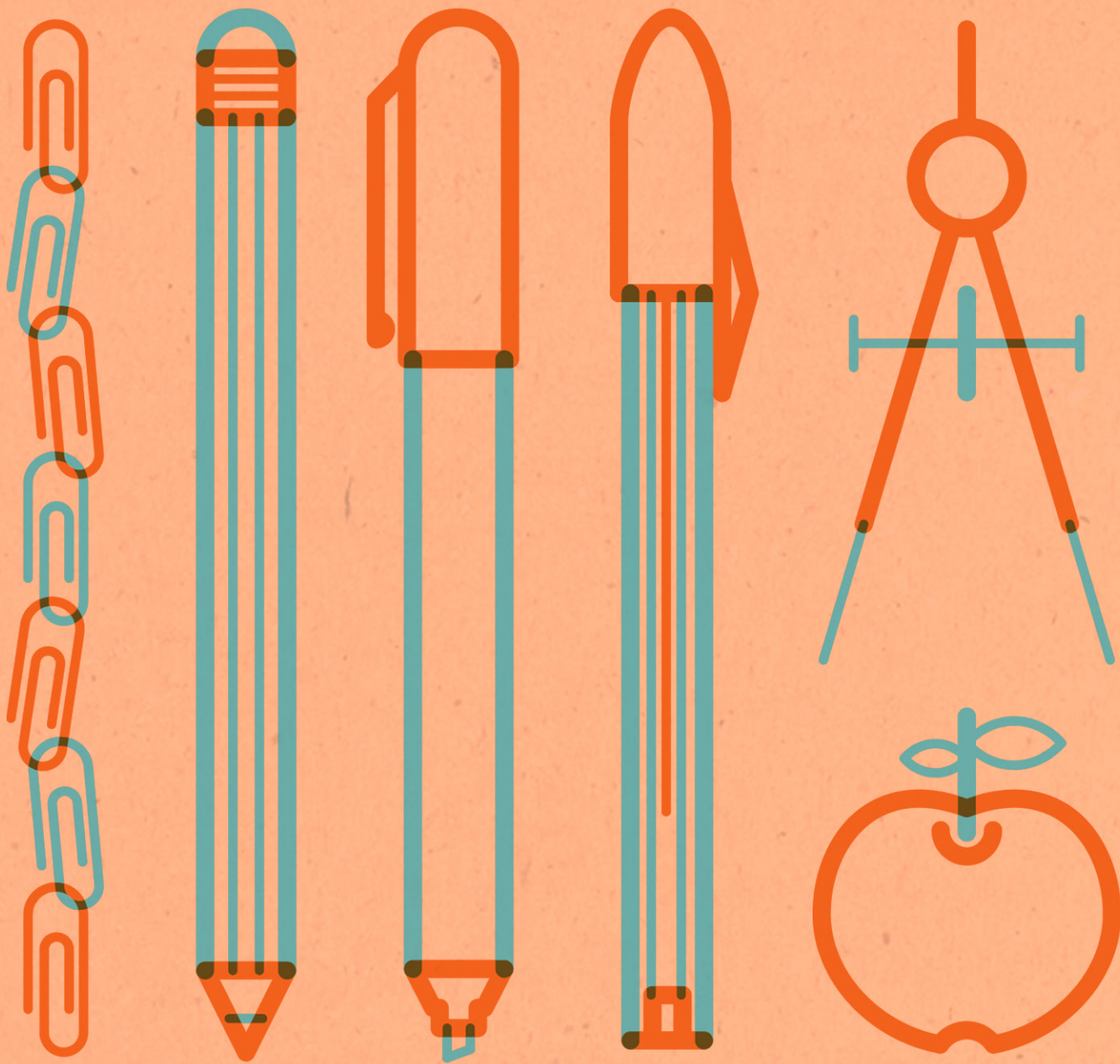


SKILLSHARE



TEACHER HANDBOOK

A guide to creating and promoting your class

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Deciding What to Teach

Skilshare teachers range from startup founders to baking-obsessed hobbyists to emerging artists. Everyone has a talent, skillset, piece of knowledge, or valuable insight to share. Everyone also wants to learn new things. Find your passion ([Oprah's got some pretty good tips for you about how to do that!](#)) and teach it. Your students will have a positive experience and give you props and/or private, constructive feedback that's productive. Teaching is a learning experience for you, too. Not only will you end up doing research on a topic that you love and know about, just to make your class tip top, but you can also reflect on what you learn from teaching your first class to make your next session even better.

Brainstorm:

Ask yourself: What do I like to geek out on? What do I spend my free time doing or thinking about? What do people always ask me for advice about? Choose a subject that's a natural extension of your everyday self; if you pick something that you think about often and enjoy doing, then it'll be easy for you to spend time preparing your class and talking to a group of people about that topic.

Ask Around:

After you've done some brainstorming, share your list of class ideas with friends, family, colleagues, or that person next to you at the coffee shop. Which class of yours would they take? Which ones wouldn't they take and why not? What skill would they like to

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learn from you? Don't hesitate to take advantage of modern technology and the masses, either; create an online survey with the class topics you have in mind and Tweet it out. Watch the results pour in.

Your class topic can be quirky and creative, like [How to Make Shoes](#), or it can be straight up and practical, like [Programming: Ruby on Rails](#). Whichever camp your class falls into, it should be compelling, productive, and reflect your passion for the subject.

Get Specific:

Be simple, sweetheart! Rather than try to cram an entire course's worth of material into one class, get uber focused. The more you narrow in your class topic, the more likely it is you'll have time to do everything from intros to teaching to hands-on workshop or Q&A time. Instead of promising to teach people how to sew, line up a class on how to replace buttons, hem jeans, and patch up holes. Rather than teach one class on how to use Wordpress, zoom in on how to find the best Wordpress plug-ins for a blog. The more concrete and definable the skill you're teaching, the easier it'll be to set class goals and meet them.

Student satisfaction:

Where expectations and reality meet. You want to deliver what you're promising, so if you title your class "How to Make and Sell Handbags," you'll want to make sure you cover everything from sourcing materials to the design process to marketing to pricing to...and the list goes on. To avoid disappointed students and a disorganized class, deliver what you promise and make it clear whom your class is intended for, i.e., advanced or beginner-level.

How to Create a Catchy Class Title

Students want to know exactly what skills and information they'll be getting out of your class and how that information will be taught. A straightforward class title draws in potential students and a detailed class description confirms their interest in your class and encourages them to buy a ticket.

The purpose of a great class title is to get potential students to read the first line of your class description! Writing an intriguing title will draw people into reading further every time.

List It:

It's easier and faster for people to read numbers and they'll be more likely to walk away feeling like they've achieved the skill you're teaching if they can quantify it.

Communicate a Benefit:

Think about the Google search someone might use to learn more about the topic you're teaching, i.e., "how to hold a digital camera." Et, voila! Your title.

Play with Words:

If you want to play around a bit, get punny. Readers always notice fun and witty titles.

Inform:

Titles don't have to be witty and mysterious; they can also be used to inform students of a main topic, i.e., Effects of X.

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Keep it Short:

You can attract people's attention with a longer class title, but there's no reason to use every last spot in the character limit we provide! Keep your title simple and easy to digest.

Don't Use Periods:

They stop the flow of your reader's experience. This is a mini tip that may not have great impact on your title, but could prevent some people from clicking on it!

If you're teaching a course - a series of classes - please note that in the title, i.e., 4-Week Course: Ruby on Rails.

Check out these insightful articles on what makes a good title for more tips:

[10 Sure-Fire Headline Formulas That Work](#)

[What Makes a Good Title?](#)

[How To: Write a Strong Title for Your Blog Article](#)

The 4 Essential Elements of a Class Listing

No matter what your writing experience, you can create a personal, descriptive, helpful blurb about your class that will compel potential students to buy tickets. You can take your class idea from a spark of brilliance to a tangible product that you can effectively sell to others via clear and compelling words. Your class description should be clear and detailed so that students know whether or not it's a good fit for them and what they'll get out of the session.

Who:

Who is your class geared towards? You don't want to prematurely exclude potential students whom you may not have considered, but you do want to make sure that everyone who attends your class feels like they belong. Think: Who is your intended audience... and who might be interested even if the class topic is not obvious to them? Explain if this class is for beginners or advanced students. If there's an age limit due to tools or ingredients (i.e., alcohol) that you're using in your class, specify those boundaries. If anyone at all can benefit from your class, let the world know, that, too!

What:

What exactly will your students be able to do or know when they leave your class? You should be able to put the answer to this question into one or

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two succinct sentences. If you've got more than that, you're probably trying to cram too much into one class!

How:

Will your class be a lecture class with Q&A? Will it be a hands-on workshop? Will you teach one, independent class or will you be teaching a series of classes (in other words, a course)? We strongly encourage all Skillshare teachers to pick the class structure that works best for their topic and their personal teaching style. That said, this is also about giving your students the chance to opt in or out; if a potential student is on crutches, he or she may choose to skip out on a class that involves lots of walking around. We've seen 75-person Q&A sessions, study sessions with no teacher, and classes that go out onto the streets to practice the networking skills they're learning. Don't limit yourself and think outside of the box - we're trying to flip traditional education on its head, after all!

Additionally, if you want your students to prep before class so they can dive right in, let them know what they need to read or bring with them so they can get the most out of the session.

Why:

Your class description is a great tool for selling prospective students on attending your class, so remind them why they clicked on your class listing in the first place and reinvest them in the importance of the subject at hand. How will your class enrich their lives and make them better versions of themselves? Why is your class different or better than others with similar topics? Maybe your class will empower

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them with a brand new technological skill or it will open their minds and help them brainstorm more effectively.

For extra help, check out this article: [How to Write a Killer “How To” Article That Gets Attention](#)

Describing Your Teaching Qualifications

Your students want to know what makes you qualified to teach the class you've listed. They don't care if you've got a PhD or if you've simply been a passionate amateur about your class topic for years - they just want to know why you're teaching what you're teaching and to see what you've got to show for yourself! Whether you're personally teaching the class you've listed or your business is hosting another teacher, the principles for proving yourself remain the same.

1. What Students Want to Know:

You don't have to be accredited from an institution or an "expert" to teach a great class. Just let students know who you are! What is your background with the subject? How long have you been working at the skill you're teaching others. Most importantly, why are you passionate about the subject you're teaching? Your passion speaks volumes and will inspire prospective students of yours to learn from you. While you may be great at lots more than the one thing you're focusing on in class, keep your teacher bio relevant to the topic of the class itself.

2. Proving Your Skills:

Words are worth a lot, but they only go so far! Show, don't just tell. Share relevant blog posts, websites, portfolios, or other evidence of your experience with the subject you're teaching. If you've got mentions

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of yourself on other sites or have photos or videos of your work, students will want to see those things to reassure themselves that you know what you're talking about.

3. Picking a Photo

Whether you're personally teaching your class or your business or organization is hosting another teacher, your teacher bio should have a high-resolution, creative image that doesn't have much text on it. Stock photos and pictures that cut off or are blurry don't attract many lookers! We recommend using Flickr Creative Commons for finding class photos, in particular.

Creating Compelling Copy

Get Smart:

knowledge is power, and if you know your topic, and audience well, you'll be able to write directly to them. If you're truly passionate about the topic you're teaching, you'll be curious about that subject and the people interested in it; provide context that proves this.

Less is More:

It's incredibly easy for readers to get distracted online, so make your point quickly and precisely so that they take the action you want: signing up for your class. Your class description isn't a blog post or a newspaper article, but if you've written one of those and they're relevant to your class topic, then link to them!

Write Well:

the most out of the session.

Why:

No matter what kind of copy you're writing, misplaced apostrophes and spelling mistakes, as well as unnecessary jargon, are unattractive and untrustworthy. Write in a tone and in language that you're comfortable with, but always proofread.

Read more here:

[Tips for Writing Compelling Copy](#)

[Copywriting 101: Your Guide to Effective Copy](#)

Etsy has some excellent tips for their online arts & crafts store sellers that also apply here:

[Seller How-To: Making the Most of Your Descriptions](#)

[Writing for an Online Audience: How-To](#)

What Happens When You Publish Your Class Listing

After you've entered the details about your class, hit the Publish button, and your class link will be live! That means you can send around the link to your class (you'll find the short link at the bottom of the class description, right above the Facebook Comments) to friends, family, colleagues, and anyone else you think might be interested in the skill you're sharing. The second you publish your class, anyone may now buy tickets!

Your class will only appear on the Learn page of the Skillshare website if we manually feature it. However, anyone may discover your class listing by keyword via the search bar on the Learn page. Don't forget to tag your listing with the appropriate skills so that interested potential students can find it!

You can read more about this in our [Support Center](#).

How to Get Your Class Featured on Skillshare

The Skillshare team editorially curates the classes you see featured on site, but every person who creates a class listing gets a live link he/she can share out to promote the class and to sell tickets. We're working on a universal search function that'll allow you to discover all Skillshare classes soon.

Consider the following guidelines you should follow with your class listing in order to have it considered for the Learn page:

- **Communicated:** detailed descriptions and teacher bios, clever and high-resolution photos
- **Creative:** if you could see it on Kickstarter.com, you'll see it on Skillshare - we love design, studio art, music, food & drinks, etc.
- **Educational:** no parties or events, no pure marketing or self-promotion
- **Unique:** classes that you can't find everywhere, more niche than a basic "101" class
- **Linked:** teacher's profile is connected to Facebook & Twitter

If your class follows these guidelines, it's likely that your class listing will be considered as a featured one!

Getting the Word Out About Your Class

You put a whole bunch of elbow grease and passion into preparing for your Skillshare class, and it's only fun to share your knowledge when you've actually got eager disciples! This handbook will explain what's automatically done by Skillshare to market your class and what you should plan on including in your prep time to actually sell out the seats of your class.

Consider the following guidelines you should follow with your class listing in order to have it considered for the Learn page:

1. What Skillshare Does to Help

Here's what Skillshare does to help you sell tickets:

- After you've entered the details about your class, hit the Publish button, and your class link will be live! That means you can send it around and promote your class, and students may now buy tickets. Your class will only appear on the Skillshare website if we manually feature it.
- There are Twitter, Facebook, and email buttons linked to each class listing, so anyone can share info about your class by promoting its link on the interwebs
- We send weekly personal recommendations of classes to Skillshare community members that are based on the topics they might be most interested in

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- We feature top notch classes on our site for all to see! (See below for more information about how to get your class feature-ready.)
 - We write articles and blog posts and get local and national press about Skillshare and usually feature specific classes in those pieces

2. What You Should Do

Here are some best practices and strongly recommended steps for you to take to get students to sign up for your class, in addition to utilizing the tools Skillshare already provides:

- Get someone - your friend, your cousin, your boss - to buy the first ticket to your class! No one wants to be the first person at the party.
- Utilize social media. Hop on Twitter and @ mention Skillshare (i.e., @skillshare) so that more people will see your tweet, if they follow our account. Create a Facebook event for your class and invite your friends and colleagues; when they RSVP “yes” to your class, their friends will see it in their newsfeeds. Of course, be sure to include the link to the class listing on Skillshare so that they actually purchase a ticket!
- Never underestimate the power of email. Send a personal message to your friends, family and colleagues about your class. Include a short line that they can Tweet out or a post they can share on Facebook.
- Go old school! Print out flyers to promote your class and place them around the location where

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you're hosting it or in relevant spots. If you're teaching a knitting class, post flyers in a yarn store!

- Think beyond your personal networks and get in touch with groups from Meetup.com or in your local community that might be interested in the class you're teaching.