

**Checklist**

This is a checklist that is going to help you make sure that you have everything you need to start your Shopify store. Since there is so much material in the book it can be challenging to remember everything. This checklist will ensure that you are ready to open your store. Print it out and check each item off one at a time as you acquire it. Then, you’ll be ready to open your Shopify store and you’ll be primed for success, wealth and independence.

Payment Gateways

The first thing that you’re going to want to check off your list is your payment gateway. Obviously, if you have no payment gateway, you have no ability to make sales. Not only do you need to make sure that you have chosen all of the payment gateways that you should have, and configured them properly, you also need to make sure that they are working properly by testing them individually a few times. Many stores have reached their launch date and spent advertising money only to discover that they had a technical problem with their payment gateways and no one could buy anything. Don’t test your payment gateways days before your launch – test weeks before.

The Shipping & Fulfillment System

If you are selling physical goods then you are going to need to have a shipping system in place. Luckily, Shopify makes this easier than most platforms, but this isn’t something that you’ll want to leave to chance. Test out your shipping system several weeks in advance and make sure that if you are using a dropshipper or a third-party to fulfill your orders that they are sending them out on time. Remember, your customers will remember little else about the product they purchased from you other than shipping time. That’s the number one thing that will influence someone’s decision to buy from you again in the future. If you are doing your own order fulfillment make sure that you have a plan for getting your orders out.

Search Engine Optimization

Since you are using Shopify you have a decided advantage when it comes to search engine optimization. Still, this is one of the most important aspects of your store, since it represents your marketing efforts and determines where you are going to fall in the search engine results. Also, this is where you want to set up your social media, and make sure that you are following good practices like consistency and value building with your social media posts. Make sure that each of your social media accounts is branded so that if a customer that knows you visits any one of them they can instantly recognize the look as your own.

Submit your Sitemap

If you want your store to be entered in Google (and the other search engines) correctly you are going to need to submit a sitemap. Shopify makes this process very easy. You can find your sitemap by going to nameofyoursite.myshopify.com/sitemap.xml. You might have thousands of product pages that all need to be indexed in Google so submit your sitemap early and then do searches to make sure that you can find everything. This will also give you some clues on whether or not you need to change your titles and HTML descriptions on some pages and whether you are optimized for the keywords that you’re intending to rank for.

Setting up your Domain

You’ll want to make sure that your domain is set up properly. This is an important step, but sometimes people get confused and try to route the domain using third-party services when it fact you can easily set this up right through Shopify. Shopify will allow you to enter your name into the system and then whenever a web server makes a request for that domain, they will redirect them to your Shopify site. The process is fairly straightforward and if you need help you can check out the help information on Shopify on domain forwarding.

Choosing the Right Tags

You’ll need to use meta tags to teach the search engines what your pages are about. The meta tags tell the search engines what the title of a page is, as well as give it a description. When you type in a keyword phrase in Google, notice that it is highlighted in the page description on all of the search results that contain it. Obviously, that means that you also need to include the keyword that the page is about in your description. Although Shopify does have some powerful tools for doing search engine optimization on your site there are actually better third-party applications that can ensure that your site pages are tagged correctly.

Making Sure Your Site Works on Mobile Devices

This is probably the most important item to get off of your checklist in this modern age – other than your payment options. The mobile device is the way that modern consumers are buying and if you don’t have a responsive theme that is displaying your site correctly on all of the major mobile devices that are on the market, your sales are going to suffer. You can test whether or not your site works on mobile devices from tablets to iPhones by looking up mobile testing sites. These are very accurate and can help you see what your page looks like on a specific device.

In addition, you need to make sure that your payments are working on mobile devices. This is a mistake often made by new store owners. They check their payment settings and gateways for functionality through the computer but they don’t test out payments made on a mobile device. Remember, you need to test out your gateway on mobile for each of the payment gateways that you have set up. Part of this is display, but most of it is whether or not the payment will actually work on a mobile device. This is something that you should have worked out several weeks before you actually launch your site.