



Teen Guide to **SIDE GIGS**

Working in the New Economy

Stuart A. Kallen



Contents

Introduction	4
The Growing Side-Gig Economy	
Chapter One	9
Little Experience Required	
Chapter Two	16
Focus on Food	
Chapter Three	23
Art and Design	
Chapter Four	30
Writing and Translating	
Chapter Five	37
Music and Video	
Chapter Six	44
Making Instructional Videos	
Chapter Seven	50
Technology and Programming	
Source Notes	56
Other Side Gigs Worth Exploring	59
Find Out More	60
Index	62
Picture Credits	64

Focus on Food

Side Gig Stats

30 percent of side hustlers say they perform their gigs just to make ends meet, while 60 percent save the money or spend it on extras like recreation and entertainment.

Amanda Dixon, "Survey: Nearly 1 in 3 Side Hustlers Needs the Income to Stay Afloat," Bankrate, June 5, 2019. www.bankrate.com.

In 2020 Thuy Pham was working at her dream job as a private hairstylist in Portland, Oregon. She made good money giving fancy haircuts to executives, touring pop stars, and other wealthy clients. When the pandemic lockdown hit, Pham was stuck at home with no job and little to do. Instead of binge-watching television or doom-scrolling on her phone, Pham searched YouTube for recipes that featured Vietnamese food. Pham, who was born in Vietnam and is vegan, had lots of experience cooking up meatless dishes for her friends and family. She began experimenting with her native cuisine, refashioning traditional meat-based dishes into vegetarian dishes like mock pork belly and vegan bao buns. As a way to stay in touch with the outside world, Pham livestreamed on Instagram as she cooked. "Within minutes of going live, I had customers asking to buy my pork belly slabs," Pham says. "I immediately thought that

this could be a way for me to make ends meet until I could go back to work as a hairstylist.”¹¹

Pham shipped more than one hundred local orders within seven days of going live. She was sending her bao buns all over the country within two weeks. By 2021 Pham's mail order business was so good she was making plans to open a vegan Vietnamese deli in Portland. She had no plans to return to her old job.

Foodie Freelancers

Pham was one of countless unemployed Americans who started their own food business during the pandemic. And small business experts say the home-based cooking trend will continue to grow since food-related side gigs offer the promise of high profits with low startup costs. Those with extra time on their hands are marketing homemade bread, gourmet meals, and homemade hot sauce. While some are laid off chefs, line cooks, and caterers, others—like Pham—are experienced foodies doing what they love most. Many turned to apps such as DishDivvy, Shef, CozyMeal, and EatWith to market their meals to hungry customers.

DishDivvy, which is only available in California, is one of the most popular cook-to-customer apps. And during the pandemic, the site experienced an eightfold increase in the number of chefs offering meals. Cooks who register on the site must first be vetted, a process that can take several weeks. DishDivvy's Cook Support Team conducts in-person interviews with chefs, inspects their kitchens, and even tastes sample dishes. Chefs must also possess a California Food Handler Card. To obtain the card, applicants must learn about food safety and pass an online test. Other apps, such as Shef, which operates in New York City, Chicago, Houston, Boston, and Seattle, require city or state food handling certificates in these areas.

Wherever cooks are located, the apps work the same way. Cooks provide their home address and determine what kinds of meals they wish to make. They create menus and set prices. The

cooking apps take 15 percent of a meal's cost and charge each customer an extra dollar per order. DishDivvy says cooks using the service made an average monthly income of \$2,500 in 2020.

Marketing Food Online

While cooking apps make it easier to connect with customers, they are not always necessary. Dan Palmer's side hustle began when he decided to cook some meals for a friend after she had a baby. He delivered several frozen ready-to-eat meals to the new mom—as a gift. The woman, who works full-time and has three kids, loved the meals and offered to pay Palmer \$100 for five dishes per week. About half the money covers the cost of the ingredients; the rest is Palmer's to keep. He ends up earning about \$10 an hour for cooking up pasta dishes, casseroles, and Asian- and Mexican-style dishes. He freezes the meals so they keep all week. Palmer, who works this side gig with his wife, explains: “This cooking side hustle really works out well for everyone. Our friend gets a home cooked meal every day of the (work) week, and we make some side money in the process. We also make the meals big enough for her family so that there's always leftovers for lunch the next day. . . . And whenever we make her a meal, we usually just make a double batch so that we have one for ourselves too with little additional effort!”¹²

Specialist Success

Ashlyn Balch is another cook who launched her food-based side hustle cooking for friends and family. Balch always loved fancy cookies. Her appreciation for these delectable morsels stems from childhood, when she used to help her grandmother with holiday baking. Balch, who was working as a clinical dietitian in Kansas City, Missouri, in 2020, took a cake-decorating class that inspired her to create a side gig called Sprinkled and Frosted: “I started practicing random cookie designs at home, and I would give them away to family and friends to get feedback. Then they started ordering from me. [The business] really started with my family and friends.”¹³

As her business took off Balch learned to increase her profits by changing her buying habits. For instance, buying flour in bulk costs a lot less than buying a five-pound bag each week. She also tries to keep her designs fresh by exploring online sites for ideas. She explains, “I can see what I like, what I don’t like, and how to pair different color schemes together.”¹⁴

Many home bakers, including those who create decorative cakes, have turned their hobby into a money-making side gig. Most start small and spend a lot of time searching for new ideas and techniques.



Q&A Interview: A Cooking Side Gig

Teddy Charles is a real estate professional in San Diego, California. She has been cooking meals as a side gig since 2016.

Q: How would you describe your side gig?

A: I work as a personal chef whose clients suffer from a variety of auto-immune problems [that causes] inflammation of the joints, nerves, and digestive system. I provide them with organic, healthy meals based on the Paleo Auto-Immune (AIP) Diet.

Q: How did you get into this side gig?

A: I was asked to cook by one of my friends because she doesn't like cooking, but she knew that I did. She subsequently referred several other clients to me. I have been cooking for the same people once a week for at least four years, which shows how well it is working.

Q: Can you describe your typical workday?

A: I go shopping based on a list and a menu that I have pre-prepared, then cook the dishes in my home. Once I have finished, I deliver some of the food, or clients come and collect it.

Q: What do you like most about this side gig?

A: My specialty is creating new recipes and amending common recipes so that they fit with the AIP diet. This venture has really turned into a collaboration because I am constantly reviewing my clients' feedback, which helps me improve the dishes that I cook. Based on their feedback, I add new dishes so I have an increasing number to choose from every week. Sometimes I remove or adjust dishes that are not so favorable. It's important to have enough variety so that dishes are not repeated more than once every month or two months. It is also wonderful to feel that I am helping improve their health and well-being.

Q: What do you like least about this side gig?

A: It can be a little intense when I am running behind schedule because I'm always conscious of trying to keep costs down (I charge on an hourly basis). It can also be stressful when a dish doesn't come out exactly as planned although sometimes something that doesn't look good tastes good.

Q: What personal qualities do you find most valuable for this type of work?

A: Being creative and always coming up with new recipes; otherwise it would get boring for me as a cook and also for the clients.

Q: What advice do you have for teens who might be interested in doing something similar?

A: The great thing about what I do is that it's a real niche in the market. It's aimed at people who are eating a very specific and controlled diet. So finding a niche is important when it comes to separating yourself from the competition. I have generally found that a lot of people don't know how to cook. They also have limited knowledge about what foods to eat and what effects various foods have on the body. I suggest doing research and becoming knowledgeable in this area. I believe that cooking and meal planning is a good trend to get involved with since more people are recognizing the connection between a good diet and overall health.

Side-Hustle Success on Instagram

Experts say the first step to launching a side hustle on Instagram is to start with an interesting product that can be clearly defined on social media. In a few short sentences you should be able to explain what your product is, why it is unique, and why your audience would love it. Instagram is a visual medium, and you can make your product pop off the screen with a good branding campaign. This involves producing an eye-catching logo, catchphrases, and hashtags. Promote your product several times a week with content that includes photos, memorable quotes, short tutorials, behind-the-scenes videos, and other clickable content.

Once these steps are completed, you can grow your following by promoting your account to friends and family members and asking them to do the same. Tap into your target audience by joining existing communities where your product would be well received. Once your Instagram side hustle is up and running, learn to track your success with analytic tools like Instagram Insights. This will help you see which of your posts received the most engagements, shares, and likes. After taking all these steps, you might see your side hustle start to take off.

Kenyon says that creating his side gig was not easy and offers this advice: “If you’re not willing to put in the hours, don’t expect to make a ton of money off your side hustle. When I started Kenyarn, I was dyeing yarn in my kitchen every Tuesday and Saturday—the days I wasn’t on shift at the hospital. . . . During work lunches, I sat in my car updating the website with new photos and product listings from my phone.”²⁰

Kenyon constantly experiments with colors and new techniques, such as tie-dyeing; this helps set him apart from his competition. While creating remarkable yarns, Kenyon interacts with prospective customers on Ravelry.com, a social networking site that its users call the Facebook for knitters. He also connects with his seventeen thousand Instagram followers by posting three to four times a week. He says this has played a major role in boosting his business. Kenyon offers this advice to others who hope to start a successful side gig: “I often share Instagram Stories and posts giving people a behind-the-scenes look at my dyeing process. I’m very transparent about what it’s like to run my own business—the successes and challenges, and even my

Source Notes

Introduction: The Growing Side-Gig Economy

1. Quoted in Jennifer Barrett, “Side Hustles Are Helping Many Close the Income Gap in the Pandemic—Here’s What to Look For,” *Forbes*, October 20, 2020. www.forbes.com.
2. Quoted in Barrett, “Side Hustles Are Helping Many Close the Income Gap in the Pandemic.”
3. Quoted in Kim Mackrael, “In the Covid Economy, Laid-Off Employees Become New Entrepreneurs,” *Wall Street Journal*, November 18, 2020. www.wsj.com.
4. Kian Bakhtiari, “Generation Side Hustle Is Changing the Face of Marketing,” *Forbes*, September 25, 2019. www.forbes.com.
5. Quoted in Barrett, “Side Hustles Are Helping Many Close the Income Gap in the Pandemic.”

Chapter One: Little Experience Required

6. Black Sugar Ice Jelly, “What Is It Like to Work for DoorDash,” Quora, February 17, 2021. www.quora.com.
7. Quoted in Patricia Escárcega, “The Lives of Essential Workers, One Year into the Pandemic,” *Bon Appétit*, February 16, 2021. www.bonappetit.com.
8. Choncé Maddox, “My Honest Review of Being a DoorDash Delivery Driver,” *The Work at Home Woman*, November 26, 2019. www.theworkathomewoman.com.
9. LynneP1978, “Out of Curiosity . . . How Much Do Y’all Usually Make in a Week? Month?,” Reddit, 2019. www.reddit.com/r/WagWalker.
10. Baxter, “Auto Detailing Uniforms: 3 Benefits and Where to Buy,” *Carwash Country*, 2021. www.carwashcountry.com.

Chapter Two: Focus on Food

11. Quoted in Alex Williams, “Can You Really Turn a Hobby Into a Career?,” *New York Times*, February 13, 2021. www.nytimes.com.
12. Dan Palmer, “My Accidental Side Hustle: Making Frozen Meals!,” *Budgets are Sexy*, July 3, 2019. www.budgetsaresexy.com.
13. Quoted in Hannah Kueck, “Frosting on the Side,” *Como*, September 25, 2020. <https://comomag.com>.

Other Side Gigs Worth Exploring

Arts and crafts instructor	Music promotion
Audiobook production	Photoshop editing
Brochure design	Podcast writing
Cybersecurity expert	Real estate promotion
Data manager	Search engine optimization
Diet coach	Social media marketing
E-commerce developer	Sound design
Fortune-teller	Speechwriting
Landscape design	3-D product animation
Life coach	Travel writer
Logo design	Voiceover artist
Modeling	Web analytics

Editor's note: The US Department of Labor's Bureau of Labor Statistics provides information about hundreds of occupations. The agency's *Occupational Outlook Handbook* describes what these jobs entail, the work environment, education and skill requirements, pay, future outlook, and more. The *Occupational Outlook Handbook* may be accessed online at www.bls.gov/ooh.

Find Out More

Internet Articles

Jennifer Barrett, “Side Hustles Are Helping Many Close the Income Gap in the Pandemic—Here’s What to Look For,” *Forbes*, October 20, 2020. www.forbes.com.

Baxter, “Auto Detailing Uniforms: 3 Benefits and Where to Buy,” *Carwash Country*, 2021. www.carwashcountry.com.

Kathy Kristof, “Six Figures from Freelancing? This Platform Makes Gig Work Lucrative,” *Los Angeles Times*, May 15, 2021. www.latimes.com.

Sangeeta Singh-Kurtz, “This Fashion Brand Took Off During the Pandemic,” *The Cut*, May 20, 2021. www.thecut.com.

Websites

Financial Wolves

<https://financialwolves.com>

This website features ideas for side hustles, delivery app reviews, online moneymaking ideas, and other information about the gig economy.

Fiverr

<https://www.fiverr.com>

Fiverr is an online marketplace for freelance services with thousands of listings in dozens of categories. This is the go-to website for anyone wishing to launch a side gig.

Sidehusl

<https://sidehusl.com>

Award-winning journalist Kathy Kristof runs this site, which has hundreds of ideas for side hustles in various categories that include working, renting, and selling.

Side Hustle School

<https://sidehustleschool.com>

This site contains hundreds of real-life stories from those who have launched their own successful side hustles; includes audio segments and written transcripts.

Index

Note: Boldface page numbers indicate illustrations.

- Abramson, Emma, 31
- Althoff, Cory, 54
- American Translators Association, 34
- animation, 40–42
- artist, 28–29

- Baab-Muguira, Catherine, 36
- Bakhtiari, Kian, 6
- Balch, Ashlyn, 18–19
- Barker, Joel, 52–55
- Bärtil, Mathias, 49
- Bernath, Eitan, 20–21
- Browne, Aziza, 23–25
- Buch, Charvee, 51
- Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS), 30, 34

- car washing/detailing, 13–14
- Cole, Jack, 40
- Computing Technology Industry Association (CompTIA), 51
- cook-to-customer apps, 17–18
- Cote, Carol, 15
- COVID-19 pandemic, 10
 - impact on language, 50

- delivery services, 10–11
- Diddy, 28
- digital nomads, 50–51
- DishDivvy (cook-to-customer app), 17, 18
- dog walker, 11–13, **12**
- do-it-yourself (DIY) tutorials, 47–48
- DoorDash, 10
- Dunchick, Cole, 31

- earnings, 44
 - artist, 29
 - delivery driver, 11
 - dog walker, 11–12, 13
 - freelancing tech professional, 51
 - self-employed writer, 30
 - for tech support, 53
 - translator, 35
 - from tutorials, 45–46
 - web designer, 52
- eBay (online auction site), 25
- English language tutorials, 45–46
- Etsy (website), 5

- Facebook, 4, 25, 27, 55
- Fairey, Shepard, 28
- Financial Wolves (website), 60
- Fiverr (website), 5, 9, 23, 60
- food freelancers, 17–18, **19**
- Freelancers Union, 5
- Fuller, Joseph, 51

- Garcia, Karina, 46–49
- gig economy
 - miscellaneous jobs in, 59
 - percentage of millennials working in, 50
 - size of, 5
- Girls With Impact, 6
- Go Natural English (YouTube channel), 45
- Google, 33, 45
- Gritters, Jenni, 32

- Hamilton, Jeff, 29
- Hamilton, Steven, 5
- Harris, Rainier, 31–33
- health insurance, 6–7
- health/safety regulations, 8
- Hernandez, Andres, 11
- Hossler, Jaden, 29