



OWN YOUR PRESENCE / GUIDE 4 OF 5

Set up a **YouTube** channel for your business

From a Google Account to a fully branded channel in your business name — set up the right way from the start, so you never have to migrate it later.

TIME NEEDED

60–75 minutes

COST

Free

SKILL LEVEL

Complete beginner

YOU'LL NEED

Email + phone

Sedjro Digital
sedjrodigital.com

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READ THIS FIRST

How YouTube is put together

YouTube stacks three things on top of each other. Understanding the stack now prevents the single most painful mistake in this guide — building your channel the wrong way and having to migrate it later.

1. Your Google Account

Your login. One email address and password. Everything else hangs off it.

2. Your channel

The public thing with your videos, banner and subscribers. One Google Account can hold several channels.

3. A Brand Account — the important bit

A container that lets your channel carry **your business name instead of your personal name**, and lets you move the whole channel to a different Google Account later. **Create your channel this way from the start.** Converting an existing channel afterwards is possible, but the process destroys data and can permanently delete things.

MOST YOUTUBE TUTORIALS YOU'LL FIND ARE WRONG IN 2026

Three things changed recently, and almost every article and video still describes the old versions:

1. YouTube Studio's Customization section was renamed. It is no longer **Layout / Branding / Basic info**. There are now two tabs: **Home** and **Profile**. Everything to do with your name, handle, images, description and links lives under **Profile**.

2. Custom URLs are dead. The old **youtube.com/c/YourName** style can no longer be created or changed. Handles replaced them entirely.

3. Adding team members no longer requires a Brand Account. A newer system called **channel permissions** works on any channel. Don't let anyone talk you into migrating just to add a colleague.

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What's in this guide

Work through it in order the first time. After that, use this page to jump straight to the part you need.

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PART 3	Create the channel	The right way, first time
PART 4	Brand your channel	Name, handle, images, links
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PART 6	Secure it & add your team	2-Step Verification, permissions
PART 7	Making money — the honest version	Including the Feb 2027 change
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Before you start

Must have

- ☐ **An email address** — you'll either create a new Gmail or use an existing address
- ☐ **A phone number that can receive texts or calls.** See the warning below — this one has a real limit
- ☐ **To be 13 or older.** 16 in Germany, Hungary, Ireland, Luxembourg, the Netherlands, Poland, Romania, Slovakia and Slovenia; 14 in South Korea; 15 in Vietnam. **16 minimum to live stream**, and **18 to earn money**
- ☐ **Your business name** and a **handle** — have backups, handles must be unique across all of YouTube

ONE PHONE NUMBER, TWO CHANNELS PER YEAR

Google allows a phone number to be associated with only **two channels in any twelve-month period**. There's no override and no appeal. If you manage channels for several businesses, plan which numbers you use before you start — not after you hit the wall.

Images — the exact specifications

Profile picture (your logo)	Square displays at 98 × 98 px	Upload larger than 98 px for sharpness — 800 × 800 is a good working size. JPG, PNG, BMP or GIF, but no animated GIFs . Maximum 15 MB. Shown as a circle, so keep detail centered.
Banner	2560 × 1440 px recommended	Minimum 2048 × 1152, always 16:9. Maximum 6 MB. Critical: keep all text and logos inside the central 1235 × 338 px "safe area." The same image is used on phones, computers and televisions, and each crops it differently — only that central strip is guaranteed to be visible everywhere.
Video watermark	150 × 150 px min	Square, under 1 MB. A small logo that sits in the corner of your videos with a subscribe action attached. Optional but effective.

THE BANNER SAFE AREA, IN PLAIN TERMS

Make a 2560 × 1440 image. Now imagine a much smaller rectangle dead center — that's all a phone will show. Put your business name and logo **only in that middle strip**, and treat everything around it as decorative background that may be cropped away entirely. Nearly every amateur channel gets this wrong and ends up with its name sliced in half on mobile.

Also worth preparing

- ☐ **A channel description** — what you do, who for, why someone should subscribe

- ☐ **Your links** — you can add up to 14
- ☐ **A contact email** for business enquiries
- ☐ **A short channel trailer** — 30 to 60 seconds, shown to people who haven't subscribed. Can wait, but it's the highest-value single video on a new channel

Create your Google Account

ALREADY HAVE A GMAIL OR GOOGLE ACCOUNT?

You can use it. Skip to Part 3. Many people prefer a separate account for the business, which keeps things tidy if you ever hand it over — but it isn't required, and the Brand Account in Part 3 already separates your name from the channel's.

- 1 Go to **accounts.google.com/signup**
- 2 Choose the account type. Pick **To manage a business** — it enables business-oriented settings and makes Google Business Profile setup easier later.
- 3 Enter your **first and last name**, then your **birthday** and **gender**.
- 4 Choose your address. Either **create a new Gmail address**, or select **Use your existing email** to sign up with an address you already own — Google verifies it with a code.
- 5 Create a **password**. Google recommends **at least 12 characters**. Standard keyboard characters only — accented letters aren't supported. Obviously weak passwords are rejected outright.
- 6 Add and verify a **phone number**. Technically optional here, but you'll need it in Part 5 anyway.
- 7 Add a **recovery email address** and a **recovery phone number**. Do not skip this — it is what gets your business channel back if you're ever locked out.

Create the channel

DO THIS THE BRAND ACCOUNT WAY. NOW, NOT LATER.

A channel created the quick way carries **your personal Google Account name**. Converting it to a Brand Account afterwards is possible, but the process loses your watch history and demographic data — and if the destination already has a channel, YouTube offers a **Replace** option that **permanently deletes that channel's videos, comments, playlists and verification badges**. People destroy real channels this way. Two minutes of care now avoids all of it.

1 Sign in to **youtube.com** with your Google Account.

2 Click your **profile picture** in the top right.

3 Click **Switch account**, then **View all channels**.

You can also get there through Settings → Account → Add or manage your channel(s).

4 Click **Create a new channel**.

This is the important click. It creates a Brand Account channel — the business-ready kind. Choosing **Create a channel** from your profile menu instead makes a personal-name channel.

5 Enter your **business name** as the channel name.

6 Set your **handle** — this becomes your web address, **youtube.com/@yourhandle**. Rules are on the next page.

7 Add your **profile picture**.

8 Click **Create channel**.

Choosing your handle

Your handle is unique across all of YouTube. It appears in comments, mentions, live chat and Shorts, and it forms your channel's address — so it's what you print on things.

- **3 to 30 characters** for Latin-alphabet handles
- Letters and numbers, plus underscore, hyphen, period and middle dot — **but none of those four can be the first or last character**
- Not case-sensitive, so **@AcmeBakery** and **@acmebakery** are the same handle
- Cannot look like a web address or a phone number
- Match your other social handles wherever you can

HANDLE VS CHANNEL NAME

They're different things. Your **channel name** is the display name, it can contain spaces and emoji, and other channels can share it. Your **handle** is unique, has no spaces, and is your address. Most businesses set both to the same words.

PART 4

Brand your channel

WHERE EVERYTHING LIVES NOW

[studio.youtube.com](#) → Customization → Profile

Under **Profile** you'll find your picture, banner, watermark, channel name, handle, description and links. Under **Home** you'll find your channel trailer, featured video and sections. Under **Settings → Channel** you'll find your country and keywords.

Fill in, in this order

- 1 **Profile picture.** Your logo, square, centered.
- 2 **Banner image.** Respect the 1235 × 338 safe area (Part 1). YouTube previews how it looks on television, computer and phone — **check all three** before saving.
- 3 **Video watermark.** A small square logo, under 1 MB. Choose whether it shows for the whole video, the last 15 seconds, or from a custom point. The whole video is a reasonable default.
It isn't clickable on phones, so treat it as branding rather than a call to action.
- 4 **Channel name.** Confirm it reads exactly as you want. **You can only change it twice every 14 days**, so don't experiment.
- 5 **Description.** The first two lines are what people see before clicking "more" — put what you do and who for right at the front, then expand.
- 6 **Links.** Up to 14, each with a title. Your website first, then your other social accounts. No verification needed.
- 7 **Contact email.** Add a business address so partners and customers can reach you.
- 8 **Country and keywords.** Under **Settings → Channel → Basic info**. Set your country accurately — it affects monetization eligibility later. Add a handful of keywords that genuinely describe your channel.

ONE SETTING WORTH A DELIBERATE DECISION

Under **Settings → Channel → Advanced settings** there's a **third-party AI training** toggle, controlling whether outside companies may train AI models on your videos. There's no universally right answer, but it is a real business decision about your own content — make it consciously rather than leaving the default in place unread.

Set your channel trailer

WHERE

[Customization](#) → [Home](#) → [Channel trailer](#)

This plays automatically for visitors who haven't subscribed. Thirty to sixty seconds answering: who you are, what you make videos about, and why they should subscribe. It's the highest-leverage video on a new channel — a decent trailer beats ten more uploads.

Verify to unlock the real tools

A brand-new channel is deliberately limited. Verification lifts those limits, and it takes five minutes.

Step one — phone verification

This moves you to **intermediate** access, which unlocks the things you'll actually miss without them:

- **Videos longer than 15 minutes**
- **Custom thumbnails** — arguably the most important feature on YouTube
- **Live streaming**
- The ability to **appeal copyright claims**

WHERE

YouTube Studio → Settings → Channel → Feature eligibility

Choose text message or voice call and enter the code. Remember: **two channels per phone number per year**.

Step two — advanced access, if you need it

Advanced features require phone verification **plus one of**:

- **Channel history** — consistent, compliant activity over time. Free, requires only patience, and is the route to prefer
- **ID verification** — a passport or driving licence with a date of birth matching your Google Account
- **Video verification** — a short liveness check where you follow a dot and turn your head, in good light

Review usually takes about 24 hours.

TWO FAILURES MEANS A 30-DAY LOCKOUT

If ID or video verification fails **twice**, you cannot retry *either* method for **30 days**. So: only attempt it when you have your document ready and good lighting, and don't treat it as something to try casually. Building channel history stays available throughout, and costs nothing but time.

Live streaming

Requires a verified channel, no live-streaming restrictions in the last 90 days, and you must be **at least 16 years old**. Restrictions attach to the person, not the channel — you can't get around one by using a different channel.

PART 6

Secure it & add your team

2-Step Verification — required later, so do it now

WHERE

Google Account → Security → How you sign in to Google → 2-Step Verification

Options, best first:

- **Passkeys** — sign in with your fingerprint, face, or device lock. Google's own recommendation, and the most convenient
- **Authenticator app** — rotating codes, works with no signal
- **Google prompts** — a tap-to-approve notification on your phone
- **Backup codes** — eight-digit one-time codes. **Print these and keep them somewhere safe**
- **Text or voice** — weakest, but far better than nothing

NOT OPTIONAL IF YOU EVER WANT TO MONETIZE

2-Step Verification is a **hard requirement** for the YouTube Partner Program. Turning it on now means one less thing to sort out when you're trying to switch on monetization.

Adding team members — the current way

IGNORE THE BRAND ACCOUNT ROLES ADVICE

Older guides tell you to add people through Brand Account permissions with roles like **Communications Manager**. That system still works but YouTube now recommends against it, on security grounds. **Use channel permissions instead** — they work on any channel, personal or Brand.

COMPUTER

YouTube Studio → Settings → Permissions → INVITE → enter email → choose role → DONE

Invitations expire after 30 days. To remove someone, find them in the list, click the arrow under their role, and choose **Remove access**.

Owner	Everything, including deleting the channel and managing permissions. You.
Manager	Everything except deleting the channel. For a genuine business partner.
Editor	Upload, publish, edit, manage live streams, and see revenue. For a video editor or marketing manager.
Editor (Limited)	Same as Editor but cannot see revenue data . The right default for freelancers and contractors.

Subtitle Editor

Subtitles only.

Viewer / Viewer (Limited)

Read-only access to analytics and channel details, with or without revenue figures.

People you add can act on the channel, but their own watching, searching and browsing stays private to their personal account. Never share your password — this system exists precisely so you don't have to.

Making money — the honest version

Most business channels never monetize directly, and don't need to. The videos bring customers; the customers are the revenue. Read this section as background, not as a goal.

Current thresholds

Full program (ad revenue)	1,000 subscribers plus either 4,000 valid public watch hours in the last 12 months or 10 million valid Shorts views in the last 90 days.
Earlier access (fan funding only)	Roughly 500 subscribers, 3 public uploads in the last 90 days, and either about 3,000 watch hours or 3 million Shorts views. Unlocks Super Thanks, Channel Memberships and Shopping — but not ad revenue. Treat these figures as approximate; check YouTube's current page before planning around them.

Both tiers also require: living in a country where the program operates, no active Community Guidelines strikes, **2-Step Verification switched on**, advanced feature access, and **an active AdSense account linked to the channel**. AdSense requires you to be 18 or over.

THE REQUIREMENTS ROUGHLY DOUBLE ON 1 FEBRUARY 2027

New creators will need **1,000 subscribers plus 8,000 watch hours** (up from 4,000), or **20 million Shorts views** in 90 days (up from 10 million). Existing partners face new maintenance minimums, avoidable by posting two long videos or five Shorts every 90 days; channels inactive for six months face removal. Anyone already in the program must **review and accept the updated terms in YouTube Studio by 31 January 2027**.

What this means for you: a channel started now will almost certainly be qualifying under the new, harder rules. If monetization is part of your plan, plan around the higher numbers.

When things go wrong

PROBLEM

WHAT TO DO

"That handle is taken"

Handles are unique across all of YouTube and aren't case-sensitive, so capitalising differently won't help. Add a qualifier: **@acmebakeryhq** , **@acmebakerytx** , **@acme_bakery** . Remember periods, hyphens and underscores can't be first or last, and Latin handles must be at least 3 characters.

My handle was rejected as invalid

It probably resembles a web address or phone number, or contains an unsupported character. Simplify it to plain letters and numbers and try again.

"Channel name not available"

Genuinely unusual — channel names don't have to be unique. It's almost always a trademark or Community Guidelines filter rather than a clash. Try a variation, and note the limit of **2 name changes every 14 days** — repeated attempts use it up.

I can't add a team member because it isn't a Brand Account

This is no longer a real problem. Channel permissions work on any channel — Studio → Settings → Permissions → Invite. **Do not migrate to a Brand Account just for this.**

I need to move an existing channel to a Brand Account

Studio → Settings → **Advanced settings** → **Move channel to your Google Account or to a different brand account.** Before you do: you must be the primary account owner, you must have opted out of channel permissions, and no one else may have permissions access. **You will lose watch and search history and demographic data.** If the destination already has a channel, the **Replace** option **permanently deletes** its videos, comments, playlists and badges. Back everything up first and read every screen.

"This phone number has been used too many times"

The limit is **two channels per number per twelve months**, and there's no override. Use a different number — a business line usually works.

The verification code never arrived

Google acknowledges delivery can be delayed in dense urban areas and on some carriers. Request a new code, or switch to the **voice call** option, which is more reliable than SMS.

I can't upload long videos, use custom thumbnails, or go live

You're still on **basic** access. Complete phone verification (Part 5) for intermediate. For advanced, build channel history or complete ID or video verification.

My verification was rejected

A failed video verification can be appealed in YouTube Studio with an explanation. Remember: **two failures locks both methods for 30 days**. Building channel history stays available in the meantime.

Nothing looks like the tutorial I'm following

The Customization section was reorganised into **Home** and **Profile** tabs. YouTube is also rolling out a Studio redesign in which the Analytics tab is renamed **Insights**. Look for the words rather than the layout.

I can't create a channel at all

Accounts under supervised experiences — child accounts and some school accounts — cannot create channels. You'll need a standard adult Google Account.

REFERENCE

Quick summary

Phone vs computer

TASK	BEST ON	WHY
Creating the Google Account	Computer	Easier form, easier to set recovery options properly.
Creating a Brand Account channel	Computer	The <i>Create a new channel</i> path is clearest here. Getting this right matters.
Banner and profile images	Computer	You need the multi-device preview to check the safe area.
Description, links, keywords	Computer	Far too much typing for a phone.
Phone verification	Either	You'll need your phone to hand regardless.
2-Step Verification	Computer	Easier to save the backup codes properly.
Adding team members	Either	Both work; the desktop list is easier to read.
Uploading and editing	Computer	Full Studio features. The phone app is for quick uploads and replies.
Replying to comments	Phone	The YouTube Studio app is built for exactly this.

The whole thing, in order

- ☐ Prepare your logo, banner at 2560 × 1440 with a centered safe area, description and links
- ☐ Create a Google Account with recovery email and phone set
- ☐ Sign in to YouTube → Switch account → View all channels → **Create a new channel**
- ☐ Set your business name and handle
- ☐ In Studio → Customization → Profile: images, description, links, contact email
- ☐ In Settings → Channel: country, keywords, and the AI training decision
- ☐ Verify by phone to unlock thumbnails, long videos and live streaming
- ☐ Turn on 2-Step Verification and print the backup codes
- ☐ Add your team through Permissions — never by sharing a password
- ☐ Record a 30–60 second channel trailer and set it under Customization → Home

A NOTE ON DATES

Written August 2026. YouTube renames sections and moves settings frequently, and the monetization thresholds change on 1 February 2027 as described in Part 7. If a screen doesn't match, look for wording that means the same thing.

You own this. That's the point.

Your account, your audience, your customer relationships — created by you, controlled by you, with no monthly fee to anyone for the privilege of existing online. Nobody can take it away, raise the rent on it, or switch it off.

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