

Online course creator

Teach a skill you really have through paid courses, coaching or digital products. Selling it is the hard part.

TYPICAL INCOME

\$0

a year, varies widely

INCOME RANGE

\$0 to \$100k

most to the successful few

TIME TO QUALIFY

1 to 5 years

after high school

DEMAND

Limited

job outlook

LICENCE NEEDED

No

anyone can do it

WHERE YOU WORK

Home office, a small filming setup, online communities and live calls

How you get there

- 1 Get really good at something people pay to learn** Years
A trade, software, a language, fitness, design, cooking. Years of doing it, with results you can show.
- 2 Teach it for free, in public** 6 months to 2 years
Videos, posts, a newsletter or answering questions in forums. You learn what people struggle with and who trusts you.
- 3 Sell something small first** 1 to 3 months
A live workshop, a guide or a cheap first version. Proof people pay before you film 40 lessons.
- 4 Build the full course from what students asked** 2 to 6 months
Clear outcome, short lessons, exercises, and a way to ask questions.
- 5 Keep marketing and updating** Ongoing
Sales stop when posting stops. Old material and broken links drive refunds.

Pros and cons

- + Almost free to start if you already have the skill
- + Each sale costs you little once the course exists
- + You can do it alongside a job
- It is a marketing job more than a teaching job
- "Passive income" is a myth: sales need constant promotion
- Crowded, and cheap AI-made courses are flooding platforms

Good to know

The "AI store" course that cost people \$22 million

The FTC (Federal Trade Commission) says Automators AI, which also sold coaching as Ecom Skool, took about \$22 million promising passive income from AI-run online stores. Its owners got a lifetime ba...

Your own link pays almost 3 times more

On Udemy you keep 97% of a sale made through your own coupon, but 37% when Udemy's marketplace brings the student. Building your own audience pays.

Optional boosts

Building an audience. Copywriting. Email marketing. Instructional design.

Where these numbers come from

Federal Trade Commission: action against the Growth Cave business opportunity scheme (2025)

Federal Trade Commission: Growth Cave settlement (January 2026)

Federal Trade Commission: Automators case (Automators AI, Ecom Skool)

Udemy: instructor revenue share

Numbers checked October 2026. Pay figures are typical full-time annual amounts in United States dollars, based on Bureau of Labor Statistics wage data and published pay scales. They vary by state, employer and experience. Tuition is for in-state students at public schools unless the card says otherwise.

Sources, links and the click-through version: <https://career.help/us/careers/online-course-creator>



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