



CREATING AN ONLINE PRESENCE

Even if you personally try to live an offline life, or predominantly share your creative activity/output in-person, if someone is interested in what you create then they're likely to search for you online. And when they do, your online presence acts as a signpost, pointing them to where they can further support and engage with your work.

Choose a handle

Part of that signposting is choosing a handle to use consistently. Whether that's your own name, a pseudonym, or the name of your business, having the same handle everywhere makes it easier for people to find you.

Once you've got an idea for a handle, Google it. What are the top ten results? If there's another person or business with the same name, how prominent are they? Do they make similar work, or will it be easy to distinguish yourself? It's not the end of the world if there's another artist online with the same name as you, but setting yourself apart at this stage can avoid confusion and help you grow.

Make a homepage

Building a website can feel like a huge task. But when you're getting started, all you need is a homepage with the basics: a bio, an image, and links to your socials or listings.



Popular website builders like WordPress, Squarespace, and Wix all have free templates and click-and-drag editors, so it doesn't take much technical knowledge to get started. It just takes confidence - and you're brave enough to make art, so you already have that!

The past year has been especially turbulent for social media. No platform lasts forever, even if it feels like we can't remember life without it. But you can easily create a little corner of the internet with your name on it which isn't at the mercy of algorithms and billionaires.

Social media

Which app do you usually open first? Where do you share personal updates, or follow other artists? Chances are that's the platform you actually like using and feel most confident with - so start there!



Consider the medium(s) you work with and the materials you have. In theory, every app will let you share text, images, and video - but in practice, sharing links and events is easier on X and Facebook, and sharing images, music, and videos of your creative process is ideal for Instagram and TikTok.

Don't feel pressured to have active accounts on every possible platform. Social media may be (mostly) free, but that doesn't mean it won't cost you time, energy, and creativity.

Other ways to share updates

Newsletters offer a direct route to a person's inbox, so a subscriber is more likely to be a loyal supporter rather than a casual follower.

Before you start, think about tone and purpose, and be clear with people about what they're subscribing to. If you ask people to sign up for event info and special offers, but then send them personal reflections on your creative process, they'll unsubscribe. You might think the reflections are more valuable, but that's not why they gave you their email address!

Consider adding a blog or news section to your own website. Regular posts will keep your supporters updated without having to be on socials, and adding fresh content can move you up to the first page of Google.

Start-up checklist

- Choose a distinct handle and use it consistently
- Set up a homepage with the basics
- Focus on your favourite social platform first, or the one which best suits your medium
- Try a newsletter or blog to share updates with engaged supporters

And finally - your web presence should reflect you, your art, and your creativity. The people supporting you long-term aren't sticking around because you're brilliant at being online. They're here to see what you create next.



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