

Prepare a UX portfolio for job applications


Prepare for UX interviews

Answer interview questions


Develop an elevator pitch


Ace whiteboarding and panel interviews


Pursue freelance UX design work


 **Video:** Introduction to freelancing
2 min


 **Video:** Jennifer - My journey as a freelance UX designer
4 min


 **Video:** Create a business plan
4 min


 **Reading:** Learn more about business plans
20 min


 **Practice Quiz:** Test your knowledge on creating a business plan
3 questions


 **Video:** Find clients as a freelance UX designer
4 min

 **Reading:** Learn more about finding clients as a freelance UX designer
20 min

 **Video:** Landing the first client
4 min

 **Practice Quiz:** Test your knowledge on working as a freelancer
5 questions

 **Practice Quiz:** Self-Reflection: Potential clients for your freelance design work
1 question

 **Reading:** Review templates for proposals
20 min

Week 6 review

Course review

Certificate program review

Learn more about finding clients as a freelance UX designer

Now that you've made the decision to start freelancing, it's time to think about how to get your business ready for clients. There are a few things that your business needs before you start searching for clients.



Create an up-to-date portfolio website

An updated portfolio should always be your first step when it comes to any career changes. Everything that you use online to discuss who you are and the work that you do should be up-to-date with current design examples and case studies. Your portfolio shows your growth as a designer and provides an accurate reflection of the work a client can expect from you.



Develop an online presence

Before you begin your freelancing career, create a social media presence that describes who you are and the different services you provide. These social media pages can be linked to your portfolio website that you've created.

Next, it's time to build a presence and put those pages to work! Look into trending topics and hashtags that connect to the work that you're creating, and use them to improve the reach of your content. This will allow anyone interested in these topics to find your post more effectively. You might also link out to your posts on your personal social media sites and have your network share them to improve the reach of your business. Finally, focus on creating meaningful connections with viewers and sharing who you are and what you do.



Offer services to your personal network

Once you've created social networking profiles and a robust portfolio that showcase who you are, start sending links out to your personal and professional networks. These networks will be invaluable as you search for new jobs.

One way that you can share your work with your network is by creating a social media post that announces your new career. It could be as simple as: "I've just finished another website design for a client! I love UX design. Reach out if you or someone you know needs design work." A post like this can get your friends thinking about their own design needs and the projects of folks they know.

It's also useful to post designs regularly to keep your network aware of your new job and to give them an idea of what you can do as a designer. One month you might post a website design; the next month you might post about a product design that you've built. These updates keep your network thinking about your designs, which can provide you with emotional support and potential clients.

Another tactic is to call, text, or email your friends about their business's design needs. That email could be something simple like:

"Hey friend! I hope everything is going well with you and your family. I'm reaching out because I've recently changed careers, and I'm working in UX design. I opened your website on my phone and noticed that the mobile design doesn't present your work as well as it could. I'd love to talk to you about them."

You never know what someone needs until you ask!



Connect with your local community

After you've established a baseline presence for your business online that includes examples of your work, reach out to small businesses in your community. Put your business plan to work! If you haven't outlined your business's goals and your fees yet, [review the steps for creating a business plan](#).

For example, maybe your favorite local chicken wings restaurant has an outdated website, but they've just started accepting online orders. You could reach out to the manager or owner and offer to design a new website for them that could improve access to their mobile order system.

Or maybe a local coffee shop is running live events and could benefit from an app to keep customers informed of the next series of events, like concerts of local bands or poetry readings. You could attend an event and ask if they've considered creating an app to encourage customers to keep track of and attend each event.

The easiest way to pitch businesses in this way is with a template. Each time you come up with an idea for a product that will improve a business's prospects, personalize the template for each business and the services they need. These pitches should use a lot of the elements you built in your business plan, including who you are, why your services are important to that organization, and your rate. Pitching takes time and a lot of research, so don't expect to be able to effectively pitch dozens of companies at once when you first start out. However, over time, you'll become more efficient at customizing and refining your pitches.



Look to the online community

Working in your local community is great because you can build a connection with the businesses around you. But, it's also important that you build relationships with organizations online because there's a much larger reach.

There are many dedicated online forums and design websites that will request the work of designers for their projects. Here are a few places that have listings for freelance design work:

- [Guru](#): A platform where professionals go to connect, collaborate, and get work done.
- [Dribbble](#): A freelance graphic design job board exclusively for contract work.
- [Fiverr](#): A platform that connects professionals with people who need work completed.
- [Wix](#): Connects freelancers with clients that need help building their websites.
- [Toptal](#): Has a collection of talented professionals they pair with clients around the world.



Consider pro bono work

As you begin looking at your community for work, you might consider offering your services pro bono (free) to a specific set of clientele, like nonprofits or charity organizations. This is a great way to complete interesting, new projects you'd like to showcase in your portfolio, which will make you a more well-rounded candidate for future jobs. Pro bono work can also provide great word-of-mouth referrals.

Pro bono work should be explicitly laid out and agreed upon before it's completed. This keeps you and that other organization aware of expectations from the project and prevents scope creep. As you learned earlier, **scope creep** is when the details of a project you're planning, or scoping, slowly increase until the project is much more complex than what was originally planned. This can leave you vulnerable to working more hours than planned. Especially on a free project, this ends up costing you more time and resources than you were expecting. Working for free can be tricky, but it can be rewarding for both you and your client.

If want to make an impact in your community or more broadly by working pro bono, there are some resources to help you get started:

- [Catchafire](#): Matches professionals who want to donate their time with nonprofits who need their skills.
- [VolunteerMatch](#): An effective way for highly qualified volunteers to work for nonprofits.

Moving forward as a business owner

Before you go, here are some tips you can use moving forward as you acquire new skills, attract clients, and grow your business:

- **Be careful about sharing your design concepts online.** Your original designs should be branded with your logo or watermark to prevent others from using your work as their own.
- **Check with a client before sharing any work.** Never post online any example of your unfinished design work for a client, unless they've given you permission. They may not want the world to see a work-in-progress.
- **Always keep your clients updated.** If you feel that you are falling behind the agreed upon timeframe, reach out to your client to explain why you will miss your deadline or need to change the scope of the project.
- **Keep searching for new work.** Put aside some time every week to post online or to reach out to potential clients. If you don't set aside time to grow your business, it's difficult to maintain your momentum.
- **Keep in touch.** Maintain communication with former clients; you never know when they will need more design work in the future. Keeping in touch can be as easy as sending holiday cards or sending an email saying you're available to work next month.
- **Remember, you're cultivating a business.** It may be hard to say no to friends or family who expect you to do design work for free, but have confidence in your skills and know the worth of the work you're completing.

Creating a business is hard work! But becoming a business owner is an extremely rewarding career path, whether you commit to a partnership, hire employees, or find success alone. Good luck!

Mark as completed

