



Ten-step mini-guide

Launch a Shopify store in ten steps

One decision, one configuration and one check per step: from positioning to launch, with a record of what you verified.

Francesco Guiducci

Edition October 2026 · English

ifgdigital.com

For personal or internal business use; unauthorized distribution is prohibited.

Contents

How to use this guide	3
1 · Define what you sell and who it serves	3
2 · Set up the account and store settings	3
3 · Build one complete sample product	4
4 · Decide how to accept payments	4
5 · Verify where and how you can deliver	5
6 · Turn approved tax rules into settings	5
7 · Build the buying journey	6
8 · Prepare measurement and search visibility	6
9 · Prepare support after purchase	6
10 · Make the launch decision from the evidence	7
Using this guide	7

How to use this guide

Use this guide to organize a first launch. Each step produces a decision, a configuration and a check. It also shows what is missing from a store that is already live. The result is a launch record that connects your offer, catalog, checkout and day-to-day operations.

I'm Francesco Guiducci, a freelance Shopify consultant and developer based in Rome. My background is in mechanical engineering, and I work on Shopify stores, themes, Liquid and apps.

Start in a test environment. If the store already sells, schedule any change that could interrupt purchases or automations: payment test mode applies to the whole store, not just a preview theme.

1 · Define what you sell and who it serves

Describe the offer in terms you can verify: product, customer, intended use, planned price and the alternative the customer will compare it with. If a benefit depends on performance, get the supporting documentation before you publish the claim.

Complete this worksheet for your first category:

Decision	Your entry
Customer and need	... person or business, specific problem
Initial offer	... products actually available
Verifiable difference	... feature and supporting evidence
Cost and price	... figures on the same tax basis
Operating limit	... capacity, lead times, countries served
First result to measure	... metric, period, source

Check. Explain the offer to someone in your intended audience and ask what they are buying, what they will receive and what they will pay. If they have to guess, rewrite the offer before you build the site. Positive feedback is a signal, not proof of enough demand and not a sales forecast.

2 · Set up the account and store settings

Decide who owns the store and who may change it. Turn on two-step authentication, keep recovery codes somewhere secure and give each collaborator their own access. Never share the owner's account.

Shopify Payments requires two-step authentication: without it, your payouts can be put on hold.

Check business details, country, time zone, language and currency. For a business operating from Rome, use Europe/Rome in operational reports. Connect the chosen domain, check where it points and verify the sender address for notifications. Before changing the currency of a store with sales history, assess the effect on prices and reports.

You choose the plan after the free trial. On its pricing page Shopify lists a 3-day trial with no credit card and, for most plans, \$1 per month for the first 3 months before the standard rate. Prices and terms change and depend on currency and country, so read them on the sign-up screen before you confirm.

Evidence. A table with the setting, expected value, owner and check date. Keep passwords, recovery codes and bank details out of the shared launch record.

3 - Build one complete sample product

Prepare one representative product before importing the full catalog. Fill in title, description, images, variants, weight and any organizational data you need. SKUs and barcodes serve different purposes: don't invent a barcode to fill a field.

Organize collections and filters around how customers choose. An automated collection needs rules you can explain: test one product that should be included and one that should stay out.

Cost per item feeds the gross-profit reports, but it doesn't cover every cost of the business. Enter it for each variant: the report shows profit only for products that had a cost recorded at the time of sale, so sales without a cost are left out and net sales in the sales and profit reports may not match. The value is fixed at a point in time, not updated automatically.

Check. Select every variant of the sample product: name, image, price and availability must agree. In the test environment, also check what happens with an out-of-stock variant.

4 - Decide how to accept payments

Check eligibility for Shopify Payments. Italy is a supported country, but your own business still has to meet the requirements. Complete the requests in the admin and read the status it returns. A submitted form doesn't prove the account is approved or that a payout has arrived.

Choose only methods that serve your customers and that you can manage. For each one, record the provider, currency, actual costs, owner and refund procedure. Use manual capture only if someone can monitor authorizations before they expire.

To test Shopify Payments, finish the setup first, then go to Settings > Payments > Shopify Payments > Manage and select Enable test mode. Test orders use test card numbers, such as 4242 4242 4242 4242 for a successful payment and 4000 0000 0000 0002 for a generic decline. Test amounts must exceed the equivalent of \$1 USD, test orders must not be fulfilled, and they don't appear in payouts or reports.

Check. In a suitable environment, run one successful and one declined payment. Simulated payments don't verify bank payouts. A real test purchase is a separate decision: it moves money, and a refund doesn't return the original processing fee.

For setup, reconciliation and troubleshooting, use the Shopify Academy guide «Configure and manage Shopify Payments».

5 · Verify where and how you can deliver

Start with the countries you actually serve. List shipping origins, products, weights, rates, preparation times and transit times. If you use more than one shipping profile, test mixed carts: the rate can differ from that of a single product.

A free-shipping threshold has to work for a typical basket, not only for your highest-margin product. Keep pickup and local delivery separate from carrier shipping.

Minimum test matrix:

- ☐ Supported destination.
- ☐ Excluded destination.
- ☐ Basket below the threshold.
- ☐ Basket at the threshold.
- ☐ Basket above the threshold.
- ☐ Basket with products from different profiles.

Record the amount and method shown. Explain or fix a missing rate before you open that market.

6 · Turn approved tax rules into settings

With the professional who advises your business, prepare a matrix by country, customer type and product category. It should state how prices are treated, which taxes to collect, which documents to issue and how refunds and cross-border sales are handled.

Use the matrix as the specification for Shopify. A card payment going through, or a destination outside the EU, tells you nothing about the tax treatment. Don't add registrations or exemptions based on a generic example.

Check. For each approved scenario, compare subtotal, tax, shipping and total with the expected calculation. An order summary doesn't replace checking the accounting and document process.

7 · Build the buying journey

Choose a theme that fits what you need to show, then configure navigation, search, collections and the product page. Start from the customer's questions: what is it, who is it for, which variants exist, what is included and how does it arrive?

Use images that match the real product. Essential buying information must also exist as readable text: a measurement or compatibility limit can't live only in an image.

Check. On mobile and desktop, open a collection, find the sample product, select a variant and reach checkout. Repeat with a keyboard only. Check menus, visible focus, buttons, error messages and navigating back to the previous page.

8 · Prepare measurement and search visibility

Define the questions first: how many people reach a product page, add an item to the cart and complete a purchase? Choose the tools you need, configure the privacy preferences that apply to your store and verify events under the relevant consent conditions.

Write specific titles and descriptions for your key pages. Shopify recommends unique titles with the main keyword near the start and no more than 60 characters, and descriptions of about 160 characters. Use readable URLs and don't keep changing them. Search terms should describe the offer in natural phrases, not repeat as a list.

Check. Verify the domain and your access to the Search Console property, and make test events identifiable. A browser event isn't reconciled revenue, and submitting a sitemap doesn't guarantee indexing.

9 · Prepare support after purchase

Complete Contact, Shipping, Returns, Payments and any other information pages your business requires. State who replies, through which channel and within a timeframe you can sustain.

Write three internal procedures: changing an order, handling a return request and investigating an unrecognized payment. For each, name the decision-maker, the information needed and where to record the outcome. Messages must describe a verified status: «refund initiated» and «refund received» are not the same thing.

Check. A second person should be able to resolve the simulated case from the procedure alone, without asking you to interpret it.

10 · Make the launch decision from the evidence

Collect the results of the previous steps in one register: check, scenario, result, evidence, open issue and owner. A skipped check is not a passed check.

- ☐ Sample catalog and variants are consistent.
- ☐ Prices, taxes and delivery match the approved scenarios.
- ☐ Payments are configured and test mode is off before real sales.
- ☐ Notifications and support procedures have been tested.
- ☐ Desktop, mobile and keyboard journeys are usable.
- ☐ Information pages are reachable and business details are correct.
- ☐ Access, backups and an incident contact are in place.

Remove the storefront password (under Online Store, change access from Private to Public) and announce the launch only after the responsible person approves it. In the first 48 hours, monitor errors and real orders without mistaking a small sample for a trend. In the first thirty days, record one change at a time where you can: what you changed, why and what you observe. Two events happening at the same time don't establish cause and effect.

Done. The register has no skipped check marked as passed, no open issue that blocks purchases or payments, and the responsible person has approved the launch.

Using this guide

Shopify's admin labels can change, so always check your store's current admin. This guide sets the sequence and the decisions; for detail, use the other resources in the series: Prices and margins for calculations, the Product image checklist for media, the Product page template for writing and the Pre-launch checklist for testing.

Sources

- Shopify Help Center, testing Shopify Payments: <https://help.shopify.com/en/manual/payments/shopify-payments/testing-shopify-payments>
- Shopify Help Center, profit reports: <https://help.shopify.com/en/manual/reports-and-analytics/shopify-reports/report-types/profit-reports>
- Shopify Help Center, Shopify Payments refunds: <https://help.shopify.com/en/manual/payments/shopify-payments/payouts/refunds>
- Shopify Help Center, keywords and SEO: <https://help.shopify.com/en/manual/promoting-marketing/seo/adding-keywords>
- Shopify Help Center, storefront password: <https://help.shopify.com/en/manual/online-store/themes/password-page>
- Shopify Help Center, two-step authentication: <https://help.shopify.com/en/manual/your-account/account-security/two-step-authentication>
- Shopify Help Center, Shopify Payments supported countries: <https://help.shopify.com/en/manual/payments/shopify-payments/supported-countries>
- Shopify, pricing and trial: <https://www.shopify.com/pricing>

Sources checked on 17 October 2026.