

BEGINNER FRIENDLY | FACTUAL | HUMAN-LED

Socials & Marketing Starter Booklet

A plain-English guide to what each platform is for, how content behaves differently, and what to start noticing before you plan more posts.

The same idea can travel across platforms, but it should not be posted the same way everywhere.

The jobs of content

A good content plan is not just a list of post ideas. Each post needs a job. When you know the job, you can judge the result more fairly.

Discovery

Helps new people find you. Useful for short video, search, shareable ideas and clear hooks.

Trust

Shows your taste, process, values or credibility. Useful when someone checks whether you are worth following.

Education

Teaches something useful, clears confusion or helps a beginner make a better decision.

Conversation

Invites comments, replies, questions or opinions. Useful for learning what people care about.

Traffic

Sends people to a page, shop, blog, guide, video or resource. Clicks matter more here.

Sales

Makes a clear offer when the audience is ready. Not every post should be a sales post.

Beginner rule: do not judge every post by views. Judge it by whether it did the job you gave it.

The quick platform map

This is the mental map before the details. Use it to avoid treating every platform like the same room with a different logo.

PLATFORM	MAIN JOB	BEGINNER USE
TikTok	Discovery and short-form testing	Quick hooks, opinions, demonstrations and simple teaching points.
Instagram	Trust and visual identity	Reels, carousels, Stories, process, proof and profile clarity.
Pinterest	Search and evergreen discovery	Pins, checklists, guides, useful visuals, product or resource traffic.
YouTube Shorts	Short video discovery	One clear point, one mistake, one quick lesson or one simple demo.
YouTube long-form	Depth and authority	Tutorials, walkthroughs, explanations, reviews and search-based help.
Facebook	Community and conversation	Longer posts, group discussion, links, local or niche trust-building.
X	Real-time opinion and public conversation	Replies, reposts, quotes and link/profile action.
Threads	Text-led conversation and light community	Meaningful replies and Instagram-adjacent audience building.
Reddit	Niche communities and problem discovery	Comment quality, rule fit and audience language.

Use the platform for the job it does best

TT TikTok

Best beginner use

Quick discovery, short lessons, strong openings, simple opinions, demonstrations and testing angles.

Start noticing

Openings that hold attention, repeated comments, shares, follows, profile visits and search-related ideas where available.

Common mistake

Treating high views as proof of buyer interest. A popular video may entertain without moving people closer to action.

IG Instagram

Best beginner use

Trust, visual identity, Reels for discovery, carousels for saveable advice, Stories and proof of process.

Start noticing

Saves, shares, profile visits, follows, replies and whether the profile feels clear.

Common mistake

Judging everything by likes. Saves, shares and profile visits can be stronger useful-content clues.

P Pinterest

Best beginner use

Search, evergreen discovery, useful visuals, guides, checklists and product/resource traffic.

Start noticing

Impressions, saves, Pin clicks, outbound clicks, top Pins and long-tail performance.

Common mistake

Expecting Pinterest to behave like TikTok on day one. A useful Pin may build slowly.

Video, depth and community

YS YouTube Shorts

Best beginner use

Quick discovery, short lessons, topic testing, simple demonstrations and one clear idea.

Start noticing

Views, engaged views, average watch time, comments, subscribers gained and whether people stayed.

Common mistake

Trying to fit a full tutorial into a Short. A Short should usually make one clear point.

YT YouTube long-form

Best beginner use

Deeper teaching, search-based help, tutorials, walkthroughs, reviews and authority building.

Start noticing

Watch time, retention, click-through rate, comments, subscribers gained and traffic sources.

Common mistake

Thinking Shorts and long-form YouTube work the same way. They support each other, but are not the same job.

FB Facebook

Best beginner use

Discussion, community, longer explanations, groups, local/niche audiences, links and trust-building.

Start noticing

Comments, shares, link clicks, useful conversations, group responses and real interaction.

Common mistake

Copying a TikTok-style caption and expecting it to work as a Facebook post.

Other platforms beginners should understand

Not every beginner needs these straight away, but a professional socials log should support them.

X Real-time public conversation

Best beginner use

Real-time opinion, commentary, quick thoughts, public conversation, niche networking, links and announcements.

Start noticing

Replies, reposts, quotes, link clicks where visible, profile visits where visible, follows and useful conversation.

Common mistake

Treating X like a normal visual-content platform. Timing, opinion and network effects often matter more than polish.

Threads Text-led conversation

Best beginner use

Lighter commentary, quick thoughts, opinion, process notes and Instagram-adjacent audience building.

Start noticing

Replies, reposts, quotes, likes, follows, profile clicks and topics that invite proper conversation.

Common mistake

Posting empty engagement bait. Useful replies matter more than shallow response-chasing.

Reddit Niche community research

Best beginner use

Niche communities, question answering, reputation building, problem discovery and audience language.

Start noticing

Rules, upvotes/downvotes, comments, repeated questions, language people use and whether posts survive moderation.

Common mistake

Treating Reddit like a dumping ground for promotion. Contribution and rule fit come first.

Source-to-distribute

You are not creating seven disconnected posts. You are reshaping one useful idea.

1

Start with a source idea

A full thought, lesson, product point, customer question or real-world observation.

2

Make the short-video angle

Turn the sharpest point into a TikTok, Reel or Short opening.

3

Make the saveable version

Turn the lesson into an Instagram carousel or checklist-style post.

4

Make the searchable version

Turn the problem or checklist into a Pinterest Pin or YouTube title.

5

Make the conversation version

Turn the idea into a Facebook/group question or explanation.

6

Review and repeat

Notice what happened. Repeat, tweak, move platform or park.

Three useful post shapes

You do not need fancy design to understand the structure. These are shapes to recognise and adapt.

Stop making this beginner mistake

One clear point

One example

One next step

Hook-led video

Best for TikTok, Reels and Shorts. Good for discovery, clarity and fast testing.

3 content mistakes to avoid

Slide 2: mistake one

Slide 3: mistake two

Final slide: save this

Saveable carousel

Best for Instagram. Good when you want saves, shares and clearer teaching.

Beginner Social Media Checklist

Clear topic

Specific audience

Useful destination

Searchable Pin

Best for Pinterest. Good for search traffic, future saves and evergreen discovery.

The idea can stay the same. The packaging should change. That is the difference between repurposing and lazy reposting.

Numbers are clues, not final judgments

Beginners do not need to track everything. Start by understanding what the common numbers usually suggest.

Views / impressions

The content was seen or shown.

Reach

Different people or accounts saw it.

Comments

People had something to say.

Shares

People thought it was worth passing on.

Saves

People wanted to come back to it.

Clicks

People were curious enough to act.

Watch time

People stayed with the video.

Follows

People wanted more from you.

Replies

People felt invited to respond.

The first metric to notice by platform

Each platform has lots of numbers. Start with one useful question instead of trying to interpret everything at once.

PLATFORM	START HERE	QUESTION TO ASK
TikTok	Watch/comment/share signals	Did the opening earn attention?
Instagram	Saves and shares	Was it useful enough to keep or pass on?
Pinterest	Saves and outbound clicks	Was it useful, searchable or action-led?
YouTube Shorts	Watch time / engaged views	Did people stay with the short?
YouTube long-form	Watch time and retention	Did the topic hold attention?
Facebook	Comments and link clicks	Did it create conversation or action?

Manual tracking is not just admin

The point is not to become a spreadsheet person. The point is to notice your own work more clearly.

Why write it down?

When you manually note what happened, you train your brain to spot audience signals: repeated questions, useful topics, confusing hooks and draining formats.

What this builds

Professional intuition. Over time you learn what your specific audience cares about.

Keep it light

Track enough to learn. Do not turn content into a full-time admin job.

Use real-world clues

Marketing ideas often start from questions, repeated phrases, comments and small problems people mention more than once.

The tiny tracking table

Use this after posting. One row per post. No overthinking.

DATE	PLATFORM	TOPIC	FORMAT	HOOK	JOB	WHAT HAPPENED?	NEXT
Mon	TikTok	Platform basics	Video	Stop copying...	Discovery	Good comments	Repeat
Tue	Instagram	Same idea	Carousel	One idea...	Education	Saved twice	Tweak
Wed	Pinterest	Checklist	Pin	Beginner guide	Traffic	Early saves	Wait
Fri	Facebook	Question	Post	What confuses?	Conversation	Replies	Follow up

The only decision you need: repeat, tweak, try elsewhere or park.

Extra field to add: Community / placement. This covers subreddit, Facebook group, X community, Threads topic/community, Pinterest board, YouTube channel, Instagram profile, email list or website section.

Keep a content idea log

Good marketing ideas often start away from the analytics screen.

Questions

Questions people ask in comments, messages or real conversations.

Repeated phrases

Words your audience uses more than once.

Confusion

Things people misunderstand about your topic or product.

Small wins

Examples, before/after moments or useful progress.

Objections

Reasons people hesitate, delay or say "not yet".

Useful proof

Process steps, outcomes, reviews or lessons.

The 3-strike rule

A poor result does not automatically mean the topic is bad. It might be the packaging.

Strike 1

Try a clearer hook or title.

Strike 2

Try a different format.

Strike 3

Try a better-fit platform.

If the topic still feels important, ask your audience directly: "Would examples or a checklist help more?" If it still shows no useful sign, park it.

The weekly review

Once a week, answer these questions before planning more posts.

What got comments?

What got saves or shares?

What got clicks?

What topic came up more than once?

Which format took the most time?

Could the same job be done with a simpler format?

What should I repeat next week?

What should I stop forcing?

The five-step habit

This is the whole booklet in one routine.

1

Understand

Ask what the platform is mainly helping people do: discover, save, search, watch longer or talk.

2

Choose

Give the post one main job: discovery, trust, education, conversation, traffic or sales.

3

Package

Choose the shape that fits: hook-led video, carousel, searchable Pin, longer explanation or discussion post.

4

Notice

Look at what happened after posting. Start with the metric that makes sense for that platform and job.

5

Repeat

Repeat what showed signs of life. Tweak what was promising. Park what still shows no useful signal.

Official help areas

Platform features change. These official help areas are the safest places for readers to check current menus and metric definitions.

TikTok

TikTok Studio and Creator Search Insights help pages.

Instagram

Instagram Help Centre / Professional Dashboard / Insights help.

Pinterest

Pinterest Analytics and Pin Stats business help pages.

YouTube

YouTube Studio Analytics help pages for reach, engagement, audience and Shorts metrics.

Facebook / Meta

Meta Business Suite and Facebook business help pages.

X

X Help / analytics support for current metric names and account-level reporting.

Why source notes are separate

The booklet keeps the learning pages readable while still pointing readers toward official platform support.

This booklet avoids platform-growth promises because platform features, dashboards and recommendation systems change over time.