YouTube Ads — Hands-On Manual (Novice Edition)

"5 Seconds to Win: Mastering Free Clicks with YouTube + Google AI"

0) What you need (10–20 min)

1. **A Google Ads account** (ads.google.com).

2. **A YouTube channel** with at least one video ad file (MP4, 16:9, 1080p recommended).

3. **Link YouTube ↔ Google Ads** (so Ads can read your channel and report views):

   o YouTube Studio → **Settings** → **Channel** → **Advanced settings** → **Link Account** → enter Google Ads CID → Save → approve in Google Ads.

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1) The 5-Second Rule (what to do, exactly)

- Fact: **Skip button appears at 5s** on skippable ads.

- Fact: With **CPV bidding**, you're charged when someone **watches 30s (or the whole ad if <30s) or interacts**. If they skip earlier without interacting, **you don't pay**.

Your 5-second checklist (say all of this before the skip):

1. **Call the viewer** (niche + pain/dream): "**Hong Kong parents**—homework battles?"

2. **Show the solution visual** (logo/product/benefit on screen).

3. **Promise** a specific outcome: "**Raise scores in 4 weeks**—free lesson inside."

4. **Tease**: "I'll show you **how** in 20 seconds."

5. **On-screen text**: big headline + URL/CTA button area.

Copy-and-paste 5-second hooks (edit the brackets):

- "**[Role/Who]**—If **[pain]**, watch **5 more seconds**. I'll show you **[result]** without **[objection]**."

- "Stop scrolling. **[Number]** quick tips to **[desired outcome]**—tip #1 in **5 seconds**."

- "**[City/Industry]**: Pay attention. **[Crazy simple win]**—proof in this video."

Niche examples:

- Hotel: "Flying to **[City]**? Save **HK$[X]**/night at **[Hotel]**—see rooms now."

- IELTS: "Band 6.0 stuck? Two mistakes kill your score—fix both today."

- F&B: "Love **[cuisine]**? Try **[signature dish]** tonight—bonus dessert inside."

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2) Pick the right campaign (so AI can help)

A. Video View Campaign (maximize views; great for creative testing)
Google mixes **skippable in-stream, in-feed, and Shorts** to get you cheaper views.

B. Demand Gen Campaign (multi-format, AI-driven reach across YouTube feeds/Shorts, Discover, Gmail; successor to Discovery & Video Action)

C. Video Reach Campaign (maximize unique reach efficiently; use when you want broad exposure, can include bumper/non-skippable/skippable/Shorts)

For novices: Start with **Video View** to test creatives fast. When you know the winners, add **Demand Gen** to scale.

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3) Build your first Video View campaign (15–25 min)

1. **Google Ads → Campaigns → + New → Video → Video views**.

2. **Locations & Languages**: choose where your buyers are.

3. **Budget**: start **US$10–20/day** (small test, clear results).

4. **Bidding**: **Maximize views** (or **tCPV** if available).

5. **Ad group**:

   o **Audiences** (start simple):

      ▪ **Custom intent/segments** (keywords your buyers search).

      ▪ **In-market** segments relevant to your offer.

      ▪ (Keep **Optimized Targeting** ON initially—Google AI can find similar users.)

6. **Placements (optional for control)**: add relevant channels/videos (don't over-restrict on day 1).

7. **Brand safety**: exclude sensitive content categories if needed.

8. **Add your video** (paste YouTube URL). Use **16:9, 1080p** assets; Shorts variant later.

9. **Final URL / CTA**: simple landing page, fast load, one clear action.

Creative pack to upload (minimum):

- **30s skippable** (core ad; strongest hook front-loaded).

- **15s cutdown** (faster tempo).

- **6s bumper** (for future reach campaigns).

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4) Build your Demand Gen campaign (optional scale path)

1. **Campaigns → + New → Demand Gen**.

2. **Goal**: Sales/Leads/Traffic (as fits).

3. **Audiences**: add **Audience Signals** (site visitors, customer lists, engaged YouTube viewers) so AI can expand intelligently.

4. **Creatives**: upload **video + image** variations (feeds, Shorts, Gmail).

5. **Landing page**: mobile-first, 3-5s load, one CTA.

Demand Gen is Google's AI successor to Discovery/Video Action; many accounts were/will be **auto-upgraded** in 2025.

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5) Make the video (novice recipe)

Specs (simple): MP4, 16:9, **1080p** (or 720p minimum). Also prep a **vertical** 1080×1920 for Shorts.

Shot list template (30s):

- 0–5s: **Hook line** + logo/product on screen (text + voice).
- 6–15s: **Show the fix** (demo, social proof).
- 16–25s: **Offer** (bonus, guarantee, limited seats).
- 26–30s: **CTA** (URL/QR, "Learn more").

Captioning: Burn in big keywords; many watch muted.

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6) Launch day checklist (copy this)

- Linked YouTube ↔ Ads (reporting/retargeting works).
- 2–3 ad variants uploaded (30s + 15s).
- One audience per ad group (don't stack too many at once).
- Budget ≈ **US$10–20/day per test**.
- Country/language correct.
- Brand-safety settings OK.
- Landing page loads in <3 seconds.

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7) Read the numbers (what matters)

For skippable ads:

- **View rate (VTR)** = Views ÷ Impressions. (Creative strength.)
- **CPV** = Cost ÷ Views. (Efficiency of attention.)
- **Clicks / CTR** = Website pull.

- **Conversions** (if set up) = money outcome.

Healthy day-3 targets (ballpark):

- VTR > **20–30%** for good hooks.

- CPV under **US$0.03–0.08** (varies by geo/niche).

- If VTR is low, **fix your first 5 seconds.**

Reminder: viewers can skip at **5s**, and with CPV you pay only on **30s views/interactions**—optimize that opening.

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8) 72-hour optimization plan (do this, in order)

Day 1–2: Creative first

- Pause any ad with **VTR bottom 30%**.

- Keep 2–3 best hooks running; produce 1–2 new variants (change opening line or first visual).

Day 3–5: Audience next

- Duplicate the winning ad into a new ad group with **another audience** (e.g., different in-market or custom intent).

- Keep **Optimized Targeting ON** if CPA is acceptable.

Day 5–7: Bids/budget last

- If CPV is low and VTR good → **+20–30% budget**.

- If CPV is high → tighten placements or swap audiences; fix creative.

Scaling path: Once one creative consistently wins, add **Demand Gen** to reach YouTube feeds/Shorts/Discover/Gmail with AI expansion.

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9) Common mistakes (and quick fixes)

- **Talking slowly at the start** → Tighten to **one punchy sentence** in 5s.

- **No on-screen text** → Add bold headline + benefit.

- **Crowded targeting** → Test audiences separately; let AI expand.

- **Only one creative** → Always test **at least three hooks**.

- **Sending to homepage** → Use a focused **landing page** with one CTA.

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10) Ready-to-use scripts (edit brackets)

A) Local service (15–30s):
"**[City] homeowners**—leaking pipes or high bills? In **5 seconds** I'll show how **[Brand]** fixes both **today**. *[Show before/after]* Book now—**[bonus/discount]** this week. **Learn more**."

B) Education/IELTS:
"**Band 6.0 stuck?** Two mistakes kill your score—watch **this demo**. *[Show checklist]* Join **[free trial/first class]**—**limited seats**. **Learn more**."

C) E-commerce:
"Stop paying **[pain]**. Our **[product]** solves it in **1 minute**. *[Show proof/UGC]* Try it **risk-free—free shipping** today. **Shop now**."

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11) Formats you'll meet later (quick map)

- **Skippable in-stream** (your default test bed). Skip at **5s**; CPV billing on 30s/interaction.

- **Non-skippable** (15–20s; sometimes 30s on CTV) — charged by CPM, use in reach campaigns.

- **Bumper (6s)** — great for reach frequency and reminders.

- **Video Reach** — Google mixes formats to maximize unique reach.

- **Demand Gen** — AI multi-surface (YouTube feeds/Shorts, Discover, Gmail).

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12) Your 30-minute daily routine

1. Check **VTR** & **CPV** → pause low performers.

2. Duplicate winners into **one new audience**.

3. Make **one new hook variant** (change first line or opening visual).

4. Spend **80%** on winners, **20%** on tests.