

Dropshipper

You run an online store and a supplier ships each order. Most stores lose money on ads before they find a product.

TYPICAL INCOME

\$0

a year, varies widely

INCOME RANGE

\$0 to \$75k

most to the successful few

TIME TO QUALIFY

1 to 3 years

after high school

DEMAND

Limited

job outlook

LICENCE NEEDED

No

anyone can do it

WHERE YOU WORK

From home on a laptop, with suppliers in China, the US or Canada and ads on Meta and TikTok

How you get there

- 1 Learn the basics for free** 1 to 2 months
 Shopify's own guides and free videos cover setup, suppliers and ads. A course is not needed to start.
- 2 Pick a narrow niche and vet suppliers** 1 month
 Order samples to your own address and time the delivery to Canada, which is often slower than to the US.
- 3 Build the store** 1 to 2 weeks
 AI tools can build it in an afternoon. So can everyone else, which is why the store is not the hard part.
- 4 Test products with small ad budgets** 3 to 12 months
 Most tests fail. You want one product where the ads pay for themselves with money left.
- 5 Grow or stop** 1 to 3 years
 Stores that last usually move to Canadian or US warehouses, their own brand and stock they hold.

Pros and cons

- + Cheaper to start than holding stock
- + You learn ads, copywriting and video, which employers pay for
- + Work from anywhere with a laptop
- Most stores lose money and close within a year
- Slower delivery and border fees make Canadian buyers harder to please
- Costs in US dollars, sales often in Canadian dollars

Good to know

The store software is Canadian

Shopify, the platform most dropshippers use, grew out of an Ottawa snowboard shop whose founders could not find decent software to sell online. It launched in 2006.

A \$20 limit, not \$800

The US let packages under \$800 in duty free until 2025. Canada's courier limit for most countries is \$20, so Canadian buyers have paid border fees on cheap imports for years.

Optional boosts

Paid ads. Short video. Unit economics. Supplier management.

Where these numbers come from

Canada Border Services Agency: Customs Notice 20-15, courier low value shipments under the new trade agreement

Canada Revenue Agency: Find out if you need to register for the GST/HST

Competition Bureau Canada: False or misleading representations

Community Legal Education Ontario: Shopping online, your rights

Numbers checked October 2026. Pay figures are typical full-time annual amounts in Canadian dollars, based on Government of Canada Job Bank wage data and published salary grids. They vary by province, employer and experience. Tuition is for domestic students. Sources, links and the click-through version: <https://career.help/ca/careers/dropshipper>



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