

*i-to-i*

# **FREELANCING**

## **FOR ONLINE TEFL TUTORS**



# DISCOVER HOW TO FREELANCE AS AN ONLINE ENGLISH TEACHER

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## *Why freelance online?*

Being a freelancer is definitely the way forward. Choosing your own hours, pay, students, teaching platform, and being your own boss - why didn't we think of it sooner?

In this guide we'll be covering how to get started as an online TEFL freelancer, how to market yourself including use of social media and building an online presence, recording the perfect demo video for all those online applications, lesson planning and the all-important time management. Plus, we'll also include some key tips and tricks to help you in your day to day freelancer life!

So, if you're interested in joining the world of online English freelancers, keep reading to find out more!





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# FREELANCING ONLINE:

## *The requirements*

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Your online freelancing options will depend on the qualification you have, but this is good news as it means you're in complete control!

### *Applying with a company*

If you're applying to a company, most require you to be a native English speaker and have a globally recognised TEFL/ TESOL/CELTA qualification. Some require a degree, but this depends on the country where the company is based. Usually the degree is a requirement for visas, but by choosing to teach online, you won't need a visa so you'll have lots of options.

### *Experience*

A lot of companies provide in house training, so if you're just starting out on your freelance journey, don't worry! Each company operates differently and uses different teaching methods, this means they're usually less worried about experience and more interested in that all important TEFL qualification.

### *Technical requirements*

A well-lit and quiet room/area is one of the main teaching online requirements. Make sure you have somewhere you aren't going to be interrupted or has excessive background noise. A lot of teachers use noise-cancelling headphones as well when teaching, so this is a good item to add to your 'freelancer shopping list'. Along with a quiet space, headphones, and a webcam the key to being a successful online freelancer - high quality internet! A lot of companies will ask you to run a 'speed test' before starting or as part of the application process to ensure your internet speed is high enough to meet their requirements and you can teach without internet problems. Pro-tip: You can test your internet using [www.speedtest.net](http://www.speedtest.net). If your internet is above 10mbs you're good to go!

### *» Freelancer shopping list*

- A TEFL qualification
- Well-lit, quiet room
- Headphones
- Webcam
- Fast internet  
(10mbs upload/download)

# FREELANCING FOR ONLINE COMPANIES

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A lot of the TEFL companies enable you to work for them, but as a freelancer - result. This means you aren't tied in to one particular company, so depending where you are in the world and where your students are, you might be able to teach across multiple platforms and make the most of different time zones. For example, if you're UK based and teaching for Palfish, your mornings through till lunchtime/ early afternoon will likely be full, but then you'll still have afternoon and evening availability for students based across the UK & Europe. Some companies might want you to sign a contract, however this is usually to confirm you agree to their terms and conditions etc and not that you are tied into them exclusively.

» Pro tip: Make sure you read the small print thoroughly in your paperwork to ensure you're allowed to work for multiple companies before signing your contract!





# INTRO & DEMO VIDEOS

If you're interested in freelancing for an online company, you'll find that a lot of them require a video of you as part of the application process - this is pretty normal. The video content can vary depending on the company requirements - some simply require an introduction video of you as a person and your background and experience so they can see your personality, some require a video of you teaching a mock lesson.

## Intro videos

A short 2-3 minutes self-recorded video where you are required to introduce yourself to your future employer. It's important to showcase your qualifications, skills, and even your personality throughout your intro video. Make it fun, eye-catching, and informative to stand out from the crowd!

## Demo videos

Demo videos often come in the form of a mock lesson. These can be with a genuine student, an interviewer pretending to be a student or a pre-recorded lesson. You'll get all of the information you need from your employer to hold a successful lesson, all you need to do is give yourself time to prepare and you'll smash it!

» Pro tip:  
be energetic,  
confident, and  
speak clearly



# HOW TO MARKET YOURSELF ONLINE...

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When it comes to freelancing as an online TEFL tutor, the key to success is knowing how to successfully market yourself, your services, and your skills to potential future students!

## Ways to market yourself:

- Create your own website
- Utilise social media platforms
- Use online marketplaces
- Start a blog
- Create online marketing campaigns
- Word of mouth

# CREATING YOUR OWN WEBSITE

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Setting up your own website isn't a necessity but it's definitely a good idea if you're looking to build a long-term TEFL career.

Here you can share your qualifications, lesson plan ideas, pricing structures and offers, blogs, and of course your teaching style, so students can see what to expect from you. It's also a secure way for students to contact you and pay for lessons up front, as well as starting to gather a database of potential students who sign up to your site.

To create your own website, you can either use free online tools to create it yourself, or pay a freelancer to create a website for you.

## Creating a website

Creating a website can be a fun and rewarding experience, but it can be quite tricky if you don't have the skills already. If you think you're up to the task we'd recommend using a website building tool to help you on your way.

## Website building tools

Ready to build your own personal website?  
Check out these handy website building tools:

- Wordpress
- Wix
- Go Daddy





# MARKET YOURSELF ON SOCIAL MEDIA!



Every freelance teacher has a social media presence of some sort!

Advertising on social media is the quickest and easiest way to share your freelance business online. Different platforms work for different teachers depending on your target audience. From Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, LinkedIn and even TikTok - each platform has a different audience that can all be used to share your teaching wisdom and draw attention to your teaching skills and availability!

Most of these platforms enable you to setup a business account separate to your personal social media which means you can concentrate on targeting the right audience with your content. Twitter, Instagram, and LinkedIn are the best at attracting a wider/worldwide audience by using a range of different hashtags to attract potential students who may not already be following you.

Sharing information such as your daily routine, about you, and your teaching style is a great way to start on social media so potential students can see what you are like as a person and teacher. You can also use these platforms to share English language tips as well as any offers or promotions you might have on.

» Remember - make sure your content is relevant and don't overshare, as people will stop following if they think their timeline is being bombarded!

JOIN OUR FACEBOOK GRADUATES GROUP >>



# ONLINE MARKETPLACES FOR ADVERTISING



Another great way to market yourself is using online marketplaces - places like Gumtree, Craigslist, local buy and sell groups online, Facebook buy and sell groups, as well as international marketplaces all provide access to potential students looking for their next tutor.

Online marketplaces often have zero to minimal costs involved and are super easy to use. All you need to do is share an eye-catching image, short bio/introduction, lesson options and lesson prices. Plus, if you have a website you can link back to this for more information too!



# START A TEACHING BLOG

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A great way for potential students and fellow teachers to learn more about you is blogging. Whether you blog for your own website or for other websites, you can share your blogs via all your social media platforms and on your website. This is a great way to share content and increase your online presence. And the great thing is, you can blog about anything!

Again, similar advice to sharing content on social media - don't overdo it! Blogging once a week/twice a month is great, readers can learn about you as a person and teacher and can look forward to reading your next blog without feeling overwhelmed - and most importantly, you won't use up all your good blog ideas too quickly!

» *Blog topic ideas:*

- *How I started teaching online*
- *What teaching online has taught me*
- *A day in the life of an online teacher*
- *Different online teaching techniques*



READ OUR BLOG FOR INSPO, TIPS AND TRICKS >>



# ONLINE MARKETING CAMPAIGNS

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If you want to boost your online presence across different platforms, there are lots of options to help with this and spread your freelance journey to a global audience - Google ad campaigns, Facebook ad campaigns and sponsored posts on Instagram are a great place to start. The best campaign for you to use will depend on your goal and target audience.

Be careful not to set your spend too high on your first go, start small and build up so you can review traffic and see if the campaign is working as you'd expected. If you go ahead and set up a website, you can also set up an email campaign sharing your teaching message to everyone who signs up to your site - another great way to reach potential students.



» Pro tip: Facebook ad campaigns can be the most cost effective way to build brand awareness. Simply create an eye-catching image, add some enticing copy and a link through to your website!



# SETTING UP YOUR BUSINESS

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Whilst being a freelancer has numerous pros; being your own boss and choosing your own hours for starters, you'll also have to put your responsible hat on. First things first, it's important you register your business online, or register as self employed with your local or national tax office (HMRC for example - <https://www.gov.uk/set-up-self-employed>). Being a freelancer means you're responsible for filing your own taxes at the end of each tax year, so make sure you keep a record of all your invoices, payments & remittances, and especially all those receipts for work related purchases as you can put these against your income. There's usually an easy step by step guide to follow online so don't panic!

## Business banking

Once you've set up your own business, you can also look at setting up a separate, or business bank account, however sometimes business accounts come with extra charges, so it's always best to check out the options first and see if it's the right fit for you. If you choose to use your normal banking, just make sure you keep in organised.

## Helpful resources

There are lots of apps and websites available online designed to make accounting a breeze for self-employed people just like you. Some great ones include:

- Quickbooks ([www.quickbooks.com](http://www.quickbooks.com))
- Sage ([www.sage.com](http://www.sage.com))
- Receipt Bank ([www.receipt-bank.com](http://www.receipt-bank.com))



# SOFTWARE FOR FREELANCERS

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## Zoom

[www.zoom.us](http://www.zoom.us)

When it comes to teaching English online, one thing you're really going to need is video conferencing software. Zoom offers a completely free version to absolutely anyone and has heaps of super useful features you can use to enhance your online English classes such as screen sharing, whiteboards, break-out rooms and zoom effects.

## Skype

[www.skype.com](http://www.skype.com)

An oldie, but a goodie! Skype is easily one of the biggest names when it comes to video conferencing software. Their easy to use platform has helped 100's of online teachers kick-start their online teaching careers.

## Google Hangouts

[hangouts.google.com/](http://hangouts.google.com/)

A new one on the market to check out! Google Hangouts offers tons of free features and all you need to sign up is a Gmail account - easy! Think features such as chat boxes, screen sharing, embeded YouTube videos, virtual white boards and lesson recordings!



## Microsoft Teams

[www.microsoft.com](http://www.microsoft.com)

Chat, schedule lessons, call and collaborate with Microsoft Teams. Completely free for anyone with a Microsoft 365 account. Teams is easy to use and has lots of added features such as; screen sharing, custom backgrounds and file sharing.



### *Which one's best?*

Each video conferencing software has its own benefits, and you might prefer using one over another, however, always check what works best with your student first. Some online companies will use platforms such as Zoom or Skype, but others will have their own app or secure teaching platform set up for teaching. Companies providing their own apps or teaching platforms will provide training and often a demo lesson in advance so you can be confident when it comes to your first lesson.

FOR MORE INFO, CHECK OUT OUR BLOG >>

# TYPES OF LESSONS

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## Types of lessons

- Business English
- Medical English
- Conversational English
- Grammar lessons
- Lessons for children
- Beginner English
- Exam preparation
- Lessons to improve reading and writing
- Adult beginners
- Adult advanced
- Cambridge English education
- Job interview preparation

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Students want a variety of lessons/lesson content depending on their requirements, and again you can have some control over this if teaching your own students. You can decide what you want to teach based on your experience, goals, and qualifications. It's a great idea to have an introductory lesson with your student to find out their learning needs and goals so you can plan lesson content accordingly. Most students simply want to practice their English, so you'll often find conversational English lessons are your most popular. But, if you opt for a more specific type of lesson you can often earn more!





# LESSON PLANNING

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After deciding which type of lesson you're going to teach, you then need to plan your lesson. There are lots of different resources that you can use online if you're new to teaching, as well as planning your own lessons from scratch. Depending who

you're teaching, the topic and length of lesson will all impact your planning. Make sure to allow time in between classes for lesson planning and preparation.



## *Lesson planning resources*

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- **British Council**

[www.teachingenglish.org.uk/resources](http://www.teachingenglish.org.uk/resources)

British Council provide lesson plans for all ages and abilities, from kids and teens to advanced adults.

- **i-to-i TEFL**

[www.i-to-i.com](http://www.i-to-i.com)

From expertly written blogs to in-depth guides and eBooks i-to-i offers a range of lesson planning resources.

- **LinguaHouse**

[www.linguahouse.com](http://www.linguahouse.com)

LinguaHouse provide a wide range of free lesson plans for ages and abilities. They also offer an annual subscription that gives you access to further resources.

- **ISL Collective**

[www.islcollective.com](http://www.islcollective.com)

This site is full of activities and worksheets for all ages and abilities. A great place to start if you're looking for some filler activities within your lesson plans.

# LESSON RESOURCES: PROPS AND MATERIALS



## Resource Packs

TEFL resources, eBooks, and guides

### Ultimate Resource Pack

- Ultimate Grammar Guide
- Lesson Planning Guide
- Essential TEFL eBook
- Warmers, Fillers, and Coolers
- 20 Lesson Plans for Teaching Online
- Teaching English Online: The Ultimate Guide to Getting Started
- 10 Business English Lesson Plans
- Online Props Starter Pack
- 20 Lesson plans for Teaching in a Classroom
- Flashcards

[See all Resource Packs »](#)

If your target teaching audience are children, then props and flashcards will be absolutely essential within your online lessons. You can easily make your own props and flashcards if you're the creative type. If not, you can find lots of props online that you can use as templates or buy ready-made props if you want to save time.

For teens/adults sometimes props are needed, but in this case you can use realia - so real life items to help explain new vocabulary that the students can easily understand. For realia you can use items you already have around your home. For example, if you're teaching a lesson about food, you can use the food you have on hand.

Along with props for children, fun backgrounds are also needed - animals, alphabet letters, colours and numbers are all great things you can make/print/buy to stick on your wall. By creating an interesting and fun background, your young students are more likely to stay engaged with your lesson.

[CHECK OUT OUR RESOURCE PACKS »](#)

# MANAGING YOUR TIME AND SCHEDULE

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One of the most important skills of being a freelancer is managing your time! Make sure you have a good diary or organiser with all your classes, training, and prep time booked in. If you have an online planner, make sure it's backed up to a cloud storage system just in case! It's really easy to get a few bookings close together and then realise you're double booked.

As well as managing teaching time, and making sure you have enough planning time, it's also important to make sure you have time for you. Easier said than done at the start of your freelance career, as you want to accept every student that comes your way. But you need to make sure you're always 100% for each student, which means making time for you. Depending on the hours you want to work, try and keep one day a week free for teaching down time (and probably some life admin)!



# TOP TIPS & TRICKS

## to being a successful freelancer

- 1 Keep a charger on hand:** whether it's for your phone or laptop - you don't want to have to run out mid lesson because your system is about to switch off!
- 2 Keep hydrated & energized:** make sure to always have a drink on hand, especially if your day is filled with back to back lessons! And a pot of snacks is always a good idea for a little sugar boost when needed.
- 3 Get a good diary/planner:** whether it's an old fashioned written one or an online one - just make sure you have a backup.
- 4 Respond quickly:** reply quickly to emails from companies and potential students. There's a high demand out there and companies want to know you're interested in teaching positions. If you leave it too long, your potential student may have already moved on to the next tutor.
- 5 Use earphones/headphones:** headphones are great for improving sound quality and keeping out background noise during lessons.



- 6 Keep a notebook and pen with you at all times:** one of the key things all TEFL teachers should have on hand during lessons - note down any requests from students, anything they're struggling with or any ideas that you think of during class.
- 7 Attend CPD and online training:** there are lots of webinars and CPD training available online to make sure you're always up to date with the latest news and information in the online TEFL world.
- 8 Join online teacher groups:** Facebook teacher groups are a great place to share ideas and get help with any teaching queries and share teaching successes.
- 9 Follow online TEFL teachers:** there are so many teachers online across all the social media platforms, and all are really happy to help fellow freelancers with all aspects of teaching, so don't be afraid to reach out. It's a great online community and support bubble.

**CPD:**  
Continuing  
Professional  
Development

# TEFL DIPLOMAS

Take your pick from any of our Level 3 or Level 5 TEFL qualifications to start your online teaching journey. All of our TEFL Courses will give you the skills and knowledge you need become an online English teacher and start earning from anywhere in the world!

Happy TEFLing!



## LEVEL 5 - 300-HOUR TEFL DIPLOMA

Our Level 5 300-Hour Online TEFL Course is perfect if you're wanting to train remotely, in your own time. This course is a combination of 180 hour online course plus our exclusive Teaching One-to-One & Online and Teaching Business English specialism - perfect for boosting your CV.



## LEVEL 5 - 420-HOUR TEFL DIPLOMA

Our Level 5 420-Hour course is very comprehensive and it's actually employer-preferred! It includes everything the 300 Hour course has to offer, plus 2 additional specialist modules in Teaching Other Subjects in English (like science, maths, and geography) and Teaching IELTS – which will really help your CV to shine when you're applying for competitive TEFL roles.

Level 5 Diplomas are CELTA-level equivalent so they'll give you more comprehensive training & they'll make your CV look great!



## LEVEL 5 - 500-HOUR ADVANCED TEFL DIPLOMA

Our Level 5 500-Hour course is the gold standard in TEFL qualifications! It includes an excellent grounding in the basics of TEFL, all the specialisms contained in the 420 Hour course, PLUS 2 additional specialisms in 'How to set up a TEFL Business' and 'How to market yourself as a TEFL Freelancer'. This makes it perfect for those that want to freelance or set up their own TEFL business – a great way to access the highest TEFL salaries!

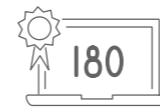


\*Available in certain countries.



# TEFL CERTIFICATES

Perfect for if you want to qualify quickly and get a good grounding in the basics of TEFL!



## LEVEL 5 - 180-HOUR TEFL CERTIFICATE

Our Level 5 180-Hour Online TEFL Course is ideal if you're wanting to get qualified, working flexibly and quickly.

Once qualified, you'll get the pick of good, competitive jobs in higher paid roles than you would completing a Level 3 Course - great if you want to TEFL for a longer than a few months.



## LEVEL 3 - 120-HOUR TEFL CERTIFICATE

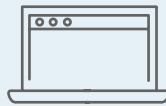
120-Hours is the minimum number of hours you'll need to find a job in TEFL and this course is included in all of our course bundles.

SOUNDS GOOD? BROWSE OUR RANGE OF ONLINE TEFL COURSES HERE >>

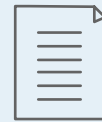
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