do the more mundane everyday jobs in life. These might include walking the dog, cutting the grass, cleaning the dishes, doing the ironing etc. Charge for your services by the hour, and customise your service to suit the requirements of each individual.

Sell and fit electric showers

An ideal business for an experienced electrician. Some plumbing skills also required. However, if you have the right qualifications, specialising in the fitting of electric showers, as opposed to wiring a house or plumbing in a bathroom suite, is generally a fairly quick job and very profitable. Arrange an account with suppliers of the most popular models. Advertise your services in the local newspapers.

Offer a gutter cleaning service

Gutter cleaning is a dirty job, but someone has to do it. If you don't mind heights and getting your hands and clothes dirty, this could be a good way to make extra cash. The autumn is the obvious time when people need this service most, to clean out leaves that clog up the guttering. But an all year round service can still be offered. If you have enough knowledge to repair or replace broken guttering, this can be a useful additional service.

Supply and fit curtain poles

This is a simple and easy to set up service that anyone who is handy with a drill, a screwdriver and spirit level can set up almost immediately. All you need is a reliable supplier of curtain poles plus some screws and rawl plugs and you're in business.

Start a mobile video and video game service

If you like the entertainment business this could be just up your street. A small van is needed plus a good stock of popular titles. Canvas your chosen area with a supply of photocopied list of titles you have available. Don't forget that not everybody finds it easy to nip down to their local video store. Building up a regular round of reliable, satisfied customers is what you should be aiming for.

Offer a service for painting or creosoting wooden fences

Canvas suitable areas where there are plenty of fences evident. Ensure that you do a really good job and build up a large annual round of customers. Obtain your materials in bulk to get the best discounts.

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Set up a house cleaning service

House cleaning is a chore that some people hate doing, or simply haven't got the time or energy to do. A well organised person could start a business hiring out cleaners to do the work for these type of people. You could work on your own, but a far more profitable approach is to employ a number of cleaners on a part-time basis, and keep a percentage of the fee charged, for your business. Work can also be obtained for cleaning offices and shops. Ensure the people you employ are totally trustworthy and good workers. Always pay a fair wage for a fair days work.

Specialise in interior design and decoration of children's bedrooms and playrooms

This type of business will require you to have a good sense of colour coordination and design, and a good idea of what children like to have in their rooms. To do this you need to find out what things are of interest to the particular child whose room you are designing. Preferably a design that will please the parents too. After all they will be the ones who are paying your fee. Let your imagination run free however, and come up with at least three or four designs that might be suitable. The parents can then decide which one to choose.

Start a house sitting service

This would be an ideal business for a mobile couple who are not tied down with property of their own. Its a business which involves you living in and looking after other peoples' homes. It's designed to provide a way for people, who are regularly away from home, to have some measure of security and peace of mind that their property is being looked after and kept in good order. References will be required as proof of your reliability and trustworthiness. This will be easier to substantiate once you have some experience behind you.

Supply and fit smoke detectors to homes

Find a reliable wholesale supplier, canvass housing estates for work, leaving leaflets for people not at home, and advertise in the local press. Once the business is running successfully, consider offering the same service for small businesses.

Offer a service fitting security locks on doors and windows

If you're a handyman, this should be a fairly simple business to start up and run. As with smoke detectors, you will need to canvas for work as well as advertise in the press. One of the benefits worth mentioning to homeowners is that when security locks are fitted throughout the home, the householder can usually get an extra discount on their home insurance.

If you're good at laying tiles, start a floor tiling service

Floor tiling is generally easier and quicker to do than wall tiling, due to the larger size of the tiles. With the right equipment, tile cutting even around awkward shapes will become easier the more jobs you do. The main thing to remember is that with wooden floors a suitable flexible cement and grout must be used to avoid tiles cracking afterwards. Learn all you can about how to plan a layout and calculate the amount of materials and time it will take when estimating jobs. You'll also need a good knowledge of what kind of tiles are available, to help customers who need advice on choosing the best tiles for the job. Advertise your service in the local newspapers and through tile suppliers who can recommend you to their customers.

Start your own business fitting security lights

An experienced electrician would find this business easy to start and run. Even a competent do-it-yourselfer, with enough knowledge of electrics, shouldn't find this business too hard to set up. First find a supplier of a good range of security lights and fittings, get familiar with their products, then advertise your service through local classified ads and door-to-door leaflet distribution.

Small removals is a service that's always in demand

Particularly in the larger towns and cities. A 'man with a van' (preferably a large box van) collecting and delivering items such as fridges, cookers and 3 piece suites for people might find this a good little money earner. You will need to be properly insured of course to cover against accidents and breakages. Contact your local insurance broker for details of public liability insurance etc. Advertise your services in the local paper, shop windows and leaflet distribution.

Home services

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Start your own wheelie bin cleaning round

Using a small van, a mobile industrial pressure spray unit, plus suitable detergents, you could gradually build up a monthly round for cleaning household wheelie bins. The smell from some bins can be pretty disgusting. Not everyone cares to clean them themselves. A cleaning service is therefore useful, and a large, regular round means good profits. Remember the old saying? Where there's muck there's money.

Paint garage doors

The good thing about this service is that it is easy to set up and find customers. You can easily spot the garage doors that need re-painting just by looking around any neighbourhood. If you keep your prices right then finding customers who are willing to pay you should be fairly easy. The main selling point being the fact that a newly painted garage door enhances the appearance of a home and adds perceived value. Anyone who is currently in the process of trying to sell their home, but desperately needs their garage door painting, (or any other part of the exterior for that matter) is even more likely to be a good potential customer. (look out for the 'For Sale' signs) This business requires a bit of door knocking or leaflet distribution for effective results but can be well worthwhile.

Build patios for home improvement customers

If you have the knowledge and experience of building a patio, laying garden paths, erecting garden walls or fences, you could start a home improvement business offering other people the same type of service. Start by advertising in the local press and through leaflet distribution in suitable areas.

Offer a service for fitting dado rails, delft racks and replacement skirting boards

Your main business would be catering for homeowners, but some small businesses may also require your services. If you're handy at woodwork this is a fairly simple business to get started. Materials are easy to obtain and reasonably cheap to buy. Most of your profits will come from your labour charges. Advertise in the local press and through door-to-door leaflet distribution.

Train to become a carpet fitter

After training and some background experience, start your own carpet fitting business. You will need all the right tools, plus a van to collect and deliver new carpets. Contract out to established carpet firms where possible, or advertise your services through the local newspapers.

Learn to fit gas and electric fires and fire surrounds

If you don't already have the experience, try to get work with someone who does. When ready, set up your own supply and fit fireplace business. There's a good profit in fitting new fireplaces, and more and more people seem to be needing this type of service. Advertise locally in the press and Yellow Pages.

Start a furniture removals business

Start with a large box van and move up to something larger when business increases. You will need to be fit and active if you want to do the lifting yourself, and you're going to have to pay someone to help you, as many items require at least two people to lift them. Also, keep with you an appointment book and mobile phone until you can employ someone to answer telephone enquiries and arrange appointments. Ensure that you're properly insured by taking advice from a reputable insurance firm.

Supply and fit spas and hot tubs

There are a number of specialist firms who can supply spas and hot tubs at discounted prices. An experienced plumber would find this a lucrative market to get into as the profit margins on these products can be very good once labour charges are taken into account. Any structural work needed to accommodate such items can be sub-contracted out to a builder, unless you can do the work yourself. Advertise your business in up-market home improvement magazines. Check manufacturers trade directories for suppliers, available at your local reference library.

Home services

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Start and run a house clearing service

Quite often family relatives and sometimes estate agents require the help of firms who offer this type of service, to clear houses of elderly or deceased people. Unwanted items need removing and disposed of, sometimes within a period of short notice. Occasionally, items need clearing and sent to an auction house. Whatever the case, if you're fit and healthy and have access to a large van, this can be a good part-time business to get into. Contact estate agents and auction houses, leaving your business card or leaflet, and advertise your services in the local newspapers.

Start a mobile car servicing business

A good mechanic would find this an easy business to set up and run using a small van with a supply of popular items such as air filters, oil filters, spark plugs and brake pads etc., for servicing peoples' cars at their own home. It can save people time and money, and if you give a good service you will find that it won't take long to build up a good round of regular customers. In fact, you could very well expand your business and operate more than one vehicle for extra profit.

Start a mobile exhaust fitting service

This could be run along similar lines to the previous business idea. However, you would need to have quick access to a wide range of exhausts for different models. These could be provided by another firm at trade prices. Ideally, you should be able to take a customer's order by phone, deliver and fit the exhaust the same day, if possible, to make this type of business a success. Only qualified mechanics, or people with a lot of experience fitting exhausts should attempt this type of work, due to the dangers involved. Advertise your service in the local newspaper for best results.

Supply and fit wrought iron gates

Find a manufacturer who can quickly make up gates to your own specifications at trade prices. Your job would simply involve advertising your service, showing the customer a few designs, getting the orders, taking the measurements and fitting the gates when ready.

Supply and fit interior replacement doors

When people need new doors fitted, they usually call in an expert. There's a knack to hanging doors correctly. It's not too difficult to learn, providing you also have some experience in woodworking. Interior doors are generally supplied without handles, locks or catches. This means you'll need to know how to fit them accurately, and with the right tools. But once you master the art of fitting doors, you shouldn't find it too difficult to get enough work to keep you busy.

Start a sewing alterations service

Anyone with good sewing skills could set up a business like this, providing you have the patience and confidence in dealing with customers. Work might include alterations to dresses, skirts, suits, and soft home furnishings like cushions and curtains. You can work part-time from home or set up a full time business. Apart from local advertising and recommendations, extra work can often be obtained through offering your services to drapery stores, clothing shops and dry cleaning services.

Start a garden maintenance service

Build up a regular round of customers whose gardens need to be kept in good order. This will involve weed control, pruning, hedge trimming, lawn mowing and edging. A good knowledge of plants and flowers will also be useful, where customers require advice and help in planning a colourful garden.

Carpet cleaning is another service which is constantly in demand

A good income can be made from this type of business for those determined to succeed. The secret to success in the carpet cleaning business, as with many other types of business, is hard work. Try to do as many jobs a day as you can fit into your schedule. This means plenty of advertising, lots of referrals and effective door-to-door canvassing techniques. Obtain the best industrial type cleaning equipment you can afford, suitable for upholstery cleaning as well as carpets. If you do a good job on peoples' carpets they will often ask if you can clean their 3-piece suites as well. Make sure your prices remain competitive and plough some of the profits back into the business if you wish to expand further. Once you are firmly established, consider taking on contract work for customers who require regular cleaning services, such as restaurants, hotels, clubs and pubs.

Home services

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Supply and fit power showers and shower cubicles

This can be a business run on it`s own, or as an additional service to fitting jacuzzis. Here again is a business idea that could be set up and run by a competent plumber with some electrical experience, or vice versa. Obtain literature and price lists from trade suppliers or manufacturers, and work out any additional standard costs involved before adding your fitting charge. Advertise your services in the local papers and selected magazines.

Start a pet food delivery service

Pet food deliveries can be useful to many individuals, particularly old and disabled people who find difficulty in getting out and about. Obtaining a stock of popular foods at competitive prices will also be an advantage. Build up a round of regular customers until you have enough to keep you busy. A small to medium-size van will be required. Add an attractive sign and graphics on the side displaying a catchy business name and contact number will help you get noticed.

Supply, fit and replace or repair television aerials and satellite dishes

You don`t need any special qualifications, just a head for heights. Fitting aerials mainly involves selecting the appropriate aerial, fixing brackets to walls and chimney stacks, or a loft stand, pointing it in the right direction and running a length of coaxial wire to a TV aerial socket. Materials can be obtained from certain electrical wholesalers or in larger quantities from manufacturers. Advertise in the Yellow Pages and the local press.

Mail order and direct mail

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Start up your own business selling health foods and supplements

There's a huge market now for health products, most of which are light and easy to post, making them an ideal mail order product. Decide on which products to sell, there's a vast range available. Find a reliable source of supply, then have a mail order catalogue printed. Advertise in health and leisure magazines. One way to get a feel for this type of business is to work as an agent for one of the leading companies then set up on your own.

Sell your products on eBay

Almost anything can be sold on eBay. For example, books, videos, software, collectibles, toys, craft work, prints, posters, paintings, the list is endless. New or old, if you have something you would like to sell, or an idea for starting your own mail order business working from home, eBay is the perfect solution. It's free to join and you can register at their website. [Click here](#) for UK sellers or [click here](#) if you live in the USA

Start a mail order business supplying materials and equipment for artists and craft workers

Build up a catalogue of products and advertise in arts and crafts magazines. Compile a list of suppliers by researching trade directories at your nearest reference library. See below for recommended reading on how to start a mail order business.

Supply jewellery making products by mail order

Making custom-made jewellery is a popular pastime for many people. A good reliable supplier can quickly build up a regular customer base, with repeat orders almost guaranteed from satisfied customers. As with all good mail order suppliers, ensure your catalogue and price list are professional in appearance and competitively priced. Try to cater for a wide range of tastes. Promote the art of jewellery making as an immensely enjoyable creative art, perhaps including one or two good illustrated 'how-to' booklets in your catalogue as well.

Candle-making supplies are also good products for selling by mail order

Sell to craft workers who like making candles for pleasure or resale. Write to the main suppliers listed in any of the craft workers trade directories, requesting prices and supply information, using a business letterhead. Compare prices before deciding what to stock. Compile a catalogue and advertise it in the most suitable hobby magazines.

Start a mail order business selling books and videos relating to astronomy

Other items could include a regular newsletter and special offers on telescopes for beginners. Advertise in the appropriate science and astronomy magazines.

Start a printing service that you can operate by mail order

This way you can reach a wide range of customers. Include a free design service in your price. Specialise in short runs of between 50 and 500 to cater for new small businesses. Your products could include letterheads, business cards, leaflets, compliment slips, ID cards, membership cards and invitations. Inkjet and laser printers are now very affordable and easily up to the job for short print runs. Good design work can be produced using a desktop publishing package such as Serif Pageplus. Advertise your services in the Exchange & Mart and business magazines that are aimed at new businesses.

Start a mail order business selling sketches of famous people

Movie stars, sports personalities, pop singers etc., are all suitable subjects. You could also specialise in doing a range of sketches of one particular person. e.g. Elvis, John Wayne, Marilyn Monroe, or someone as equally famous. Advertise your catalogue of sketches in film and entertainment magazines.

Sell business manuals and self-improvement guides by post or online

This was once one of the most popular mail order businesses to get into, but selling books as digital ebooks has more or less taken over. Unfortunately, not everyone succeeds at it. Like every successful mail order business, it takes careful planning and good organisational skills. Anyone can buy a money-making guide with reproduction rights and try to sell it. The best way to get started however, and save yourself some money, is to write and self-publish your own manual, and see if it sells. You could even try selling it over the internet. [Click here](#) to learn more.

Mail order and direct mail

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Sleep products are a good mail order seller

Any device that helps people sleep or reduces snoring will prove popular in the classified ads. Invite people to send for further information and send them an illustrated brochure or catalogue by return post. Use a persuasive sales letter to accompany your price list and order form, extolling the benefits of a good nights sleep. You can advertise these products in practically any popular magazine with a large circulation.

Sex aids are another big mail order seller

As you might guess, not everyone feels comfortable going into a shop to purchase these type of products. A mail order business set up to provide an exciting range of naughty toys and sexy underwear can hardly fail, providing a sensible approach to business is maintained. Seek out suppliers through suitable trade directories and magazines such as `The Trader`

Produce a series of audio cassettes for helping people relax

There are numerous books written about stress relief and self-hypnosis techniques. Take the best advice from these books and devise a script that can be recorded on tape to help people overcome their tension and fears. Use a professional speaker with a relaxing voice if your's is not suitable for the job. Sell your tapes by mail order in various magazines with a classified ads section.

Specialise in selling sports videos by mail order and on the internet

Compile a catalogue of boxing videos, football videos, snooker, cricket, motor-racing and rallying videos. In fact any type of sports video that features famous or exciting events to bring a little nostalgia into peoples lives. That's what makes these videos sell well. Advertise predominantly in sports magazines and through your own ecommerce website on the internet

Sell science-fiction and fantasy books, plus American and British comic books by mail order

Contact suitable suppliers and import the American titles on a regular basis. You could also deal in the thousands of secondhand titles which are also available, and buy and sell them at the various comic book fairs around the country. Advertise your mail order service through subject-related magazines.

Write and self-publish a guide to caring for houseplants

Alternatively, a guide to growing outdoor plants or vegetables should also prove popular. If you would rather sell existing titles on these subjects, then see what's available and find a reliable source of supply. Compile a catalogue and advertise in the classified ads of gardening magazines.

Become a mailing list broker

Lots of companies rent mailing lists for use in their direct mail advertising campaigns. Many firms who sell mailing lists either sell them by direct mail themselves or through mail order advertising. The easiest way to get started is to compile your own. If this sounds like a business you would like to try out, then you can find out more by searching online for 'compiling and selling mailing lists'

Start a business selling self-improvement Dvd's and CD's

This could be a suitable companion business to selling self-improvements books, as mentioned previously. Videos might include titles relating to keeping fit, losing weight, self-defense, make-up techniques and so on. CD's might include topics such as `How to stop Smoking` etc.

Produce a mail order catalogue specialising in chess pieces

Include various designs and d.i.y. kits for people who want to make their own. Find a supplier who can provide you with all the necessary products. These will include latex moulds, casting powder, resins, colour additives, felt for the bases etc. You might even try designing your own chess pieces using a material such as clay to make the master. Advertise your catalogue in hobby magazines. Any chess sets that you create yourself can be sold through gift and souvenir shops.

Mail order and direct mail

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Design a new stress-relieving gadget for busy executive types

Product ideas should be kept simple, but fun to use. It should obviously offer some kind of therapeutic physical or mental relaxation. Prototypes could be made from wood and other materials readily available. Finished products could be marketed by direct mail. Use a professionally printed full colour leaflet, extolling the virtues of your new stress-relieving device.

Produce a business directory listing firms offering specialised services

For example, services related to computing, web design and advertising. Promote it by direct mail to various businesses. Have it professionally printed and sell advertising space to selected firms appearing in the directory.

Start a business duplicating Dvd's and Cd's in bulk

As an extra service, consider selling blank dvd's and cd's in bulk, plus dvd and cd cases. You could also provide a design and print service for the cover design and printing of the customer's dvd and cd inserts.

Produce a mail order catalogue for selling a range of magic tricks and practical jokes

These type of products are always popular but not so easy to get hold of. A well prepared catalogue advertised in the right places could prove to be a good little money-spinner.

Start a business selling ladies lingerie by mail

These type of goods are extremely popular and very easy and light to post. They make an ideal mail order product. Advertise in various magazines and send a fully illustrated catalogue to all enquirers. You could specialise in lingerie designed for ladies with a fuller figure. For the more adventurous, a nice range of sexy underwear should bring in a good response. When business picks up, you might consider expanding into other areas of sexy clothing to suit a variety of different tastes.

Sell telephone answering machine messages on tape

There's a wide range to choose from, including famous lines from movies, humorous remarks, poetry and lots more. Check the internet for supply sources. Advertise in the free classified ad papers and other general publications.

Produce an audio CD training course in salesmanship or how to run an online business.

If you have experience in either field, this could be a very profitable project. CD's are easy to duplicate in large numbers once the master CD's have been produced. Compile the course first, using outside help if required, and hire a small recording studio to produce the master CD. Use a CD/DVD duplicator (available from ebay sellers or online retailers) and duplicate your CD's with professionally printed cover designs on each one. Advertise by mail and online and send them to customers in a well designed package, along with any necessary printed material.

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Design and make a selection of fancy dog collars and coats

Items like these can be made from various fabrics and leathers. Produce a range of sizes for different breeds of dog. Have them carded and packaged in cellophane bags for display. Sell through pet shops and mail order advertising.

Design and make knitwear for babies and young children

Research current trends to see what sells best. Consider using knitting machines for producing items in small quantities and sell through baby shops, childrenswear outlets and by mail order.

Start a business making fibreglass models for commercial use

These models would be used for promotional purposes. For example, a large ice-cream cone could be used alongside the company sign of an ice-cream shop or manufacturer. Or how about a large bowling ball to represent a ten-pin bowling alley. The possibilities are numerous. If you think you have the skills or knowledge to set up this kind of business then make a business plan first and do some market research. Customers can be found through canvassing commercial and industrial outlets.

Make coffee tables in wood using attractive glass-covered tabletop designs

For example, use reprints of ancient geographical maps or floral designs. Alternatively, use small attractive wall tiles or a mosaic design. Sell your finished products through local furniture retail outlets.

Make and sell pine bathroom fittings

Items such as towel rails, toothbrush and toilet paper holders, bathroom cabinets and even bath panels are not beyond the skills of a good amateur carpenter. Kitchen accessories such as spice racks and plate racks are also worth considering. The nice thing about pine is that it can be stained in a variety of colours to suit a customer's colour scheme.

Design a range of comfy beds for pets

Although there are various designs already available, you may be able to come up with something new that might catch on and find a space in the market. Sell your designs by mail order and through pet stores when firmly established.

Use wood logs to make rustic bird tables, bird boxes and feeders

Look at the designs already on the market and make yours better or different. Set up a small production line to make them in quantity and supply garden centres direct. If you're not too ambitious, and just want to make some occasional extra cash, sell them at car boot sales.

Design and make colourful quilts for children

Use your imagination and come up with a range of designs that you think will sell well. Ask a number of children what kind of design they would like to have on their quilts. Combine their ideas to produce something new and exciting. Sell your designs by mail order, through shops, or your own market stall. If you can't make the quilts yourself, employ part-time workers to make them for you.

Produce your own range of electrical leads

Find a supplier or manufacturer who can supply you in bulk at discounted prices. Put together sets of extension leads in various sizes and number of sockets. e.g. long leads with one socket for gardeners and do-it-yourselfers, 2-way and 4-way sockets for indoor electrical appliances etc. If you're a whizz at soldering, you might also consider producing a variety of audio and video leads. Package your products in cellophane bags with a stapled header card advertising your product and business name. Sell through hardware stores or market stall.

Design and manufacture wooden souvenir items to sell through gift shops

Items such as letter racks, book-ends, coasters, place mats, etc. Incorporate photographs of scenic beauty or well known landmarks into the design.

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Design and make fashion clothes

If you're artistic with a good fashion sense, you can design your own range of clothes for men or women or both. Have your designs photographed using attractive models and sell them direct from your own website on the internet. Or through shops who are willing to sell your designs. Suggested reading: 'Pattern-making for Fashion Design' available from [Amazon](#)

Design and manufacture giant soft toys

Children love to see giant teddy bears, tigers and elephants, and the multitude of other possibilities. And although not all parents are willing to pay the extra price for the extra-large versions, toy stores love to display them. Produce a set of designs and samples. Create a catalogue and price list, and send them out to prospective buyers.

Manufacture imitation wooden beams

Obtain a small number of real wooden beams, preferably oak, and make fibreglass moulds from each one. These moulds can be filled with polyurethane foam, with a suitable colour additive, and used to reproduce copies of the original. You can then sell them by mail order or through selected diy centres.

Start a business making shower curtains

Using a selection of colourful waterproof materials, aluminium tubing, and plastic curtain rings, you could quite easily manufacture your own brand of shower curtains. Poles used to support the curtain should be adjustable to fit different size bathrooms. These can be made similar to the extendable clothes poles found in some wardrobes. Package your designs in a box and sell them through diy shops and bathroom centres.

Design and make stencil kits for d.i.y. Decorators

The type used for adding flowery patterns etc., on walls. Check to see what the latest designs are on the market and try to come up with something different and original. Package and sell your own brand of kits through d.i.y. hardware and wallpaper stores.

Start your own business designing, making and selling bath robes for men and women

Design them with a special motif. Contact all clothes shops and department stores that sell nightwear to see if they will stock your designs.

Design your own range of personalised mugs

The type which have a variety of popular names printed on them. Have yours produced by a pottery firm who can supply and print your designs in specified quantities. Find a supplier of suitable display racks or a firm that can make them up for you. Have them placed in gift shops and other suitable outlets.

Design and make ottomans for children's bedrooms

Use colourful fabrics that appeal to children. Ottomans make excellent storage places for bed linen or as a place to store the children's toys. Aim to sell them through furniture stores and shops that specialise in bedroom furniture and accessories.

Start a business making and selling waterproof cushions for garden furniture

Many types of garden seats are purchased without cushions included, which often means they aren't as comfortable to sit on as they could be. A business selling custom-made waterproof cushions should be able to find plenty of customers. You could also make replacement covers for sun lounges, which become too worn or dirty to clean. Advertise in home and garden magazines and sell by mail order and through local advertising.

Make and sell fancy dress animal costumes

These could be full-size adult or children's costumes in a variety of designs. Costumes can be made for pantomimes or carnival processions, as well as private fancy dress parties and other functions. Some costumes can be hired out, as well as being sold. Advertise your service in the Yellow Pages, on the internet and through magazines specialising in leisure and entertainment pursuits.

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Start a business selling loose cushion covers and arm rest covers for three-piece suites

An assortment of attractive designs can be made, either for individual custom-made orders or a catalogue of standard non-exclusive designs. Custom-made orders will obviously be more expensive, as standard designs can be made from material bought in bulk at higher discounts. Advertise your service in local newspapers and through mail order.

Manufacture and supply a range of wooden gates in various sizes

These could be tall side and back door gates, small single garden gates, small double driveway gates, as well as large garage gates and even field gates. You don't need to be an expert carpenter to get started, you can employ someone else to do the elbow work while you organise the marketing side, getting orders through canvassing and advertising. After all, most successful businesses are built up through good managerial skills, not through doing everything yourself.

Make and sell denim clothes and accessories

If you're a dab hand at sewing, consider making denim bags, hats, purses, money belts, shopping bags or even waistcoats out of denim. Items made to a high standard will sell through clothes shops and market stalls. Canvass suitable outlets when you have a set of samples and designs to show.

Design, make and sell aprons in various styles.

Cookery aprons, woodworking aprons, waitresses' aprons are some of the immediate options that come to mind.. Designs can be frilly, chequered, humorous or practical. But the main point is, there's a wide range of possibilities. For someone with sewing experience this could be the perfect small business to set up. Products could be sold through various shops or direct to businesses such as hotels and restaurants who require these items of clothing.

Make and sell big soft hand puppets for children

Use your imagination to create a range of your own designs. Like the Muppets and Sesame Street, your designs could vary in size from medium to very large. Approach toy stores to sell them in quantity or by mail order through selected magazines.

Design and make humorous novelty caps to sell through souvenir shops

These might include way out designs such as giant eyes growing out on stalks, or a miniature oasis with palm trees. Let your imagination run riot. Simpler designs with funny messages could also be added to the range.

Start a business making and supplying leather belts to mens and ladies fashion shops

Belts in different colours with a variety of buckle types could be made in different styles. If you have never tried making leathers goods before, contact a craft supplier to find out what is involved and what materials are available.

Make and sell wood dog kennels and scratch posts for cats

These are items that are not too difficult to make by someone with a little woodworking experience. But they are also the type of things that are always in demand by pet owners who are quite happy to pay for them rather than attempt to make them themselves. Other wood items such as rabbit hutches and bird cages could also be considered. Sell your designs through pet stores or by mail order from advertisements placed in pet magazines.

Design and make doggie quilts for dog baskets

For someone who prefers sewing to working with wood, here's another idea for pet lovers. For dogs (or cats) with their own basket, a soft warm quilt is one way to pamper them, using designs which add a nice touch. For instance, a quilt for dogs could have a cover with printed pictures of bones or various breeds of dogs on it. Other designs can be left to your imagination. You could sell your products by mail order or through pet stores.

Design, make and sell maternity wear for expectant mothers

Here is an area of clothing where your designs will be up against less competition, but could still be sold through numerous outlets throughout the country. It's also an opportunity to provide good designs by mail order through selected magazines, with a more easily identified target readership.

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Make and sell wooden stilts for children

Here's a simple idea for anyone who likes making things from wood. Children love to play on stilts, and to make it more interesting you might try to come up with some unique and colourful designs, rather than plain wood. For example, painting black and yellow stripes on them like the colours of a honey bee, or painting lizard scales on them, or alternatively, try adding something extra such as flashing lights which look great in the dark.

Design and make wood climbing frames for children

Try to produce inventive designs that encourage children to use their imagination. For example, some frames could be made in the shape of an aeroplane, or a rocketship. Paint them in attractive colours and sell them through a mail order catalogue.

Start a business making and selling mirrors

You could start by putting mirrors into various frames of standard sizes to enable you to purchase stocks of mirror glass in discount quantities. Sell them direct from a stall or at trade prices to various shops, if you can get big enough orders. Further possibilities might include the supply and fitting of large mirrors into peoples bathrooms and bedrooms to create the illusion of larger rooms. You might also consider finding a trade supplier of mirrored wardrobes and supply and fit these as well.

Manufacture a range of headboards for beds in traditional and classic designs

Padded headboards and wooden headboards are probably the easiest type to begin with. Also consider expanding into making complete beds such as single and double slatted pine beds, bunk beds and even four-poster beds. An industrial unit would be ideal for such a business. Start by making contacts and taking orders from small furniture shops and work your way up.

Design and produce a range of novelty candle holders

Various designs can be made from wood, metal or resin, depending on your preference. Sell your designs through craft suppliers or make your own candles as well and sell through gift shops.

Make and sell wedding dresses

A talented seamstress could make a good part-time income from creating high quality wedding dresses working from home. Designs can be based on the customers own individual taste from a range of existing designs or custom-made. You can either work for yourself or for an established bridal wear shop. If you're really ambitious you could always make it your goal to open your own shop and work full-time.

Make and sell oven gloves and ironing board covers

Simple ideas, but when sold in quantity to retail outlets, a small business could easily be built up into a very profitable business in a fairly short time.

Start a business manufacturing stone slabs and wall bricks for gardens

For someone with plenty of energy, this is a business which can be started part-time, at little cost, and quickly develop into a lucrative full-time business. To get started you simply need a few moulds and some raw materials for mixing and casting. As a place to work, a large garage or small rented unit would be ideal to start with. It can get a little bit messy, so you'll need a place where you're not going to be disturbed. Your finished products can be sold direct to the public from an illustrated leaflet, and by advertising a delivery service. Or when you can reach a regular high volume of work, through various building and gardening supply firms.

Make and sell novelty clocks

It may surprise you that making your own clock designs is not as complicated as it sounds. Inexpensive clock mechanisms, complete with hands can be purchased and used in any type of picture design you can think of. There's already been star trek clocks, exotic car clocks and numerous other designs made using simple flat picture backgrounds on a wooden base. Plates with pictures have also been used to produce clocks on plates. If you can think up something new and interesting, there's no reason why you couldn't make and sell your own range of clock designs.

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Design and produce a range of car seat covers and car boot liners

Once a set of basic templates are produced to suit a variety of seat designs, it's mainly a choice of which materials to use. Industrial sewing machinery will be required and a reliable source of material suppliers. Sell your products direct by mail through illustrated display advertisements in selected car magazines.

Produce and sell home decor products in plaster

Items such as ceiling roses, doorway arches, columns, statuettes and even fire surrounds can be produced using plaster moulds. Check the internet for suppliers of equipment and materials. Create your own catalogue of products and sell by mail order and local advertising.

Make and sell your own brand of honey or jam

Design your own label, find a reliable supplier of glass jars, package and sell your products through small retail outlets until you can establish a reputable business and good profits. If you want to expand further, and sell a higher volume through supermarkets, plough your profits back into the business by setting up a production line and taking on extra staff as well as investing in suitable machinery. Suggested reading: `Jams, Preserves and Other Edible Delights` by Sara Paston-Williams (available from [Amazon](#))

Set up a business making a range of self-supporting hammocks

These can be made using strong metal or wooden A-frames linked together. Sell by mail order or supply garden centres at trade prices. Have illustrated leaflets printed for each model.

Set up a business making and selling small wood products

For example, tidy trays, tool boxes, bread boards, candle holders, mug trees etc. Using a suitable woodturning lathe and a few power tools, a capable woodworker could quickly set up a small manufacturing business turning out products in various types of wood for selling through hardware stores and gift shops. With a range of high quality products you might also consider supplying a chain of larger stores. Supermarkets and department stores usually have a section which sells these type of products.

Make and sell upholstered footstools

Another idea for the woodworker who also has some experience of upholstery. Not as popular as they used to be, but still a saleable commodity. Good quality designs can be sold through small furniture stores and department stores.

Make and sell leg warmers, scarves and woollen hats for children

Using colourful designs which appeal to children, your products can be sold through children's clothes shops and department stores with a children's clothing section. Start small selling through local shops at first, then if successful, expand your business by taking on extra workers and more efficient machinery.

Design and manufacture work overalls

If you have experience in the clothing business, either through factory work or shop management, you should have enough inside knowledge to know what equipment is required to set up a small production line in turning out overalls suitable for various type of businesses. Orders can be taken for custom-made designs, including sewn-on business logos or identity tags. Start by canvassing local production firms. Expand the business by taking on extra staff and purchasing more machinery.

Make and sell wooden coat racks with brass hooks

Here's a simple product that almost anyone can do with a few simple tools. Pieces of wood about 2ft x 6in (60cm x 15cm) and chamfered edges can be stained or coloured and have four brass hooks screwed to them to make rather elegant hall coat racks. Similar designs can be used in various sizes and shapes for different rooms. A further possibility is to make upright coat and hat stands in a modern design using 2 x 2 timber. With a little imagination new design ideas can be dreamt up to produce something out of the ordinary. One idea that springs to mind, which I saw in a catalogue recently, was a vertical coat stand that was made and painted to look like a giant pencil. A great idea for a children's room.

Manufacturing

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Make and sell your own brand of sauces

As an alternative to the previous example, you might try producing your own sauce mixture, and package it in bottles. Obviously, as with any form of food manufacturing, a good knowledge of food hygiene and preparation is essential. Follow the same procedure as previously described by canvassing small retail outlets first, then larger food stores when turnover reaches an appropriate level.

Design and make small fluffy animals that double as air fresheners for cars

Design them so that they hang on a chord or spring and stick to car windows using rubber suckers. Sell them via ebay or on a wholesale basis direct to car accessory shops and petrol stations

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Set up your own digital goods internet store without having to stock your own products

It's never been easier! You can create your own eCommerce online store in a matter of minutes, stocked with quality merchandise and equipped with credit card processing, order fulfillment and customer service. [Click here](#) for more details.

Design a website that appeals to a large identifiable group of people

One of the main aims of an eCommerce website is to try and achieve a high level of sales that wouldn't ordinarily be achieved without huge expense. A shop on the internet has the potential to reach a worldwide audience, and is always open for business. However, any site that can attract a lot of visitors can also attract high advertising fees by helping promote other businesses. Your site doesn't necessarily need to sell anything to make money on the internet. Providing your site is popular, you have the chance to make it pay through affiliation.

See the [step by step guide to creating a popular website](#)

Publish an online newsletter for specialised information

Sell by annual subscription, thousands of copies can be sent online with practically zero cost. Use the services of a mailing list manager such as server.com. Useful articles and other specialised information could be sent monthly to subscribers. The more valuable the information you supply, the higher the fee you can charge for subscription.

Start an online business selling specialised products

You're far more likely to succeed selling products online if you deal in a specialised market. For example, items such as custom-made jewellery, pet products, motor sport videos, telescopes, rare coins and a myriad of other niche markets could be sold from a website that targets people interested in these things. You could also provide a regular newsletter and special offers to keep prospective buyers up to date with news of new items being made available.

Buy and sell internet domain names

As you might already know, domain names are becoming more affordable and in some cases a valuable commodity in which to trade and sell. However, it is generally known that most of the best names have already been taken, but many more are still available and quite a large number which have already been registered, come back into the public domain, as previous owners fail to re-register them. The internet is obviously the ideal place in which to trade. Most domain names up for sale are available through online auctions such as afternic.com. To find out what domain names are currently available to register go to [GoDaddy.com](#)

Sell your products on eBay

Almost anything can be sold on eBay. For example, books, videos, software, collectibles, toys, craftwork, prints, posters, paintings, the list is endless. New or old, if you have something you would like to sell, or an idea for starting your own mail order business working from home, eBay is the perfect solution. It's free to join and you can register at their website. [Click here](#) for UK sellers or [click here](#) if you live in the USA

Design greetings cards to sell online

If you're artistic designing a range of greeting cards you can sell online could easily produce a useful source of income. Using a PC and a good quality printer, a variety of designs could be produced based around popular themes. You could also offer a personalised design service. Each design could be adapted to use the name of the buyer. See also the design and print section for more ideas.

Already have a website?

Join an affiliate program to promote the products and services of an established merchant on your website. You do this by adding their advertising banners and text links to your site. A personal recommendation usually works the best. You can earn commissions ranging from 3% up to a massive 50% depending on which affiliate scheme you join. There are a number of affiliate networks set up that provide comprehensive details of a wide variety of merchants who operate an affiliate scheme through the network provider. Commission Junction and Linkshare are two of the better known ones and both have a good reputation. [Click here](#) if you want to learn more about affiliate marketing.

Online business ideas

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Success from mom and pop websites

The internet provides the ideal opportunity to enable people to work from home. There are already thousands of people making a living from their online businesses. All you need is one good idea that is suitable for promoting on the net. You can find out how others have achieved success and are making big incomes online by [clicking here](#)

Make money completing online surveys

Take a look at the [Survey scout](#) website where you can find out how hundreds of companies are willing to pay you for your opinions! It doesn't matter whether you're retired, a work-at-home mom, student or anyone else looking to make extra cash, Survey Scout will show you how you can use this useful service to make an extra income.

Start your own internet membership site

Some of the largest content rich sites found on the internet today now offer both free and paid membership areas for the content they provide because specialised content is a hot item on the Internet today. It's also been predicted that it will continue to grow in popularity. A 'paid membership' site can reap big rewards to those who can provide specialised content. You can learn more about this growing trend by clicking here ...

[Learn how to build your own membership site for free](#)

Make money from helping others save money

Everyone wants to save money on their telephone bills and a UK company called 'Just Dial' offers exceptionally good discounts for anyone using their service. It's a good way to make an extra income and can be promoted online and offline. [Click here](#) for more details.

Sell ebooks with resale rights

Creating your own ebooks can be very rewarding but also time consuming. Getting resell and reprint rights to existing tried and tested information products is a quick and easy alternative. Once purchased you can resell them for 100% profit. Do a search on Google for 'resell rights'

Join a reputable MLM program such as SFI

MLM programs are rife on the net but SFI is one of the best and most respected. It is being advertised by literally thousands of SFI associates, simply because it works. It's free to join and the benefits of being a member are truly awesome! When you sign up you will get your very own personally coded web site to direct people to, just like the one you'll see if you [click here](#)

Buying and selling through online auctions

A net auction business is a low-cost and low-risk way to dip your toes into the online world of e-commerce. Doing business with people through a net auction enables you to reach an easily identified target market. People who are interested in the items you deal in might also be interested in the same hobby, subject or collectible items that you are which can make it a rewarding and enjoyable business to be in. You can learn more about making your net auction sell with the free ebook ['Make your net auction sell'](#)

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Start your own home visit hairdressing service

An experienced hairdresser can make a good part-time income from this type of work. Lots of people prefer to have their hair done at home, for various reasons. Disabled people and older people especially can benefit. Advertise in the local paper and shop windows until your business builds up through recommendations. Being able to drive is an advantage, but not essential.

Become a children's entertainer

If you have the talent and imagination to make children laugh, this could be the job for you. Whether it's dressing up in a clown's outfit, juggling, or doing magic tricks, a children's entertainer can make a good part-time income from doing parties and special events. Perfect your act and advertise in your local edition of Yellow Pages. You might also consider getting an agent if you can't find the work yourself.

Train to become a masseur or masseuse

When qualified, you can start up your own practice, work for an established firm, or offer a home visit service. Check the local colleges and the internet for training courses available.

Start a cake decorating business

Cake decorating is the ideal home business for a work at home mum. There's always plenty of potential customers who are looking for someone who can provide this type of service. Wedding cakes, birthday cakes, special events and functions, children's parties, anniversaries etc are just a few that spring to mind. It's the perfect business if you're a creative person and you love to bake. There are some legal health requirements you will need to comply with, but other than that it should be plain sailing. No special education is required to set up a cake decorating business, but if you need to hone your skills you might want to consider taking a professional cake decorating course first. Do a search online for courses near your location.

Train to become a chiropodist

If working with people's feet doesn't bother you, and the satisfaction of helping others is on your priority list, this could be a good business opportunity. Pay is reasonably good, particularly when self-employed. As previously mentioned, training courses are generally available. Alternatively, you could train to become a beautician or manicurist or a combination of all three.

Start a child minding service

With suitable qualifications, you could do this on your own. However, there's more potential in building a business which enables you to farm out the work to others, while taking a percentage of the hire fee. To get started you will need to interview candidates who should have previous experience of this type of work. Compile a list of suitably qualified people who you can call on at short notice. Start by advertising your service locally until you build up enough work through recommendations.

Set up a business that specialises in organising weddings

All the services required for people's weddings, including the church service, the wedding car, photographer, reception room, mobile disco and catering would all be arranged by you, taking the pressure off the bride and groom's parents. Good organisational skills, are of course, essential. Advertise your services in the Yellow Pages, local newspapers and bridal shops.

Become a consultant for people who need debt counselling

Some people are hopeless at organising their finances. If you have good skills in money management, this could be a suitable business opportunity. Further information on the subject can be found at <http://credit.about.com/money/credit/>

Set up your own practice as a health consultant

Courses in reflexology, osteopathy, iridology, homeopathy etc. can be found on the internet. Once training has been completed and suitable qualifications have been achieved, you could set up on your own, or gain experience first with an established practice.

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Take a course in hypnotherapy

If successful, set up a personal service helping people overcome their bad habits and phobias. In many cases, hypnosis has helped rid people of their bad habits, such as smoking or biting their fingernails. It's also been useful in overcoming personal fears, such as fear of spiders, fear of open spaces and fear of heights etc. Being able to help people with these problems can be a very satisfying and lucrative profession. If this sounds like something you would like to do, check the internet for courses available.

Start and run a personal home help service

Busy people, elderly and disabled people often require help in their home to do the cleaning, washing, cooking, ironing and general household chores, which they either don't have time to do themselves, or can't because of their incapacity. Advertise your services in the local press.

Become a personal keep fit trainer

This is a service that seems to be becoming more and more popular. It's not just for the rich and famous. A lot of people are much more health conscious these days and are prepared to pay for the privilege of getting expert help in the privacy of their own homes. If you have good communication skills, qualifications and have suitable experience in working in health clubs, you will be particularly suited to this kind of work. A lot of your appointments will come through recommendations, but also advertise in your local newspaper.

Set up and run a home shopping service

If you don't mind shopping for other people, here's a simple business idea that can benefit those who are housebound through disability. Good organisational skills are required to keep track of each client and their list of requirements. To make it worthwhile, you'll need a few customers and you need to be able to handle more than one shopping list at a time. Having a small van or estate car will make things easier. Build up a weekly round of about ten clients or more and set a minimum handling charge for each trip.

Train to become a practitioner in acupuncture

Alternative medicine is becoming increasingly popular throughout the world, and acupuncture is perceived to be one of the most effective cures to a variety of ill health conditions. There are courses available where you can learn acupuncture, as well as a number of other techniques in alternative health care. Check the internet for details.

Start a home buyers information service

One of the problems with moving house is that you can never be sure what your neighbours are going to be like. They could be noisy or have mischievous children terrorising the neighbourhood. There may be other numerous drawbacks too. Unacceptable periods of busy traffic, smells emanating from nearby farms or industrial complexes, things that never come to light until you move in. Some individuals are making a good living from offering a service which provides a detailed report of these types of problems. They make a regular survey of the area at different times throughout a specified period. The information and service they provide can often make a big difference in the home buyers final decision as to whether to buy or not. This is a business that is simple to start and run, but the hours can be unsociable.

Photography

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Photograph attractive scenic landscapes in popular tourist locations

Have them enlarged, professionally mounted and framed and sell them through gift shops. Build up a reputation for producing stunning photographic landscapes. Retain the copyright to your work and contact an agency to sell your photographs to suitable publications.

Set yourself up as a wedding photographer

If you have the expertise and talent to create professional quality pictures of people, this could be the ideal job. It takes patience, creative flair and good organisational skills, particularly when dealing with crowds of people. It also carries a lot of responsibility, which is reflected in the amount you can afford to charge.

Suggested reading: 'The Art of Wedding Photography: Professional Techniques with Style' available from Amazon

Specialise in food photography

Your clients might include catering companies, food magazines, restaurants, cake decorators, and food manufacturers who supply the trade. Previous experience is preferred, but a good photographer can soon learn the 'tricks of the trade'. (substitutes for real food are sometimes used to achieve the desired result)

Handy with a camcorder? Why not produce a set of DVD's based on classic fairy tales?

Using a competent actor reading from a book, accompanied by overlaid illustrations in selected parts of the story, a high quality video production can easily be achieved. Have the actor read direct to camera, surrounded by an appropriate, well designed set. Ensure good sound recording levels are maintained and film on the best quality tapes. Preferably digital. Editing could be done in post production on your own desktop video computer, or through a post production house. Package and sell by mail order or through selected retail outlets.

Glamour photography is always popular and appealing to many amateur photographers

One way to make it pay is to hire and arrange location shoots, along with agency models, and advertise glamour shoots in the popular photo magazines. Charge an appropriate fee to cover all expenses and retain the profits to expand your business. Aim to attract a minimum group of at least five or six amateur photographers per shoot. Larger groups can be organised, depending on facilities and location. Once established you might prefer to employ your own models to save on agency commission fees.

Produce a set of DVD's that show how to use popular computer software

Desktop publishing, database, spreadsheet and word processing applications, as well as the wide variety of graphics and web design software, are all suitable candidates. Using a good TV card enables the computer output to be recorded directly to digital video tape or dvd using a dvd recorder. Use someone with a good recording voice to narrate the instructions. Any required editing can be done with a suitable video editing package such as Adobe Premiere.

Photoglazing on to plates is always popular

Particularly with doting parents who like to keep treasured photographs of their children. A photographer could offer this service as a sideline, or simply glaze other peoples' photographs. Affordable equipment is readily available, with materials generally available direct from the equipment supplier. Subject matter needn't be confined to children. Groups of people, horses, pets, cars, or anything remotely photographic can be transferred.

Transfer your landscape photographs on to plates and sell through gift shops

(see photo glazing on to plates above) Tourists are always on the look out for something attractive and useful. What better way to remind them of their holiday?

Another way to sell your photographs to tourists is through postcards and slide sets

Postcards don't need to be confined to pretty landscapes either. Humorous images of various subjects are gaining in popularity. Check out your nearest gift and souvenir shops to see the choice on offer. Card shops should also be considered as another good source of revenue.

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Promotional videos for new bands and solo artists are becoming more popular

There are good opportunities for talented camcorder owners to make some serious cash in this growing market. The high quality of computer-based desktop digital video editing solutions puts professional quality video making within easy reach of more and more people. If you've got a head full of ideas in this direction, why not turn them into reality by starting your own video company? Promote your business to artists agents and through music magazines.

Produce a regular newsletter or magazine aimed at photographers

Make it primarily a magazine for people who want to make money with their camera. Articles about photographic techniques, business opportunities, money-making ideas should be a regular feature. Plus an index of useful contacts such as photographic agencies and publishing houses. Sell on subscription to interested people. Rent a mailing list of photo enthusiasts and promote your idea by direct mail.

Design and produce calendars

A well designed calendar can be sold through shops and also be used as promotional material for businesses. A good calendar is an all-year-round advert for companies who send them to their customers. Business names and addresses can easily be added to calendars with space for additional printing. Canvas firms or retail outlets with your best designs. Samples can be used to take orders before printing in quantity is arranged.

Child photography is a tried and tested business opportunity

Whether it's the traditional school photograph, or a privately arranged photo session, this area of photography will always be popular. A good child photographer will never be short of work. If you think you have the skills and knowledge to be successful, don't be put off by the competition. Produce a good portfolio and advertise your services. Having a studio of your own is a definite advantage, but natural outdoor photographs can be just as effective. If your budget is restricted you can always hire a studio when the need arises.

Record special sports events

For example, marathons, athletic meetings, golf tournaments, motor rallies. Package and sell them by mail order in specialist magazines. Include specific details of when and where each event took place. This will have the added advantage of appealing to people who were at the present event.

Combine your photographic and computer skills

It will open up a whole new world of opportunities. One idea is to produce dvd's that will sell to tourists. Imagine being able to provide a disk full of beautiful images of popular tourist resorts. In particular, areas of outstanding beauty and historical interest. Images might include castles, historical landmarks, statues, stunning scenery, local craft workers, famous buildings, the list is endless. Background information could also be included in the form of a text file or PDF document. With a CD writer you can start by making your own. An attractive CD case is essential to catch the eye of potential buyers. Sell through tourist information centres and local gift shops.

Produce a DVD on how to become a better driver

Use sequences that demonstrate how not to drive and how to drive correctly. Educate drivers by testing their knowledge of the highway code using questions and answers based on this subject. Sell the dvd's by mail order and through driving schools on commission.

Photograph and sell framed pictures of private residences and public houses

Canvas up-market areas with suitable samples to show prospective customers. Offer a choice of two different sizes and a choice of frames. Take payment on delivery to ensure the customer is happy with the picture. If not, you can always take another photograph.

Specialise in industrial photography

Many companies require photographs of their plant or premises for inclusion in promotional material, as well as framed photographs for the workplace and exhibition purposes. If you can make a boring subject look interesting, so much the better. Stark, black and white industrial landscapes, enlarged and framed, always make an interesting subject for artistic prints. Promote your services direct to companies, using a well designed brochure.

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Teach photography at evening class

A good photographer, with experience in darkroom processing, could pass on his knowledge to enthusiastic beginners, and those who need to go a little bit further with their favourite hobby. Although digital photography is rapidly taking over traditional techniques, amateur photographers still get a thrill at seeing their photographs slowly but magically appear in the developing tray. If darkroom facilities aren't available, you can still concentrate on the techniques of taking good photographs, with a little bit of processing theory thrown in for good measure.

Start a mail order business selling photographs of trains or aircraft

The photos have to be good enough for framing, and you'll need a good knowledge of what type of subject sells best. However, if you can take photographs which are dynamic and of a high quality, they are bound to catch the attention of the thousands of train and plane enthusiasts throughout the world. Sell your work on the internet and through specialist magazines.

Arrange trips for nature photographers

This could range from simple bus trips to nature reserves, right up to a full blown safari holidays. Start small, but aim for bigger things. This idea has huge potential if set up and run professionally. If you're an experienced traveller and have intimate knowledge of the best places for nature photography, you've got all the qualifications to make this business a success. If not, expanding the business will depend on how quick you can learn, and how good your organisational skills are.

Start a video service for filming children's parties

Not everyone has a camcorder, or knows how to use one correctly. You can put your skills to good use if you've had any practice filming children before. You could also video other types of party as well. Anniversaries, engagement parties, coming of age etc. If you don't feel confident enough to run it as a business, get some experience first by doing it for friends, and expand your video skills by taking a college course in video production.

Produce baby videos

As with the previous idea, a good knowledge of video techniques is preferred, but filming babies is much more straightforward. The trick here is to make them appear interesting. Although any nice images would satisfy doting parents, any film lasting more than 10 - 15 minutes without sufficient variety of shots and activity, will soon become boring. Apart from using your imagination to vary the shots, the best method is to produce a film over a period of time, Newborn babies change rapidly over the first few months. Being at the birth is a great opportunity to get a once-in-a-lifetime event on to tape, but unfortunately not always possible. However, a regular monthly visit to build a visual record of the babies changing appearance, plus a babies first steps, can compile into a fascinating record that is almost priceless.

Passport-sized photographs are used for a whole range of things, not just passports

Membership cards, ID cards, licenses etc., and although there are photo booths widely available, some people prefer the personal touch. Better results are usually obtained this way. If you would like to offer this service you'll need a polaroid passport camera, capable of taking a multi-image instant photograph. When developed, which normally takes just a few minutes, the photos are split using a special handheld cutter. Having a small studio with lights would be ideal, but with a little ingenuity you could offer a mobile service using portable lights and a suitable portable backdrop. You can charge a little bit more than the mechanical method, but don't overprice yourself out of the market. Advertise your service in the local press and work within a twenty mile radius to make it financially viable.

Become a freelance photographer

Some pictures can be worth a fortune if you're in the right place at the right time. To get the kind of pictures that make headline news however, means you'll need to have good contacts. Having a close alliance with a good news reporter helps enormously. Being able to gain inside information on what is happening in the world of sport, entertainment and politics has its advantages. Specialising as a freelance magazine and press photographer means you need lots of energy, and be ready to travel at a moments notice. You can either specialise in photographing famous people, or interesting news events as they occur. Of course, there are ample opportunities for taking photographs of a less stressful nature. There's a huge variety of magazines that specialise in all kinds of subjects. If your photographs fit their criteria you could well find a market for your work on a more regular basis.

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Become a 'How-to' video producer

A talented video enthusiast, whether amateur or semi-professional, could specialise in making videos that show other people how to improve their skills or knowledge of a particular subject. For example, you could produce a series of Dvd's that demonstrate how to play the piano, learn to play the guitar, or virtually any other musical instrument that you, or an acquaintance, has experience of. How about a series of Dvd's on the art of cooking? There's always programmes on tv that relate to cooking, but do any of them specialise in vegetarian dishes only, or chinese, or Indian cuisine? The market may not be huge, unless you hit on a winning idea, but even selling Dvd's in small numbers can be very profitable.

Specialise in baby photography

Some photographers can make a decent living out of taking photographs of babies. Especially when you have the chance to set up a portable studio in a place where there's plenty of people. Shopping centres are ideal. However, if you build up a good reputation, people will come to you. A small shop or home studio, located in an easily accessible area, will do just fine. It takes skill to get a good shot of a baby, so go somewhere where you can watch how others do it, and learn from their techniques. When you think you're ready to give it a go, start by practicing on friends' babies. Advertise in the local press and baby shops for starters.

Novelty photographs are a great way to remember a holiday, or a gathering of friends or relatives

They're fun to do and very profitable. The basis of this business idea is to dress people up in Victorian attire, have them pose, against an old fashioned background, in the way people did when photography was in its infancy. The photograph, would be taken using a modern camera of course, but adding a sepia tint during processing gives the appearance of an old Victorian photograph. Another slant on the idea is to use the theme of the American wild west. Dressing the clients up in old western gear, complete with authentic props such as rifles and holstered hand guns. As you would expect, this idea works best in a busy tourist area.

Aerial photographs of peoples homes make an interesting conversational piece

Which is one of the main reasons they sell so well. Particularly in villages and upmarket residential areas. Arrangements will need to be made to get airborne and a medium format camera will give you the best results for enlargements. Once developed, canvas the area with the appropriate samples. Sales aren't guaranteed, but a good percentage of people will be interested, at the right price. It's therefore up to you to negotiate a sale.

Produce a series of gardening technique Dvd's

If you're an experienced and knowledgeable gardener, or know someone who is, consider producing and selling a set of Dvd's specialising in different areas of gardening. For example, one Dvd could be all about planting shrubs and trees, another about planting bedding plants, and another which shows how to plant and grow vegetables.

Photograph and produce a range of calendars based around popular pets

For example, subjects might include various breeds of dog, cats, rabbits and hamsters in cute poses. Ponies, reptiles and insects could also prove popular. Test the idea first with one type of calendar design and aim to sell through pet shops and card shops.

Start a business running courses in video filming and editing techniques

This could be a very profitable enterprise for an established semi-professional videographer, or a knowledgeable enthusiast with plenty of experience. Apart from a basic introduction course for beginners, you might also include specialised courses on how to make great wedding videos, holiday videos, wildlife videos or even glamour videos. Post production courses using up-to-date computer editing equipment and software could also be a possibility. Courses could be designed to run on a one-to-one basis, or in groups of three or more people, in which case course fees could be lower, but overall profits would be much higher. Advertise your services in amateur video making magazines.

Specialise in photographing scale models

If you like scale modelling and photography, why not combine both, and specialise in taking photographs of models for magazine articles, framed prints, packaging designs or even write your own book to show other model enthusiasts how to take good photographs of their own models?

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Offer a service that produces sports technique analysis Dvd's

These would be aimed at amateur and professional sportspeople. For example, this would be useful to people wishing to improve their swing technique in golf or tennis. A Dvd and expert analysis could show which parts need improvement and which parts are good. Your service could be offered directly through sports clubs or on a private tuition basis. A good knowledge of the sport in question is obviously a distinct advantage.

Set up a business producing photographic jigsaws of glamour models

Purchase the equipment to make your own or arrange for a firm to make them for you. Decide whether to produce the photos yourself, or hire a professional photographer. Sell through adult shops and by mail order in suitable publications.

Specialise in producing 'This is Your Life' type of videos

A nostalgic video can be easily produced using photographs and various nostalgic items collected throughout the subjects life. For instance, the video could start off with a picture of the birth certificate followed by photographs of the subject as a baby, along with images of their family and pictures of their schooldays, their first job, their first car, getting engaged, getting married, their first home, their first child etc. etc. Suitable music and titles would complete the film and make it more professional.

Produce Dvd's of school plays and dance school competitions

These are events where proud parents are sure to be interested in purchasing a well produced video record of their adorable children showing off their talents. Many copies can be made and sold from one good master Dvd. A percentage of profits can be allocated to the school as a way to raise funds for materials and equipment, as well as cementing a good relationship for future business.

Travel photography is an area worth investigating if you're a keen traveller

There's always a demand for good photographs that capture the essence and atmosphere of interesting locations. And it's not just pretty landscape pictures that sell. Pictures that tell a story are always worth taking. Whether it's the local inhabitants going about their work, or a fascinating close-up of an ageing face with a lifetime of experiences behind it, these type of pictures are always popular with travel magazines.

Start a video dating service

This would be run like a normal dating service, with the added advantage of being able to show potential partners a video compilation of different people, airing their likes and dislikes on tape. This way people can see what the other person looks like, and gets a feel for the characteristics and personality of each prospect.

Produce a keep fit or martial arts technique Dvd

As a video producer, you don't need to be a specialist in your chosen subject. You just need to find someone who is. Someone who is willing to use their expertise, along with a class of their own pupils, to help you produce a highly informative Dvd full of useful advice and demonstrated techniques. A share of the profits is all it takes to win over a willing partner. Completed Dvd's can be sold to existing pupils, by mail order and through selected retail outlets.

Start a business that makes wedding videos

There's plenty of competition from people already established in this field. But with advances in digital photography and video, new and more exciting professional effects can be achieved with the equipment that is now available. A competent videographer should find it relatively easy to get a foothold in this popular small business.

Produce a Dvd for new dog owners that shows how to train a dog

Each year thousands of people get a dog for the first time. Many are keen to train the dog properly right from the start. Dog training classes are not always available in some areas. They can also be expensive and not always held at convenient times. A dog training video would be ideal for helping people to teach their dog in their own time, and at their own convenience.

Photography

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Make a Dvd for train enthusiasts

Creating a train layout can be a challenging and fascinating hobby for those with an interest in electric toy trains. Someone with experience and intimate knowledge of modelmaking techniques could pass on their knowledge to other enthusiasts by helping you make a demonstration video. In fact, a series of Dvd's would be more likely, to cover all the methods involved in planning and completing the finished item. Techniques might include how to make the scenery, the buildings, the people and all the other accessories which go into producing an impressive layout. Advertise the Dvd's by mail order in model train magazines.

Pet photography may not be the easiest way to make a living

But there's always an opening for a good pet photographer. Animal photographs sell extremely well, especially dogs and cats. Whether it's for a professional publication, or simply a local customer, there's money to be made if you can produce the goods. Advertise your services locally. Leave a business card with satisfied customers. Ensure you retain the copyright, and with the owners permission, use the best examples of your work to place with a good agent for general publication.

Hire out a studio to photographers

Obtain suitable premises, plus photographic lighting, camera equipment, and a selection of various props and costumes. Advertise the studio for hire in photography magazines. Send an illustrated leaflet and price guide to enquirers and freelance photographers.

Provide a video record service for insurance purposes

People who own expensive or irreplaceable valuables could benefit from your service which would provide a high quality detailed visual record of the items in question, as well as proof of ownership. If an item was lost or stolen, a video showing the exact item would be extremely useful when making a claim, and helpful to the police when trying to recover stolen property. Jewellery, paintings, expensive clothing, even larger items such as cars, boats and motorhomes could be recorded in great detail.

Start your own video production company producing D.i.y. promotional demo tapes

This idea has a lot of potential. Not only could you produce demonstration videos for in-store promotions, you could upload and manage content for showing online at various video sharing sites such as You Tube and Daily Motion. For in-store promotions combination TV and Dvd players can be hired out to D.i.y. and hardware stores to demonstrate products that have been filmed and transferred on to DVD.

Offer a video service for converting and duplicating video tapes or Dvd's from various countries

Different broadcasting standards exist throughout the world. Each standard is incompatible with the others. In the UK the PAL format is used. The USA and Japan use the NTSC format, and in France and parts of the Middle East the SECAM format is used. Affordable equipment is now available to convert the signal and copy tapes and Dvd's on to compatible formats for those people who don't have a multi-standard players. This would be a useful service to people who send videos to relatives in other countries. Check the video magazines for equipment suppliers.

Retail and wholesale

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Open a small shop specialising in needlecrafts

Sell embroidery kits, materials and hand stitched framed pictures. If your interests lie in this direction, a small shop located in a village or town popular with tourists will be the ideal place to run this type of business. Start by having a few nice designs available as samples which you can display in the shop window to attract peoples` attention. If you`re just starting out, you might consider party plan sales or mail order as a way of getting established.

Sell goods on ebay

eBay is not only a great place to pick up a bargain or two, it gives sellers the opportunity to turn their unwanted items into cash and also provides an ideal opportunity to start selling stuff on eBay for profit on a regular basis to provide an extra income Read article: [Selling stuff on ebay for profit](#)

Start a business making custom-made curtains

Offering a professional sewing service specialising in various types of curtains will enable customers to choose their own designs, being more exact in their requirements. Using a small shop to work from will allow you to display your own designs as well. You could also provide matching furnishings. i.e. bedcovers, pillowcases and cushions etc. A service like this can often create a big demand through recommendations. Which means, of course, you may need to take on extra staff. However, in this business you can retain full control over how much you want to expand. If you prefer to stay small, and provide a personal service to a limited number of customers, that is entirely up to you.

Open a shop on the Internet

If you`re reading this then you`re probably aware of the huge amount of business that is conducted over the internet these days. All businesses no matter how big or small should consider having their own website to market and sell their products. Setting up shop on the internet is now easier than ever.

Sell baby wear products or fashion wear from a market stall

Many towns have regular market days where hundreds of people converge to look for bargains. Setting up your own market stall is just a matter of finding a site, obtaining the necessary permits from the local authority, buying a stall, and stocking it with the goods. Baby wear and fashion wear are usually good sellers, but check out the competition first. Ideally, depending on the size of the market, it`s better not to have to compete with more than one or two other stalls selling the same type of goods. Also, you`ll probably want to work more than one day to make it worthwhile, so check to see what other markets are operating in your region.

Start a market stall specialising in mens lightweight jackets and coats

These might include a range of colourful ski jackets and car coats. Alternatively, you could specialise in leather and suede. Adding a selection of hats and gloves might also be worth considering.

As good as new clothes shops are always popular with bargain hunters

You could start up by selling unwanted clothes supplied from friends and relatives. The best items to sell would include ladies blouses and skirts, cardigans and jumpers, dresses and slacks, jackets and trousers. Some of your stock might also include menswear, but ladieswear is more likely to be your main source of income.

Start a bookshop selling used books

Lots of people love to scour the shelves of old bookshops. You could start with a small shop to begin with and a supply of secondhand books purchased through wanted ads. You can also build up your stock by buying books from auctions and car boot sales. Ideally, open up your shop in a popular tourist location or near a busy town centre. Read article: [How to make it big with your own used book store](#)

Buy and sell secondhand Dvd's, compact disks and computer games

There`s always a huge selection available. Sell from a small shop or market stall. If selling from a shop, arrange the shelves in easily identified sections. Only display the empty cases and keep the disks in an easily accessible place which can be locked up safely at night. If your stock grows big enough you could start a mail order service. Once the business is well established you might also consider starting a rental service for old and new titles.

Retail and wholesale

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Set up a market stall selling t-shirts and jeans

T-shirts, sweatshirts and jeans are always popular and never go out of fashion. There's always a demand, because they always need replacing, more often than other types of clothing. T-shirts can either be plain or with a selection of popular graphics printed on them. Jeans can range from top brand names down to bargain price makes. You could specialise in one or the other, but you'll probably have more success if you cater for a wide range of people.

Sell knitwear for children, either from a market stall or a small shop in a busy location

You can buy supplies in, but also consider using local people to work for you, producing knitwear at home on a pay per item basis. Standards should be high, so only use knitters who can produce work that's good enough to sell.

Start a market stall selling thermal underwear and waterproof clothing

Any items that would sell well in the cold months. You might also consider selling umbrellas during the rainy seasons. In the Summer months change your stock to summer wear. Read article: [There's Money in Market Trading](#)

Open a shop selling computers and software

If you're a whizz with computers and can build them to a customer's own specifications, you have the makings of a good business. Your stock should include ready built systems with prices to suit, plus peripherals such as printers and scanners, that can be added to the system. Items for upgrading should also be available to the customer, such as graphics cards, sound cards, cd rom and dvd devices, modems, motherboards, processers and extra ram, for which you can offer a fitting service, or sell to the customer for themselves to fit. A range of software will also be a worthwhile addition along with supplies of cables, blank floppy disks and disks for cd writers. To boost sales even further, consider including a regular stall at various computer fairs that operate in your area.

Set up a market stall selling a wide range of boiled sweets, chocolates and toffees

Sell the more popular brands along with products bought from smaller firms who specialise in their own particular types of confectionery.

Become a supplier and distributor of plumbing accessories to the trade

As a wholesaler, you can buy direct from the manufacturers and obtain better discounts when buying in bulk. These discounts will increase your profit margins when supplying to trade customers.

Import products from the far east

A whole range of goods are available from exporters who can supply you with a huge range of electrical and fancy goods at amazingly low prices. Sell them to trade customers or through your own mail order catalogue.

Start a business selling computer components to the trade

Import graphics cards, sound cards, floppy disk drives, DVD and Blu-ray writers, keyboards etc., direct from the manufacturers. Produce a trade catalogue and advertise your service in the appropriate publications.

Open a shop selling secondhand tools and do-it-yourself supplies

A vast range of tools exist for all kinds of jobs. Woodworking tools, plastering tools, bricklaying tools, gardening tools, electricians tools, plumbers tools, everything for the handyman. You could also stock supplies of nails, screws and other general fittings which are easily bought in bulk, then packaged or sold loosely. Tools are always good sellers, so being able to sell them at bargain prices makes them all the more attractive. Only stock tools in good condition though, not worthless junk, and your business is sure to grow. Auctions are a good source of supply, as are flea markets and car boot sales.

Become a supplier of training aids for driving schools

These could include dual controls, roof signs, magnetic car door signs, audio/visual training aids, mock theory papers, books and videos. Advertise in the driving school trade magazines and by direct mail to driving schools, most of which are listed in the Yellow Pages.

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Make and sell childrens play outfits

Super heroes, soldiers, doctors and nurses, cowboys and indians, spacemen and monsters. Any type of outfit that relates to popular childrens television shows is bound to prove popular. Package and sell your designs through toy stores and a mail order catalogue.

Open a small shop for selling small items for £1 or less

These type of shops have become very popular. You don't have to compete with the major chain stores that are springing up in nearly every shopping centre. There's plenty of localised shopping areas where these type of shops can succeed. Stock can be bought direct from specialist wholesalers and importers in inexpensive goods. Check the trade directories at your local library for contacts.

Buy and sell used furniture

Buy from private sellers, house clearance sales and from auctions. You could also canvas homes with an offer to buy unwanted items. You'll need a decent size van and a place to store everything. A shop with a seperate storage room would be ideal. Advertise furniture for sale in your local newspapers, as well as an ad for items wanted.

Make and sell picture frames and picture mounts in quantity and supply at trade prices

This will require an investment in suitable power tools to speed up the normal manufacturing process of making frames and cutting mounts with the usual hand tools. (see arts and crafts section) Although you could start small by making a limited amount of frames at a time until you can provide them in larger quantities and supply them to a range of shops. Simple wood frames stained in a variety of colours are currently popular for framing modern style prints. They make an attractive but inexpensive alternative to the more traditional ornate frame. To find suppliers of picture framing equipment and materials, check the trade directories at your nearest reference library.

Start a market stall selling cosmetics

You could also sell through party plan, but the advantage of selling from a market stall is that you have a lot of passing trade. Plus, you also have very low overheads. This, combined with the fact that cosmetics have a very good mark-up, means profits can be exceptionally good.

Buy and sell paintings and start your own art gallery

A small shop will be adequate to start with. Start by buying watercolours and oil paintings at auctions. Set up a gallery and offer a picture restoration service as well. To do this you could employ someone with the necessary skills, or learn to do it yourself. A framing service is another possibility, and a stock of fine art prints for framing and selling might also be worth considering.

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Start your own school for dancing

If you have the experience and patience to teach children, or adults, then why not put your skills to good use by offering dancing classes part-time? Whether it's tap, ballet or ballroom dancing, there will always be a number of people who will want to learn. Particularly young children who are often encouraged by their parents. Finding suitable premises is the main hurdle. Once a location is found advertise your classes in the local press.

Start an evening class teaching basic computer skills

This might include an introduction to various aspects of the Windows operating system, plus how to use a web browser to surf the internet, and how to use an email program.

Set up and run a course in typing and word processing

Many people, though capable of typing with two fingers, have never mastered the keyboard efficiently. Anyone wishing to learn how to use a computer or portable electronic typewriter for word processing, might also find it useful to learn how to type properly. A course, running along these lines, in your local community could very easily prove popular enough to provide you with a worthwhile second income if you have the skills in this area of expertise.

Start and run weekend courses in landscape painting or photography

If you're a creative type with a good knowledge of painting or photographic techniques, then why not set up a course teaching other people how to paint or photograph landscapes like an expert. The course could include an occasional trip to areas of natural beauty to gain practical experience, as well as classroom theory. There are lots of people looking for ways to spend their leisure time, and painting and photography are two of the most popular subjects for newcomers seeking to improve or take up a new hobby.

Teach the English language

This would be aimed at foreign students and residents who want to improve their English and writing skills. This can be done on a personal one-to-one basis in the person's own home, or with a group of people at an evening class. This would make a good part-time opportunity for a qualified teacher to supplement their income.

Teach a foreign language

A foreign resident who speaks good English should have no difficulty in finding students who wish to learn their language through personal tuition. French, German, Spanish and Italian are probably the most popular choices. But other languages are also in demand. Advertise your service in the local and regional press.

Set up a business for teaching windsurfing in a popular seaside or lakeside tourist area

This is definitely one for the expert. If you're a skilful wind surfer, with access to additional equipment other than your own, this idea could become a good way to supplement your income, or at the very least, pay for your own equipment. In the summer season you should find your services in great demand, if you pick a good location. You will obviously need somewhere secure to keep your equipment safe and locked up while teaching. However, if you get a lot of people wanting to book lessons, you will need to pay someone to take bookings and look after your base of operation.

Start a self-defence class specialising in martial arts

Find suitable premises to hold the classes. If you don't have the necessary qualifications advertise for qualified experts to teach for you. Pay them a set fee or a percentage of the profits. Advertise the classes in the local newspaper, shop windows and community notice boards.

Teach people how to sail

Here is another popular activity that holiday makers like to participate in at seaside and lakeside resorts. A similar operation to the one previously described for windsurfing could be set up, only this time your teaching skills would be based on your expert knowledge of handling small sailing craft. Apart from the obvious requirement of having a place to keep your boats, make sure that you have the correct insurance to cover all eventualities.

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Teach people to play the piano

Another opportunity for the musical expert. Piano lessons are even more popular than they use to be because of the huge amount of electronic keyboards and synthesisers now on the market. Even though computers have made it easier for the amateur musician to create their own music, there is no substitute for proper music tuition. For anyone serious about learning to play music, piano tuition and guitar tuition are two of the most popular options. A talented music teacher could either teach one or the other, or could offer lessons in both if they have the necessary skills.

Teach flower arranging at evening class or through private tuition

Flower arranging has become a very popular pastime for many ladies and pensioners seeking a way to fulfil their creative desires in a way that proves useful as well as enjoyable. A skilful flower arranger can make money from teaching others how to do it. Here is a service that not only satisfies your pupils desires, but also offers a way to bring like-minded people together in a satisfying social environment.

Start a class for dog training. Are you good with dogs?

Do you have expert knowledge? If so, this is a great way to make an extra income. You`ll need to hire a hall large enough to take at least fifteen to twenty people and their dogs, and with plenty of extra space to provide the training exercises required. The expense of hiring a hall should be relatively small when compared with the money you make from each person who enrolls. Classes are generally organised to run once or twice a week, depending on how popular they become. When ready to start, advertise regularly in your local and regional newspapers.

Set up a business that runs weekend courses for d.i.y. Enthusiasts

Teach people how to use specific types of software. Lots of people are interested in learning to use certain types of programs that help them with their hobbies such as photography, video making, creating artwork etc. Or learning to use accounting software for small business use and keeping track of their personal finance and home budgets.

Set up a business that runs weekend courses for d.i.y. Enthusiasts

These might include short intensive courses in bricklaying, basic plumbing, woodworking projects and painting and decorating techniques. Find suitable premises and hire expert instructors where needed. Advertise the courses in D.i.y. magazines and arrange overnight accommodation for people who travel long distance. Adjust course fees to suit individual requirements.

Start your own yoga class

For yoga experts only. However, everyone has to start somewhere, and yoga, like any other skill, can be learned through attending classes, practice and study. Learn as much as you can, and you too could soon be a yoga expert with pupils of your own.

Become a sports instructor

If you`re a keen sportsman with skills or qualifications in any particular area, you should seriously consider teaching others how to improve their game. A good instructor can easily make a good part-time income from teaching one of the following sports: Golf, tennis, swimming, football, rugby, athletics, gymnastics etc. If you`re suitably qualified, approach your local sports club to see if any vacancies are available, or set up your own class by hiring suitable facilities and charging for personal tuition.

Teach people to sing properly

With all the interest in TV shows like the X factor there are thousands of people who want to learn to sing better. If you have the knowledge and skills to help them (ideal if you have experience as a professional singer) you could set yourself up as a vocal coach and charge by the hour for singing lessons.

Teach a professional skill such as bricklaying, carpentry or painting and decorating

Many colleges of further education use people with experience in these fields of work to teach their part-time evening class pupils these skills. If you`re suitably qualified, you may just fit the bill. Contact your local college to find out their requirements. Some colleges also have a number of courses in other areas such as computer programming, word processing, catering, commercial art and design etc., which, if you have the work experience, may suit you better.

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Become an aerobics instructor

Here again, someone with suitable qualifications can start their own part-time classes teaching aerobics on a regular basis. Aerobics is one of the more popular activities used to help people get fit. Classes of twenty people or more are not unusual. Advertise your courses in the local press and sports centres.

Teach people the art of watercolour painting

If you can paint watercolours and have a good knowledge of watercolour techniques then consider passing on your knowledge to others. Many people, particularly retired people take up watercolour painting as a relaxing hobby. You could open your own small private school of art, or teach a part-time day or evening class in your spare time. Check what training facilities are available for residents in your area, and offer your services to start and run a course on how to paint in this popular medium.

Teach people how to ride a motorcycle

If you're keen on motorbikes with a few years experience, why not train to become an instructor? You can run your own school part-time or full-time, whichever suits you best. There's always plenty of riders willing to take a course of lessons, tailored to help them pass the motorcycle test.

Start a business teaching people how to play the guitar

A good guitarist with patience and a sound knowledge of music composition can make a good income from teaching others how to play the guitar. Here is a business that can be set up in any medium-sized town or city. Working from home, with hardly any overheads to speak of, your business can be built up to a level where you can teach part-time or full-time, whichever you prefer. Start by advertising in the local press. Hand out a few business cards, and if you're good, business will soon build up through word-of-mouth.

Become a driving instructor and teach people how to drive

Here is a business where there is always a demand. If you have at least four years driving experience on a full clean driving license and are over twenty one years of age, the opportunity to become a driving instructor is available through a number of training centres, but at a price. Unless you know a qualified Approved Driving Instructor who is willing to train you for a reasonable fee, then you will have to choose one of the more expensive established training centres to receive proper training. This is the best way to have a good chance to pass the required tests to qualify as an A.D.I. Once qualified however, you can either set up your own driving school, work for someone else, or become a franchisee with one of the national driving schools such as B.S.M. or the A.A. driving school.

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Start an e-zine on the internet

There`s lots of electronic magazines springing up all over the web. If you can specialise in a particular subject that has little competition, then you could be on to a winner. The internet enables you to have a huge potential audience. If you can regularly update information on your chosen subject, then you have the foundation to set up an e-zine. How do e-zines make money? By subscription of course, and through third-party advertising.

Use your writing skills to produce a traveller`s guide.

This would include information on where to find the most interesting places of historical interest in popular tourist locations. Research your subject thoroughly and give your reader some interesting facts and figures to dwell on. Include some picturesque photographs. Have your guide printed and sold through bookshops in the area of interest and in tourist information centres.

Specialise in writing greetings card verses

Send your examples to card producers in the UK and abroad. Research the market thoroughly to find out what sells. A wide variety of themes exist for different occasions. The obvious ones being birthdays, anniversaries, christmas, coming of age, new home, new baby, etc. etc. A good sense of humour is a definite advantage. For some types of cards it`s essential. A list of card producers can be found in `The Writers and Artists Yearbook`.

Write short stories for magazines

Fictional short stories are tremendously popular, particularly in women`s magazines. If you have a talent for writing good romantic fiction, then you`re bound to sell your work. There are numerous other options of course. Science-fiction, horror stories, detective stories, historical romance are all good sellers. Research all the available magazines that cover your topic of interest. Send your stories addressed to the editor, keeping the original on file. Suggested reading: `Writing Short Stories` by William H. Phillips

Devise and write a correspondence course

This would be based on a subject that you have an in-depth knowledge of. Lots of people would like to improve their own knowledge and learn new skills, and are willing to pay for someone to help them. And not everyone has the time or inclination to go to college to achieve what they want. If you can help people learn to write better, draw better. learn a new language, learn a new trade, then you have the opportunity to turn your ideas into a worthwhile business opportunity.

Write a book on how to make money from property

If you have prior knowledge of the subject, that`s a good stepping stone to get started. If not, do some research into how other people make a living from renting, or buying and selling property. Cover all the bases, including buying property from auction, renovating, converting large houses to flats, nursing homes, renting out shops, land development and so on. There`s always a large section of people who can benefit from this type of book. You could self-publish it by selling it on the internet or having it printed and sold through mail order.

Writing jokes and letters to magazines can be a useful source of extra cash

If you have a talent for telling a funny story or a good joke, there are plenty of magazines who would be willing to publish your work if it`s appropriate to their needs. Refer to the `Writers and Artists Yearbook` for contacts and study the magazines you would be interested in writing for.

Compile a collection of questions and answers and write your own quiz book

Specialise in a specific subject to pinpoint a selected market. For example, a quiz book based on golf or cricket. Alternatively, produce an audio cassette version along with a booklet and instructions, and market it as a quiz game. Have it packaged and sold by mail order or through gift shops.

Write a business guide on how to write and publish a newsletter or magazine

If you have prior knowledge and experience of this subject it should be a simple and straightforward project. You could self-publish the guide and sell it through advertisements placed in business opportunity magazines.

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Write a book about how to trace your own ancestry

A lot of people are interested in this subject, but sometimes they're not sure how to begin and proceed. A well written book or guide to the subject is bound to be popular if marketed correctly.

Write and publish a regular newsletter or magazine based around a 'niche' subject

Sell on subscription. If you come up with a good idea it could prove to be very lucrative. (One man in Britain set about publishing a monthly magazine based on foot fetishes, and ended up with more than 20,000 subscribers) Digital magazines are becoming more popular now and can be published online through various distributors.

Write your own recipe book specialising in one particular area of cuisine

If, for example, you have an in-depth knowledge of how to prepare chinese food, or perhaps vegetarian or Indian dishes, then a 'how-to' guide devoted to your own food preparation techniques might prove popular. If you don't feel you have sufficient knowledge to write a complete guide on this subject, consider finding and working with someone who does. And if you aren't successful at convincing a publisher to publish your book, consider self-publishing. (see below)

Write and sell a book on how to improve your finances

Extra income books always sell well when marketed correctly. A number of ready-made titles exist for budding home publishers, but a new title with the latest money-making ideas will have the best chance to succeed.

Write a book on how to grow and take care of houseplants

Thousands of people could benefit from a well researched book with lots of useful hints and tips relating to the care of houseplants. There are books already available on the subject, but by self-publishing you can produce and promote your book as a concise, and inexpensive, quick reference guide. Advertise by mail order in home improvement magazines.

Write a book on how to save money

If you have a knack for finding the best bargains, and have numerous ways of saving money through useful household tips and inexpensive home improvement ideas, you could write your own A - Z guide on how to save money. Sell for a few pounds so that readers can save hundreds of pounds.

Compile and write a collection of quiz books dealing with specific subjects

For example, quiz books specialising in English or American history, popular music, classical music. the cinema, English literature, sport etc. Advertise and sell by mail order through the appropriate magazines.

Write a biography about someone famous from the past who lived in your part of the country

Self-publish the book on Amazon (see below) and/or sell through local bookshops and tourist information services. Books about well known local characters are always of interest to the local community, but books about famous people will sell to a wider audience.

Become a self-publisher

These days it's just as easy to self-publish your own work than it is to get it published through an established publisher. Most tasks involved in self-publishing can be achieved using a home computer. The research, drafting, compiling together text, illustrations and photographs, can all be done at home. It's even possible to print and bind your book using a modern printer and binder. This type of book might be acceptable for selling by mail order. But for truly professional results you will have to use the services of a good printer. This does involve a substantial amount of investment however, but if you believe that your book will prove popular enough to sell in large numbers through bookshops, then this is the only other way to proceed. Having about one or two thousand books printed is probably the safest way to start. Of course, the higher the volume, the cheaper it becomes. Once your books are printed you will then need to canvass bookshops to try to get them to stock a few copies of your book, which they may accept on a sale or return basis. Ideally, however, it is better to be paid up front at the wholesale price. Seeing your book in print can be immensely satisfying, and usually worth all the hard work involved. Wherever your interests lie, if you really feel you have something worthwhile to write about, consider self-publishing as one way forward. [Click here](#) to find out how to self-publish on the internet

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Consider writing articles for magazines

There's a huge array of subjects for would-be writers to specialise in. Whatever your interests are, there's bound to be a magazine that's appropriate to your particular talents. Whether it's photography, computers, fishing, cycling, nursing, caravanning, windsurfing, or whatever, you could probably find something to write a short article about, and get paid to have it published. Many writers make a good income this way. As always, research your subject thoroughly. Find out what the going rate is for payment, and give it a go.

Produce a guide that shows other would-be writers how to write and sell a correspondence course

Obviously you will need to have first hand experience on this subject, or be able to work in conjunction with someone who does. Sell the book as a business opportunity guide through the classified ads of business opportunity magazines.

Compile a collection of general knowledge questions and answers and publish a 'pub quiz' book

For example, it could be entitled 'A 1001 questions for pub quiz fanatics' Sell by mail order in suitable magazines that have general classified ad sections.

Compile and self-publish a series of joke books

For example, these might include jokes suitable for best man speeches at weddings, jokes for using at business seminars, jokes for the serious golfer, jokes for rugby players etc. Advertise each book in the appropriate subject-related magazine and follow up orders with a list of other books in the series.

Write a book about millionaires and how they achieved their wealth

Arrange interviews with wealthy people who are willing to co-operate in your project. If possible, try to sell your book through a major publisher. If not, publish the book yourself and see if you can get bookshops to stock it for you. Also, advertise it by mail order in business ideas magazines.

Subscription based newsletters are also a worthy consideration

If you're an experienced writer with lots of ideas and energy this could be a good earner. It's time consuming but can be an excellent way to turn your writing skills into profit without the need of a publisher.

Produce a directory of craft work suppliers

A directory of suppliers would be useful to the thousands of craft workers throughout the country who need a list of useful contacts to help them in their hobby or business. It could be advertised and sold by mail order through selected publications read by craftspeople. Inclusion in the directory would be free except for display advertising space reserved for businesses who are prepared to pay for a larger advert to make their business stand out that little bit more.

Write your own novel

It's a daunting prospect I know. But if you have led a colourful life and have many experiences that can be turned into interesting fictitious situations with characters you can develop (perhaps based on people you know) then all you need is determination and a half decent writing style to get you started. Even if you don't have much life experience you could try your hand writing books for children. Or how about science fiction and fantasy? All it takes is vivid imagination for creating imaginary worlds and wild and wonderful characters.

Design and print a series of books containing crossword puzzles

These could specialise in particular subjects such as various sports, the cinema, science and technology, geography and history etc. Sell them through newsagents and mail order.

Write a book about how to improve your memory

Yes, I know it's already been done. Actually someone lent me a book like this once, but I kept forgetting to read it. Still, if you think you have a foolproof method that can help others to improve their memory, you can be sure there's plenty of people willing to buy it if the price is right. Try to come up with a snappy title and advertise it in the classified ads of various magazines.

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Start a mobile snack bar

Various types of food trailers are available, suitable for selling all kinds of edible goodies. Whether it's hamburgers, beefburgers, chips, sandwiches or ice-cream, there's plenty to choose from. A medium-size investment is required, particularly when buying new. But if you can purchase a used trailer in good condition, then you could probably save a fair bit of money. Check out the Exchange & Mart as one source of new and used trailers.. You will need to learn all the regulations related to hygiene, safety and the selling of food in public. But if you find a good location, this type of catering can be very profitable indeed.

Design and make a puppet theatre

Hire out your services as a childrens` entertainer for birthday and xmas parties etc. Put on a show that children love to watch. Advertise your services in the Yellow Papers, but recommendations are the best way to gain more business.

Organise antique fairs

An interest in antiques is desirable, but not essential. Hire a suitable hall and rent out stalls to sellers of antiques. Arrange to advertise the fair through local newspapers and posters. Place a large notice board outside the hall to catch peoples` attention and charge a small admission fee.

Open a bed and breakfast house

This is an ideal opportunity for people living in a popular tourist area. If you have two or three spare rooms or more then you`re halfway there. Visitors will require an efficient breakfast service, along with easy access to the bathroom, and a comfortable and clean bedroom. Preferably with extra facilities such as a tv, telephone and wash basin. Also provide tourist information literature for good measure. Advertise in various B&B guides, as well as placing a suitable sign outside, or in your front window. Read article: [Bed & Breakfast - The Easiest Home Business](#)

Design and bake unusual party cakes based upon the interests of the person whose party it is

For example, cakes made up in the form of sports equipment, musical instruments, or modes of transport. Cakes of unusual design can also be used for special functions and events where food and drink is being served.

Sell a selection of plants at regular car boot sales

Alternatively, sell them from a roadside stall. Place signs 100 metres from the stall in either direction to inform approaching motorists,

Invent a cartoon character which appeals to people of all ages

Produce a regular short comic strip in a format designed to suit newspapers and general publications. Successful cartoons can sometimes make a lot of money for the inventor. Suggested reading: 'How to Draw and Sell Cartoons'

Buy a large van and offer your services as a roadie for new bands and dj's

There are always plenty of young people who are in the process of forming a band and just starting out on the road to hopeful success. Some of these bands are getting bookings and need reliable transport and help to carry their equipment to gigs. There are disk jockeys who would also find this service useful. If you`re interested in the entertainment business, this idea could be right up your street. Contact bands direct, or contact agents who deal with bands to inform them of your service. You might also consider advertising in selected music magazines.

Start a business that specialises in organising trips abroad for sports fans

These excursions could, for instance, be to football matches, motor-racing events, tennis tournaments etc. Advertise your service through local newspapers.

Start a business that removes graffiti

Find out your nearest supplier of industrial cleaning materials and equipment. Advertise your service to local businesses, government bodies and community organisations.

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Start your own picture framing business

With practice and the right tools, professional results can be achieved quickly. To get started you'll need a mitre cutter, a pin hammer, pliers, clamps, a mount cutter, a glass cutter, staple gun and a supply of mounting boards, picture moulding, glass and hardboard for backing the pictures. Eventually you would need to invest in professional picture framing equipment for fast and accurate mitring and mount cutting. You can advertise your services in the local newspaper.

Open up a collectors museum

The museum would be dedicated to a collection of old items that are fondly remembered and popular with visitors. Themes such as toy trains, vintage toy cars, dolls houses, photographic equipment, film memorabilia etc., could be easily displayed in a large house or rented premises. Choose a suitable location within easy reach of a popular tourist spot or large populated area. Charge a small admission fee or apply for government funding.

Start a business organising `Adventure Days Out`

These could include exciting activities such as ballooning, rally driving, off-road driving, abseiling etc. Target business executive types with a direct mail brochure. Activities like these attract a fairly high fee due to their nature. Hire experts with suitable expertise and training ability where required.

Buy and sell used garden furniture that's in good condition

Items might include tables and chairs, picnic benches, garden seats, hammocks etc. Further items could be added later such as overlap fencing panels, garden sheds and if you're handy at carpentry you could also stock self-made, wooden plant containers and window boxes.

Set up a cleaning service for businesses

Companies with shops, offices, warehouses are all potential customers. The usual simple cleaning materials can be used along with industrial vacuum cleaners and floor polishers. Start small, but think big. Expand your business by employing others as more work comes in. It's a competitive business, but there's always room for another reliable and professional service who can deliver the goods at the right price.

Start a walking tour guide service

Research the local history of popular historical tourist spots. Plan a historical tour around places of interest within reasonable walking distance. Inform the local tourist information centre, and leave leaflets for tourists to let them know where to find you. Three or four tours a day, reasonably priced, to guide around a dozen people or more, can be well worth the effort.

Train to be a website designer

If you're a computer buff with an eye for good design, the internet has opened up a huge opportunity for competent web designers to make a good living, designing websites for business. A good grasp of html, java and cgi scripting is essential. An understanding of ecommerce is also obligatory. Thankfully, the process of design, has been made easier by software packages such as Dreamweaver, NetObjects Fusion, and free programs like Wordpress and Joomla. If your skills need honing a little more, check the internet to see what training courses are available.

Start a party plan business specialising in sexy lingerie

Ideal for the ladies, this business can be very profitable and fun to run. Send for a number of catalogues and price lists from various suppliers to compare products and prices. Compile a list of the best items and purchase a small stock of each one, using one of each for demonstration purposes. Hand out brochures and order forms at the party and use an attractive friend to demonstrate the goods.

Party plan sales are also ideal for products such as perfumes, cosmetics, jewellery and gift items

Good organisational skills and a good sense of humour go a long way to making this type of business a success. Apart from these basic qualities, all you need is a good selection of products to sell at the right price. Check the trade directories and `trader` magazine for sources of supply. Read article: [Party Plan Sales Programmes](#)

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Start a walk-in solarium business

As an alternative to buying or hiring a sunbed, which takes up a lot of space in the home, a service like this is ideal for everyone seeking a golden tan in double quick time. A capital investment is required for equipment and premises to run the business. The environment should be clean and modern with suitable changing room facilities. Advertise your service in the local press.

Buy and sell keep-fit equipment in good condition

Many people often buy equipment such as exercise bikes, rowing machines, multi-gyms etc., while going through a phase of trying to get fit and healthy. Although some take the alternative route of joining a health club, there are still people who prefer to work out in the privacy of their own homes. If you cater for the latter, you could sell or hire out good quality used equipment at an easily affordable price. This is a business best operated in highly populated areas.

Start a home security firm

This would involve keeping watch on houses and commercial premises on housing estates. An ideal business to run in areas where crime and vandalism are a common problem. For a small monthly fee, individual residents and shop owners would pay you for regularly driving around the area, keeping an eye on their property while they are at work or away in the evenings. As your client list grows so do your profits, while the relatively small overheads involved will diminish. Basically, all you need to get started is a small car or van with security signs printed on, a base to work from, a mobile radio and phone, and a suitable security guard outfit. As the business grows, extra staff can be taken on as required. Obtain work by canvassing door-to-door with suitable ID and credentials.

Set up and run a mobile discotheque

Your business would cater mainly for organisers of private functions, such as engagement parties, wedding reception parties, anniversary parties, 18th birthday parties and so on. If you fancy yourself as a Deejay, that's fine, if not you can hire someone who does. All you need to get started is a twin record console with amplifier, a set of flashing disco lights, a tape/cd player and a big collection of popular records. Have some well designed business cards printed, and a few small leaflets and posters. Advertise in the local press and the Yellow Pages.

An alternative to running a mobile disco is to hire out the equipment to others

You could also offer a range of equipment that caters for musicians who need replacement gear in an emergency. This could include keyboards, microphones, guitars and drums, plus special effects equipment such as fog machines etc. A fairly heavy investment is required to get up and running, plus it's a risky business, but looking on the bright side, there isn't a great deal of competition. Suitable insurance will be required of course, to cover loss or damage, and public liability. This can be a major expense. But if that doesn't put you off, get your business off the ground advertising in music mags local press, and target potential customers with a well designed brochure.

Arrange day trips to racecourses and other special events

These could include events such as music festivals, major exhibitions or theatrical productions. A regular service could be set up for regular customers, depending on the popularity and nature of the service offered. Racing enthusiasts and football fans might use your services repeatedly. Travel arrangements might include travelling by coach or train, possibly overnight accommodation, and obviously, entry tickets would be included in the overall price. Whatever discounts you can obtain, will of course, become part of your profits. Good organisational skills are a must. Advertise your service in the local press and the appropriate magazines.

Sell antiques from a market stall

Antiques and bric-a-brac can be picked up cheap from auctions, car boot sales and jumble sales, then resold on for a profit. Pay particular attention to collector's items. A good knowledge of antiques is required, but beginners can also learn as they go along. Having an eye for a bargain when scouring the car boot sales can bring surprisingly good results. Sometimes exceptional profits can be achieved if you spot the right item. Research the subject thoroughly. Some excellent books can be found at your local library. They may not be a substitute for years of experience, but everyone has to start somewhere.

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Start a business organising boat trips at a popular seaside resort or lakeside tourist area

A suitable used boat could be bought, or hired from a local boat owner. If you lack boating experience, hire someone who does. If the person you hire owns the boat, then arrange to split the profits. Sell tickets from a nearby booth in a prominent position to attract passing tourists and promote your business through local shops and tourist information centres.

Make up a number of attractive hanging baskets, each containing a colourful floral arrangement

Sell them by calling on residents who live in upmarket residential areas. Carry them around in a brightly painted handcart or a suitable small van. Suggested reading: 'Beautiful Hanging Baskets' by Stephanie Donaldson

Buy and sell, or hire out, good quality tents and camping equipment

There`s lots of people who have bought tents and only used them once or twice. Thinking they might use it again sometime, they store the tent away. Eventually they realise they will probably never use it again. Like many things, tents and camping equipment are often just bought on a whim. By taking advantage of this fact, you can often pick up some real good bargains and resell or hire them out for profit. Advertise in the classified wanted ads so you can pick and choose the best from what you see. Buy at the end of the summer months to get the best deals. Ideally, a small shop or unit would be used to set up the business. To start with though, you could work from home using a large garage for storage.

Are you good with figures? Train to become a book-keeper

There are lots of small businesses who need the services of a good book-keeper. Chartered accountants charge a steep hourly fee for their book-keeping services. Which means you will have no trouble finding work, if your rates are more reasonable. After training, you should be able to keep simple records, balance the books and fill in tax returns for any small business. Check your local further education centres, advertises of correspondence courses and information on the internet for courses available in book-keeping.

Start a business which designs and makes lucky charm key rings and bracelets

These could include items such as a lucky horseshoe, rabbit`s foot, or four-leaf clover made in a plastic, silver, gold or enamelled design. The best ideas can be sold through gift and souvenir shops. Another possibility is to produce personalised key rings or bracelets with peoples names on them.

Buy and sell cherished number plates

Private number plates are hugely popular in the UK. Start by buying plates at auction and resell while advertising for more plates to buy. Check the transfer regulations and become familiar with the documentation required. You`ll need to become familiar with plate values, what sells well and what doesn`t. Some plates can be worth a small fortune. Build up your selection for sale and advertise in motor magazines, Exchange & Mart and Autotrader.

Organise secondhand book sale events

Hire a small hall, set up some stalls and invite people to sell their old book collections. Charge a small entrance fee and a basic charge to stall holders. Where possible, organise a place for visitors to sit down and provide suitable refreshments.

Sell music cassettes, cd`s and videos from a market stall

New and used products can be sold together. For used items, advertise in the wanted section of local newspapers, and national magazines. Offer the best going rate for good quality merchandise. Add approximately thirty percent profit on goods resold. You could also sell by mail order once a large stock has been built up.

Buy and sell toy train sets and accessories for enthusiasts and collectors

Although electronic toys have become the main attraction for young children, there is still a market for toy trains, not only for children, but a generation of adult enthusiasts who still enjoy it as a hobby. Advertise in the wanted column of your local paper. Sell through train magazines by mail order and collectors fairs.

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Produce and sell a range of wooden floor sculptures

These for example, could be based on wild animals such as bears, wolves or african animals i.e. giraffes, tigers, lions etc. They can be made to stand on a wooden or stone base, or as a freestanding ornament. Sell through upmarket furniture stores.

Start a sandwich round catering for local businesses

Many businesses, particularly firms which are situated out of town and on industrial estates, often don't have the luxury of a works canteen, or even have the good fortune of having a local shop nearby. This would serve as a good opportunity to set up a mobile sandwich delivery service providing an assortment of different kinds of sandwiches and drinks. You will of course need to comply with certain food hygiene laws and provide a way for customers to order and receive their orders within a reasonable time. For instance, orders placed before 10 a.m. will be received by 12 noon. To get started, canvas firms that aren't already being catered for, leaving a suitably impressive menu and price list. Gradually, as your business builds up, take on extra staff to meet demand.

Specialise in selling sports trainers

Buy from wholesale sources and sell from home. Alternatively, sell by party plan or set up a market stall. Sell locally at below shop prices and build up your sales through word of mouth.

Buy and sell secondhand photographic equipment

Either set up a shop or sell via the internet. Used equipment can be advertised as wanted through classified advertising or bought from auction. Check the online auctions also. Research the going rates for particular models and try to buy lower. Keep in mind that some equipment may be collectors' items. You could also sell goods on commission. Advertise in photography magazines and local press.

Design and produce crossword puzzles for magazines

There's a lot of newspapers and magazines which print crosswords for their readers. Some puzzle magazines are filled with them. If you like the idea of creating your own crosswords, and you're clever enough to do it, you can sell your creations to make it worthwhile. There's even computer software available which can help you along the way, Check the internet for sources.

Grow and sell your own houseplants

If you have a keen interest in houseplants, and you like growing them in multiple quantities from cuttings taken from mature plants, here is a way you can make extra cash. Start by selling them at car boot sales and outdoor markets. Have a good selection to choose from and sell them at prices that are at least 30% below shop prices. Once a regular site is established, increase sales by finding other sites and build up your stock.

Make your own jewellery and sell by mail order

Alternatively, you could sell your work from a market stall. If you're really ambitious and have an impressive collection worth putting into a catalogue, consider selling your products on the internet. An online shop and catalogue could be created using suitable e-commerce software and a merchant account.

Sell a range of catalogue goods for firms such as Kleeneeze, Amway or Betterware

These are well established companies with excellent products and a good commission rate for sales. Build up a round of regular customers by leaving a catalogue with people every few weeks. You then call back to collect any orders and deliver the goods as soon as you receive them. You can also build up your own business through introducing and helping new agents from which you will gain an extra small commission on orders taken through them. To begin with, contact the firms mentioned for all the literature which explains the business in full. A small investment is normally required to get started.

Start a greenhouse sales business

Find a supplier or manufacturer of greenhouses who can supply you at trade prices on credit. Advertise your service through canvassing and professionally designed door-to-door leaflets. When established, if business is good, you could employ people on a part-time basis to do the canvassing work for you, while you concentrate on the running of the business, including installation and the satisfaction of your customers.

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Buy secondhand student desks, refurbish and sell as computer desks

More and more students and young people are getting their own computer these days, for help with their homework and studies. Many of whom don't have a proper place to keep their equipment. Usually they get around to buying a computer desk, but new ones can be expensive. Student desks can be purchased cheaply and refurbished, if required, for re-selling. Advertise them as computer desks to get a better response. Local classified advertising in the free advertising publications are as good a place as any to place your ads.

Obtain screws and fixings in large quantities

Package and card them and sell them through hardware shops under your own brand name. Alternatively, sell them by mail order, or at car boot sales along with other inexpensive tools which can be bought at wholesale prices.

Buy and hire out trailers for motor vehicles

There are various types of trailers that people sometimes need to hire. These include box trailers for carrying commercial goods or moving house contents, open trailers for carrying rubbish and equipment or machinery, car transporters for carrying cars, horse boxes for horses and trailer tents for camping. Secondhand trailers can usually be picked up for a reasonable price, as opposed to new ones which are rather expensive. Ensure you have proper insurance cover and a place to store them when not in use. Advertise in the local press and Yellow Pages.

Buy mountain bikes from auctions which deal in unclaimed goods recovered by the police

These bikes usually sell at very low prices. You can refurbish them, if necessary, and resell them. Alternatively, hire them out in busy tourist areas. Ensure all bikes are well maintained and proper insurance is arranged.

Supply and fit replacement kitchen unit doors

This is an excellent way to save money on re-modelling peoples' kitchens, rather than the expensive alternative of purchasing a brand new one. There are a number of firms who can supply these doors at trade prices, allowing you to charge for your fitting service on top of the price of the doors you supply at retail cost. If you're a dab hand at do-it-yourself, this is a business you could try out with minimum investment.

Start a business buying and selling used sports equipment

All kinds of items could be sold, saving customers plenty of money on new expensive gear. These might include items such as trampolines, pool tables, archery equipment, table tennis tables, badminton nets and rackets, bodybuilding equipment etc. Smaller items are unlikely to be very profitable, so stick to the larger sports goods, for which you'll need a fairly large van and storage space. Advertise to buy and sell through local and regional newspapers.

Buy and sell pop and rock music memorabilia

Any type of music collectors' items, including records, signed autographs, concert posters etc., that might prove popular through mail order advertising. Specialise in the nostalgia periods of the 50's, 60's and 70's for best results. Advertise in music magazines.

Buy and renovate old country cottages in need of repair

On completion, rent them out during the holiday season. Obviously, a fairly large investment is involved in starting and running this kind of business. But property rarely drops in value, providing it's maintained in a good state of repair. Property auctions are a good place to look for likely bargains, but bear in mind that the type of property you're looking for needs to be in a suitable location and large enough to accommodate at least five or six people. This will allow you to get the best deal when hiring out.

Start your own mobile welding service

If you have any experience using industrial welding equipment, you should find a reasonable demand for your services. Particularly where motorists are concerned. There are always a fair number of people who need welding repairs carried out on their car or van to get it through the m.o.t. With suitable portable equipment and a large enough van to contain it, this is a business which has no shortage of customers for those with the necessary skills.

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Breed earthworms for profit

Here is a business that involves very little in the way of expense or any special skills. The main thing required is some unused space in a garden shed or garage. Using propagation boxes, available from gardening centres, plus the right combination of manure, peat and topsoil, earthworms can be bred in copious quantities. There are certain types which are regular fast breeders, and thousands of them can be bred in a relatively short space of time. So who needs earthworms? Well, gardeners and fishermen actually. And they're quite prepared to pay for them too. For more detailed advice check the internet or your local library for information.

Start a children`s fancy dress party service

This would involve you supplying a range of party games and costumes for children's birthday and christmas parties. The costumes could range from cavemen outfits to spacemen, and designed to fit a variety of different ages between 3 and 12 years. Have the costumes made up by someone reliable and professional. Advertise your service through the local newspapers and Yellow Pages.

Set up and run a contract painting company

Commercial and industrial premises, more so than private households, need regular maintenance and cleaning. As a contract painter your goal would be to gain work through contracts for keeping business premises, including shops, industrial units and warehouses, regularly spruced up by painting them when required. This will likely involve interior as well as exterior painting, possibly using special paints in some cases, such as vandal-proof and slip-free paints for floors. Supplies are readily obtainable from trade outlets. All you need is suitable scaffolding platforms, the right type of brushes and spray equipment, plus a good head for heights.

Buy and sell secondhand fantasy role-playing games

There are thousands of these type of games available now. By placing an advert in suitable publications, you could find a number of sources from where you can obtain used games. Sellers will often have a collection of games that they may wish to sell. These can then either be resold or rented out through means of an organised club. Profits would be made through mail order sales, or an annual subscription to the club and it's newsletter.

Learn to become a landscape gardener

Anyone with a good knowledge of plants, lawn care and a flair for creating an attractively laid out garden might consider this as an ideal business to operate part-time, or even full-time, if so inclined. Once your knowledge is sufficient, start your business by advertising in the local and regional press. An assortment of tools will be required, plus transport, plus any artistic materials you need to promote your designs, or to get your clients ideas down on to paper. More detailed planning can be done carried out at home if necessary.

Service and repair gardening equipment

Mowers, rotavators and hedge trimmers occasionally need replacement parts and their blades often need sharpening, as well as other handheld implements such as garden shears and edging shears. If this sounds like a service you could provide, all you need to get started are a few basic tools plus a grinder for sharpening. Either work from home or a small business unit, using advertising to attract customers, or start a mobile service with a small van, canvassing homes with gardens.

Run an accommodation address service

If you live in a large city you could charge individuals and businesses for the use of your address as a mailing address. This is useful to small mail order businesses who require a more prestigious address appearing in their advertising. Your involvement in this type of business simply involves you re-mailing letters back to the clients own address, For this you would charge a monthly fee and any postal costs incurred.

Start a sign writing service for business vehicles and shops

If have a good steady hand and an eye for detail, this type of business might interest you. You do need to be fairly artistic though, and a knowledge of various type styles is almost essential. This can be learned through practice, however, and studying reference material on the subject. If you're keen to give it a try, start by practicing on painted hardboard sheets, using methods outlined in books obtained from your local library or bookstore. When confident, take on a few small jobs to begin with, then advertise in the Yellow Pages.

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Start and run a mobile entertainment service for children

Parents who need to keep their children occupied during out-of-school hours and school holidays, or when they are sick, should find this service useful. Music cd's, videos, computer games, and even young children's toys are all suitable items for renting out to keep the kids amused. Build up a regular round through a children's club membership scheme, and charge a weekly fee when items are hired for the week. Advertise your service with leaflets and door-to-door canvassing.

Set up a driving school teaching advanced driving techniques

If you're a member of the Institute of Advanced Motorists, or perhaps even a qualified Approved Driving Instructor, you should consider the possibility of starting a business that runs advanced driving courses to help inexperienced drivers, or those who wish to improve their driving skills. These courses might, for example, include techniques for coping with skidding, driving in adverse conditions, learning to read the road and recognise potential hazards sooner, and even dealing with road rage situations. You don't need any particular qualifications to teach drivers who have already passed their test, but it does look good on your letterheads. If you're not already a member, join the IAM and take the Advanced Motoring test to sharpen your skills and teaching abilities.

Start a mobile laundry service

This would involve building up a regular round of customers who would require their laundry to be collected, cleaned and delivered, preferably the same day. A useful service for busy people, who don't have the time to do this chore themselves, and also the elderly or disabled who need a helping hand.

Open a conference room centre

Not as difficult as it sounds actually. If you own a large home in a major city, with equally large rooms, some of these rooms could be converted into small conference rooms, or training rooms for area managers and visiting reps. Standard fixtures might include a desk, a number of chairs, a flip chart or wipeable board and stand, a coffee vending machine, and perhaps a photocopier machine, which would also bring in extra revenue. Some rooms could also be made available for overnight stays. Charges would be based on daily or weekend usage.

Set up and run a rubbish removal service

This could be started using a large pick-up vehicle. Eventually, if business picks up well, you could expand in other directions, either starting a haulage tipper hire service or moving into skip hire. To begin with, advertise your service in the local newspapers and through shop window and leaflet advertising.

A demolition service can also be started on a small scale using a pick-up truck and suitable tools

This might include the deconstruction of small outbuildings or sheds which are no longer needed. Your service would also involve taking the rubbish away. Another possibility is to specialise in removing asbestos buildings and roofs, which requires a degree of expert knowledge and protective clothing. For further advice in this matter, seek expert help and guidance before attempting any form of asbestos removal, which can seriously harm your health if not carried out properly.

Start a business teaching other people how to set up and run a party plan business

If you have any experience in this field of selling, this could be a good opportunity to help others, who have little or no experience in this area, succeed in their new venture. Offer a one day course for people to develop their skills in the various stages of party planning, from arranging the party, through to presentation, entertaining guests, getting the orders and obtaining more bookings.

Start a loft insulation service

There are definite advantages in having a loft properly insulated, apart from the obvious one of keeping in the heat. This will lead to noticeable savings on the heating bills. Loft insulation materials are readily available and simple to install. Grants are also available in some cases. The only disadvantage is that the materials used can be very irritating to the skin if protective gloves are not used. But, although this is not a major problem, most people would rather pay a firm to do the work for them. If you think you could offer this type of service, by all means, give it a try.

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Supply and fit fascia and soffit boards

This is a business similar to the one previously described, except you're not repairing roofs, you'll be enhancing their appearance by fitting new, more up-to-date materials. The latest products are more durable and easier to maintain than the old wood fascia boards. Materials can often be supplied direct from the manufacturers. All you need to do is learn how to measure and fit them, and hey presto! you're in business.

Fitting double glazing can be a hugely profitable business when run efficiently

Experience of fitting upvc windows and doors is obviously a distinct advantage, though a well qualified handyman could soon learn the methods involved. Someone who is good at selling could also set up their own double-glazing firm and employ experienced fitters to do the nitty gritty work. Accurate measuring, a knowledge of materials available, and the ability to close a sale, is just as important to the success of the business as the fitting side. There are numerous firms who manufacture their own double glazing units, as well as fitting the windows themselves, and many of them supply individual fitters at trade prices.

Supply and fit custom car products

If you're mad about cars, this could be a very interesting venture. Lots of drivers, especially young males, love to give their cars some individuality. The supply and fitting of car body kits, custom graphics, big bore silencers, alloy wheels and wide tyres could be right up your street. Ideally, a small shop would be a good place to base your business, but you could start building up business through word-of-mouth until established.

Start a mobile karaoke business

Like mobile discos, the karaoke machine has found popularity as a means of spicing up private parties and regular weekly pub night entertainment. With a mobile karaoke machine plus a good selection of music, there should be no shortage of bookings if you have the energy and determination to make this business work. It's not only profitable, it's great fun too. For suppliers of professional karaoke equipment, check the home and leisure section of the Exchange & Mart magazine. Advertise your services through the local press and Yellow Pages.

Buy and sell microscopes, telescopes and binoculars

Here is a specialised opportunity to start a small business in a market with relatively little competition. Buying and selling optical equipment of various types through classified advertising. First study the market and what kind of equipment is currently available, as well as researching the value of older equipment through old magazines and other sellers. Advertise in the wanted columns of free ad papers, and re-sell through the same, as well as specialist magazines related to the item you're selling. Another option is to set up a website on the internet dealing in used optical equipment.

Start a tree and shrub pruning service

Many people with shrubs and trees in their garden don't have sufficient knowledge of how or when to cut them back to keep them in tip top condition. This knowledge is easily obtained however, through study and research of the appropriate books in your local library. With the right tools a determined person can quickly build up a round of regular customers for whom they can offer this service.

Frame and sell collections for display

These might include specialised items that appeal to particular groups of people. For example, sets of coins for coin collectors, stamps for stamp collectors, autographed photographs of celebrities, medals, maps, replica guns, stuffed fish, butterflies, insects and numerous other things. Advertise in suitable magazines.

Supply and fit replacement plastic guttering

Here's another business that can be started by a handyman who doesn't mind climbing and working up ladders. No special skills are involved, just a basic knowledge of how to remove old guttering and replace it with new parts. Many older houses still have the old style guttering which often needs replacing, but the newer plastic guttering is also prone to cracking sometimes, and the sections affected will need renewing. To find work, canvass homes and advertise your service in the local press.

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Supply and fit carpet tiles or laminated wood flooring

These are ideal materials for places like the kitchen, utility rooms, porches, playrooms and spare rooms. or any other room where the customer would rather not have a carpet fitted. They are usually very hard wearing and easy to keep clean. Materials are easy to obtain, with good discounts if you find the right source. Fitting is fairly straightforward in most cases, but can be difficult in awkward shaped rooms. Which is one of the reasons why someone with enough practice and experience should find plenty of work to keep them happy.

Start a mobile nappy delivery service

Babies go through an amazing amount of nappies each day. For mothers in urgent need of a fresh supply, but can't get to the shops for some reason, or the shops are too far away, a mobile nappy delivery service can be a godsend. The bigger the discount you can obtain when buying your stock in bulk, the more successful you're likely to be, as mothers who normally buy from the shops might use your service too. But only if your prices are much more favourable. This is an ideal business for a mobile lady with a van or large estate car. Advertising can be done through local newspapers and some well placed posters and leaflets in suitable places.

Breed and sell pedigree pups

If you love dogs and have suitable kennels, breeding certain types of dogs with good pedigrees can be a profitable, as well as very enjoyable, way to make an occasional spare-time income. Certain breeds sell for hundreds of pounds. If you doubt my word, check the pet section of the Exchange & Mart. However, there are costs to consider, including feeding and vet fees, and the well being of the dogs is of paramount importance. So it's not a business to be taken lightly, with little or no notion of what is involved.

Start a flowers and chocolates delivery service

Everyone loves a nice surprise, and they don't come much nicer than this. For people romantically attached, or celebrating an anniversary, birthday or engagement, this is an ideal service that gives people a chance to show how much they care. Supplies can be obtained from stock, or through a special arrangement with chosen suppliers. Advertise your service in the local press.

Start a business that organises a regular `almost new` clothing sales event

Similar to a car boot sale, this would involve hiring a hall, renting stalls to people with clothes to sell, charging a small admission fee and running a small food and drink facility. Advertise each event in the local press.

Buy and sell secondhand cookers and fridge freezers

Refurbish where necessary using new parts if needed. Use cleaning materials to spruce them up, and a spray gun and compressor for re-spraying scratched goods with new enamel paint. You could also sell microwaves, chest freezers and dishwashers. A small shop or factory unit will be needed once business takes off. Until then, you could test your business aptitude by buying and selling from home. Advertise in the local papers' classified sections.

Start a key cutting service using a key duplicating machine

Everyone needs extra keys cut at some time or other. Whether it's extra house keys or a spare set of keys for the car, in case your main keys get lost, a key cutting service will always find customers. Particularly if your prices are competitive. Ideally, you should provide your service in a busy central location. Perhaps from a small booth in a department store or shopping centre. Even a fast turnaround mail order service is a possibility, in which case you could work from home, but success would depend on the amount of business you receive in relation to advertising costs. Check the internet and trade directories for suppliers of equipment.

Start your own dog grooming service

If you're good with dogs, this could be just the job for you. Though, you will need to be fairly proficient at using a pair of scissors and hair clippers. Some dogs, such as poodles, need expert handling. It takes practice to be very good at this game. Learn as much as you can before setting up on your own. As an additional service you could also offer to do nail clipping. In either case, you can run it as a mobile service, or run the business from home.

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Set up a photocopying service for small businesses

Good quality new and reconditioned photocopying machines can be purchased or rented at very reasonable prices from specialist firms who deal in photocopying machines. It's just a case of phoning around to see who can give you the best deal. A service contract can be taken out at the same time to keep your machine in good working order. After that, it's just a case of making suitable contacts and offering a pick-up and delivery service to meet your customers needs.

Supply and fit roller blinds

There's a number of firms who offer this kind of business as a franchise, which may be worth considering unless you prefer to go it alone. If so, you'll either need to learn to make the blinds yourself, which is not too difficult when using the right materials, or find a supplier who can make the blinds up to your own specifications. All you need to do then is get the orders through advertising and home visits to show what you can offer, and take your customer's measurements to have them made and fitted.

Start a rotavating and lawn turfing service

People with gardens and allotments often need to turnover their soil before re-planting fresh seed to grow new plants or new grass. With a rotavator, an expensive tool which not many people buy or use frequently, you could offer a service which helps them complete this task, by doing the work for them. To begin with, to save money, you could purchase your own rotavator secondhand from an auction or through the classifieds. New home buyers are a good source of potential customers, because the gardens which come with their new home are not always grassed over. With a suitable contact and source of supply, you could offer a turf laying service as well. Neither of these tasks needs a great amount of skill, just the right equipment and plenty of energy. To advertise, place leaflets through the letterboxes of suitable prospects and advertise in the local press.

Start a travelling theatre group

This would involve producing and putting on plays at selected locations around the country. Places such as colleges and small theatres, plus clubs which arrange pantomimes around christmas time are all potential venues. Your job might also include finding suitable actors, arranging publicity and selling the tickets. If you lack the experience in stage management, find a suitable partner who can direct the actors and share some of the responsibilities for running the group.

Buy and sell golf equipment

Here's a business idea that you could start from home, and eventually, with shrewd investments, open your own specialist shop. Lot's of people are taking up golf for the first time as a new leisure pursuit. Other people are giving it up because they find they don't have the time or inclination to continue with their game. Yet others, wish to continue and improve their game by upgrading their equipment. Whatever the reason, there are always people wanting to sell their old clubs, golf bags, carts and accessories. Providing their equipment is in first class condition, and available at the right price, there's no reason why someone who can strike a good bargain, couldn't buy and re-sell these type of goods for a profit. Start by using 'goods wanted' and 'goods for sale' classified adverts in your local or regional newspapers.

Invest in a horse and carriage and offer sightseeing tours in a popular tourist location

You could also hire out your services for weddings. The drawback is that you will need somewhere to keep your horse and carriage. Check to see where you can hire a stable and storage for the carriage locally. As close to the tour route as possible.

Grow and sell your own vegetables and herbs

There are lots of gardening books which tell you how to grow your own food successfully. If you have a large area of garden or an allotment which you can use, this should be sufficient to start with. Particularly if you concentrate on growing small products such as herbs, tomatoes, cucumbers, horseradish etc. You will also require a number of greenhouses of adequate size to hold your plants and cultivating equipment. Even then, you will be severely limited in your output until you can invest in more land and equipment. However, if this is something that really interests you, then by all means start small but think big. Using suitable packaging, products can be sold direct to general grocers or in larger quantities to wholesale distributors.

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Produce a range of audio cassettes based on bible stories for children

The bible is packed full of fascinating stories that can be adapted to suit the imagination of young children. They make ideal bedtime stories and can teach children the importance of what is right and what is wrong in many different ways. The stories can be narrated by a single person with a good speaking voice, or enacted as a play using a cast of suitable actors. A local drama group may be happy to oblige. Have the scripts typeset and hire an inexpensive recording studio to record the dialogue. Some music and sound fx tapes may also come in useful. Once the master tape or CD has been produced, copies can be made quite easily using good quality hi-fi equipment. Have duplicates packaged and sold by mail order and through christian bookshops.

Start and run a regular arts and crafts fair

Ideally, this should be somewhere in a busy location where there`s plenty of people who may call in out of curiosity. Press advertising will also bring a number of visitors with more serious intentions to buy. To get started, find a suitable building that can be hired and fitted out with temporary stalls. Charge a set fee for craftspeople to display and sell their wares, and offer free admission to attract potential customers. The more people that come, the more successful the event is likely to be. This way, more sellers will become interested and higher rents can be charged.

Buy and sell metal detectors

Start a mail order business for new and used equipment. Set up a monthly newsletter for enthusiasts, including articles about valuable finds and suggested locations for treasure seeking. Include a column of items for sale and items wanted. A newsletter would also be a good way to get likeminded people together by arranging trips to sites of interest.

Supply and fit car alarms and car radio cassette/cd players

If you have a good knowledge of car electrics, this could be a good way to make money and work for yourself. Find a reputable supplier of car alarms and in-car entertainment systems and advertise your services in the local press. A mobile service would be the easiest way to start, perhaps with the aim of eventually opening your own specialist shop.

Supply and fit outdoor garden lighting systems

In fact anything that`s electrically powered in the garden such as fountains and miniature water falls which require electrical pumps, could be supplied and fitted by you, if you have some experience in electrical wiring. Most people would prefer an expert to fit these type of features in their garden. Your service might also include simple landscaping features, such as rockeries and ponds, that can be incorporated as a special feature of your lighting and water systems. Find out which firms can supply you with the basic equipment and materials. Compile your own catalogue or leaflet and price list, and advertise your business in the local press, the Yellow Pages and through door-to-door leaflet drops.

Start your own fence erection business

Wood fencing doesn`t last forever. It often gets damaged in strong winds, or simply rots away. People with garden fences occasionally need to have them replaced, and new fences are sometimes being put up for the first time. If you have some basic knowledge or experience of erecting posts and sections of lap fencing then all you need to get started in business is a reliable supplier with whom you can set up a trade account. Advertise your service in the local and regional newspapers.

Buy and sell old record collections

Trade in various collections of music including rock, pop, jazz, classical, rhythm and blues etc. There`s still a demand by collectors for old LPs and singles, particularly original recordings, plus various audio tapes and cd`s. Advertise in the Exchange & Mart and selected music magazines. Also trade at car boot sales and collectors fairs.

Buy and sell reproduction furniture

You`ll need a large van and plenty of storage space, but there`s a good demand for this type of used furniture. Whether it`s a sideboard, a TV or hi-fi cabinet, bookshelves or a set of dining room table and chairs, good profits can be made if you buy and sell wisely. Keep a lookout for bargains in the classified ad sections of the free papers and local newspapers. Place your own items wanted ads in regional papers and sell locally. Build up your knowledge of antique furniture, as this can also be a lucrative field. Attend auctions until you become familiar with prices. Eventually, you might like to consider opening a shop if your business brings in a steady income.

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Buy and sell musical instruments

There's a whole wide range of instruments you can deal in. The most popular being guitars and keyboards. You can start by buying and selling secondhand until you establish yourself as a reputable dealer. An alternative route, if you would like to specialise and run a small business from home, is to import folk instruments from other countries and sell by mail order. Advertise your stock in selected music magazines and local newspapers.

Purchase a badge machine and make badges for clubs

Badges are ideal for fundraising, promotions and special events. Badge machines are relatively cheap to buy. Firms who supply them can usually supply the blank badges and designs you require as well. Check out the business opportunity magazines where these firms normally advertise.

Start a telephone answering service for small local businesses

There are some business people who are often out on a job and cannot always answer their phone, which could very easily mean losing out on gaining new customers. Although mobile phones have alleviated part of this problem, it can still be inconvenient to answer the phone while busy at work on a job. Rather than employ a full-time office assistant, a small business could easily benefit from using an affordable telephone answering service that specialises in helping small businesses. Your job would involve tasks like taking simple enquiries, booking appointments and taking orders for firms who sell by phone. To get started, contact suitable businesses which may be interested in your service. One man firms such as plumbers, electricians, driving instructors etc. Arrange to meet them to discuss their requirements and what rate of fees you charge.

Start a business selling and distributing facial cosmetics, hand creams and body lotions

Produce your own brand name. Obtain supplies direct from selected manufacturers, preferably in bulk, and package them under your own label. Sell by party plan, mail order or through factory agents.

Run a business doing watch and jewellery repairs

Specialised courses are available to teach you how to repair jewellery and watches. Your service could be tailored to suit independent jewellers who farm out repair work rather than employ someone full-time to do it for them. You could also offer a mail order repair service direct to customers throughout the country.

Produce and sell a range of personalised embroidered handkerchiefs

Package and sell ready-made designs through menswear shops, as well as offering a custom-made service for their customers.

Start a video rental service that specialises in the top ten or top twenty new videos on release

Run the business as a mobile delivery service. Set up a limited club membership with an annual subscription for video renters who will be willing to hire videos on a regular basis at a special reduced rate. Dealing in the best of the new releases should guarantee a steady stream of customers. Obtain at least ten copies of the most popular videos to ensure customers have the best chance to get the title they want. Sell the videos off at half-price as soon as their popularity begins to wane.

Buy and sell army surplus supplies

Start your own mail order business, sell at car boot fairs or open a small shop. A number of dealers can supply at trade prices. Check the ads in Exchange & Mart and send for their catalogues and price list.

Start a business that builds conservatories

As an alternative to the previous idea, you might consider building conservatories instead. They do however, require a more skilful approach. Having experience in bricklaying and carpentry or fitting double glazing is practically essential. Though a business-minded person could very easily contract this work out to a third party and still make a reasonable profit if organised properly. Once again, do your homework. Check on available materials, compare prices and work out the best deals to make it a worthwhile proposition. Get orders and enquiries through advertising and leaflet distribution.

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Start a business organising and promoting music concerts

Someone with a flair for organising people would find this a very exciting business. Whether it's rock, pop or classical music, there are thousands of people in every major town and city who would show an interest in these type of events. How many tickets you sell will depend on how popular the performers are, how much you charge for the show, and how successful your publicity is. Get the mix right, and you could easily find a rewarding and lucrative career ahead.

Supply and install small timber constructions

Specialise in one type of installation. Perhaps various types of garden sheds or timber-framed saunas. To get your business off the ground, try contacting one of the specialist firms who manufacture their own. Tell them you would like to act as an agent and become an approved installer. Alternatively, you could run the business as a general construction firm that supplies and installs a variety of timber products such as summer houses, chalets, garden sheds, saunas or timber-framed conservatories. Provide your own labour or employ other people to do it for you. For the biggest profits run it as a high quality service providing top quality products, and target up-market homes with customers who can afford the very best.

Supply and fit high quality spiral staircases

As with home saunas and summer houses, these are products which can be squarely aimed at wealthy homeowners looking to add unusual features to their home. You could also provide cheaper alternatives for people carrying out loft conversions. These can be either straight or spiral staircases, but available at lower prices. Contact manufacturers for details of trade prices and terms of supply. Use only experienced fitters for carrying out the work to guarantee a first class job. For getting the orders and overseeing the work, incorporate your own profits in with the final price.

Start your own gumball or vending machine round

A number of companies offer this type of business opportunity, whereby you purchase their machines and products, find suitable locations, and regularly service the machines to keep them filled up. There's very little else involved, apart from counting your profits. Check the pages of business opportunity mags for firms who supply these products. Before entering any type of agreement however, always check the details and fine print.

Make more money with your answering machine

There's a number of mail order businesses who make money simply by placing small, inexpensive, classified ads with an enticing messages to phone for more details about their products. It can also work for firms offering business opportunities and certain types of services too. If you have something to sell that can be sold successfully by mail, consider using your answering machine, and a compelling description of your product as a way to get more orders.

Start a business reproducing prints of famous old buildings

These could be loosely sketched drawings or in the style of a detailed architectural plan or perspective view. Sell them by direct mail to architects and interior designers or through selected retail outlets.

Start a business designing and selling personalised wine labels on bottles of wine

This type of service can provide a gift that is different and out of the ordinary. Customers would send you details of the persons name and date of birth, along with any other relevant details, to be included on the label. You would then, using a home computer, design the label to make it look authentic, print it out and stick it to a bottle of wine, white or red whichever preferred, that's been supplied without a label. The bottle, or crate of wine is then sent to the customer by special delivery. Arrangements could also be made to deliver the goods to a third party as a surprise gift, if required. Advertise your service by mail order through various magazines.

Start a faxback service supplying printed information

Certain types of useful information that can be sold to businesses, can also be profitable to promote. For example, market research information, mailing lists, company directories etc., can be promoted through a faxback service which is run using a premium rate phone line. Companies willing to respond to your fax promotions are charged at the usual premium rate, which is generally around £1.00 per minute. If you have information to sell, consider using this technique as a way to make more profits.

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Specialise in fitting close-circuit security cameras in private homes and commercial outlets

Security cameras are everywhere these days, but there's still a lot of businesses who don't have them yet. Plus, the market for home security is huge. Now that video cameras are much more compact and easily fitted, while crime and vandalism continues unabated, there's great potential for an energetic person to make this business an instant hit. For equipment, check the exchange & Mart and trade magazines.

Offer a service to transfer cine film on to videotape

This isn't as difficult as it sounds. Good results can be achieved with a good quality camcorder and a suitable 8mm projector. The trick to getting it right is all in the setting up and the type of projector used. A dual gauge projector is best, suitable for standard 8mm and super 8mm films. It will also need to have a variable speed control to get the best results. Once you have the right equipment there are very few overheads in running this type of business, and profits can be good. See also the Photography section.

Set up and run a roof repair service

For most homeowners, roof repairs are inevitable when strong winds take their toll. Whether it's simply a loose or broken tile, rotten wood eaves, loose cement or a leaking flat roof, repairs are going to need doing eventually. For someone in the roofing business, there's always another job just around the corner. If you don't mind working up ladders and on sloping roofs, the opportunity is there to offer a useful service. Fixing tiles is a fairly simple job in most cases, but eventually you may also wish to repair or replace flat roofs which requires a lot more skill. You could learn this process the hard way from books and trial and error, but working for someone else to gain the experience first will be a much more sensible route. When you do decide to start your own business, you can get more work through canvassing and advertising.

Start a walking menu board service

Not as popular as it used to be, but still a useful service. Ideal for students who need a bit of pocket money. If you make the right contacts through canvassing and supply the advertising boards, you could pay other students to work for you, while you take some commission for yourself. A dozen small contracts should make it worthwhile.

Start a business organising city tours by bus, or coach excursions to historical sites of interest

An open top double decker bus would be ideal for city tours, or a single decker for out-of-town trips. Arrangements could be made to hire these vehicles if purchase is out of the question. Advertise the tours in busy tourist areas and through tourist information centres.

Start your own used car parts business

Secondhand car parts can be taken from old and late model cars bought from salvage auctions. Thousands of 'write-offs' are sold weekly throughout the country, and can be grabbed for amazingly low prices. Good parts can be stripped and sold on to local and mail order customers. When starting out, specialise in one particular make of vehicles, such as Ford or one of the other major manufacturers. You will need a place to store one or two cars at a time and storage for spare parts. You will also need a car transporter trailer, or have contact with someone who can lend or hire you one for transporting cars from auction. Advertise your spare parts business in the Yellow pages.

Buy and rent out holiday caravans

If you have some money to invest, here is a way you could see good returns on your investment. Thousands of people each year book holidays in caravans. It makes a cheaper alternative for families who can't afford to go abroad with their children, and for elderly couples who like a quieter holiday near the sea or countryside. There are always well furnished caravans for sale on established popular sites, which is ideal if you want to make them pay. A site fee will need to be paid, which is usually quite reasonable, considering the profit you should make on hiring the caravan out. Always check the costs involved however, and weigh up the likely profits you could make, through the busy and quiet seasons.

Record and sell your own songs over the internet

Many new bands are taking this route to establish themselves with a wide audience. Some of them are sending their demo CD's to major music sites where they are being converted to MP3 and played on demand. A lucky few are likely to gain major recognition as professional recording artists.

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Buy and sell washing machines

Here is a business that is best run by someone with good mechanical and electrical knowledge of how washing machines work. If you're experienced in this area you could also run a call out and repair service. Start by buying through classified ads to find the best deals and re-sell for a reasonable profit. When established, consider opening a small shop.

Start a mailing service for direct mail advertisers

This would involve combining a selection of leaflets or cards advertising various products and services that might appeal to the general public, or names from a specified mailing list. After placing the advertising material together in one professionally designed envelope, the mailing is sent to prospective customers. The fee for this service would be approximately half the cost incurred to advertisers preparing and sending out their own mailshot.

Set up a business that erects car ports and pre-fabricated garages

Here's a business for the experienced handyman. There's a number of manufacturing firms who could supply you with materials at trade prices. Write to them using a printed business letterhead to find out what their prices are, as well as terms and conditions of supply. When you find a suitable supplier, canvass for jobs in your local area until you get enough work. Eventually, to expand your business, you might prefer to advertise in local and national publications if you're willing to travel further afield.

Supply and fit telephone extension leads and sockets

This would be a simple service offering people a way to add an additional phone to their existing phone line. For example, an extra phone in the bedroom or study. You might also consider supplying new phones of various types to expand your business. Canvas door-to-door and advertise in the local press.

Breed and sell tropical fish

If you're an expert in tropical fish you've probably already tried this idea, but for a newcomer who may be interested, there's lots of information available on how to look after, and breed various types of fish for profit. Before considering this as a way to make extra money however, there's plenty to learn and you would be well advised to gain as much experience as you can to make it a worthwhile proposition. It's not as easy as it sounds, certain types are harder to breed than others. Equipment can be a little expensive to begin with, but not prohibitive. Some types of tropical fish can bring good profits and are worth persevering with. You can sell them through various pet stores or directly to the public through classified advertising.

Become a promotions and competition organiser

Here's something that people with good organisational skills might consider. It's a business with very big potential and big profits when run successfully.

Buy and sell children's books

Advertise for unwanted books and resell them from a children's bookstall at car boot fairs. By specialising in secondhand children's books you can often pick up popular titles at bargain prices. Seek out fiction and non-fiction books which have been read and discarded, or put away in a collection which is no longer needed. You could also buy and sell computer games and children's videos as well. If you attend the same car boot fairs regularly you will gradually become well known and people are likely to approach you to sell their unwanted books and games for cash.

Buy and sell bankrupt stock or job lots of ex-catalogue goods

Frequently, companies go bust leaving unused remaining stock left to be disposed of. Auction houses are often used as a means of selling off this stock. If you're a factory worker, party plan agent or a natural salesperson, selling job lots of liquidated or ex-catalogue stock can provide a way to deal in good quality goods at very low prices, and still make a very good profit. Check for lists of auction houses and scour the trade magazines such as 'The Trader' for suppliers of ex-catalogue goods.

Buy and sell old telephones

People still have fond memories of the old style phones. They also make a nice change from the modern bland phones in use today. But if a sense of nostalgia isn't your cup of tea, you could always deal in novelty phones. i.e. Mickey Mouse etc.

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