

Caron Beesley

# 6 Home Business Ideas That Can Pay Off (+ Tips for Getting Started)



*“Freelancers take many forms – tax advisors, bloggers, accountants, graphic designers and more – and with advances in mobile technology, the remote office has made it easier than ever to become one.”*

Home businesses are a booming! In fact, in the USA, 52 percent of all small businesses are home-based, according to the [latest data from the SBA Office of Advocacy](#).

It's no surprise; home businesses afford the luxury of being your own boss and can be started with relatively little investment. But what types of businesses thrive in the home environment? Here are six ideas to explore (plus some tips on getting started).

## Freelance anything!

According to a [2014 survey by Elance.com](#), 34 percent of the U.S. workforce – that's 53 million Americans – is now freelancing. In fact, freelancers are the new normal, contributing \$700 billion to the U.S. economy.

Freelancers take many forms – tax advisors, bloggers, accountants, graphic designers and more – and with advances in mobile technology, the remote office has made it easier than ever to become one. Those who hire freelancers understand the benefits too – freelancers have a lot of experience with different businesses, don't require training or benefits. Plus, they get things done fast.

Freelancing as a career is finally gaining the respect it deserves and the potential for earning is

increasing. Elance reports that three times as many freelancers expect their hours to increase in the next year.

If freelancing might be for you, here are a few resources that can help (click on the hyperlinks below):

- [Becoming a Freelancer: Assessing your Readiness to Be your Own Boss and Tips for Getting Started](#)
- [Starting a Freelance Business – How to Take Care of Legal, Tax and Contractual Paperwork](#)
- [How to Calculate and Negotiate Your Hourly and Project-Based Pricing](#)
- [8 Steps to Becoming a Consultant at 50+](#)
- [Should You Incorporate Your Freelance or Consulting Business?](#)
- [5 Ways to Become an Indispensable Freelancer and Earn More Money From Your Clients](#)

## Monetise your creative skills and hobbies

Doing what you love is a great incentive to get out of bed in the morning. What better way to do this than finding a way to make money out of your hobby?

If you're crafty, you could start small with an online store on Etsy. If cookery is your thing, home-based food production businesses are a great option, but remember to consider the laws that govern

any food-handling business. Read [Starting a Home-Based Food Production Business: Making Your Culinary Hobby Your Job](#).

## Be a professional organiser

From bridal consultants to travel agents, if you have passion and experience in a certain field, consider becoming a home-based professional organiser or consultant. Other ideas include business coaching, virtual assistants (companies hire you to help manage their email, appointments, etc.), life coaches and event planners.

## Pet services

Whether you are washing, walking or sitting pets, the pet industry is huge and people are always looking for a trusted sitter. Like so many other home-based businesses, this is one you can do on your own or work freelance for an established company. You can also offer your services through online portals like [DogVacay.com](#) or [Rover.com](#)

## Personal fitness

Personal trainers affiliated with gyms don't always get paid well as employees and the work is often infrequent, so the incentive to going it alone can be strong. Convenience, flexibility, and the knowledge that you earn what the client pays (less any overheads, of course) are some of the benefits of starting a group or one-on-one home-based fitness business. Your customers benefit too – no gym

fees, privacy, one-on-one attention, results-focus, etc.

Before you do, weigh the cost-benefit ratio carefully. What equipment will you need to buy? Do you need to make any renovations?

It's a good idea to have a strong body of clients established elsewhere before starting out. That way your reputation will take care of that much-needed start-up marketing. Be sure to invest in **liability insurance**. You'll also need to insure your premises and any equipment as well.

If you don't have the business savvy to do it on your own, you could go the franchise route. You provide the classes, but the franchisor takes care of the backend business like marketing, a centralized website, booking system, accounting, and even coaching.

### Child day care

Home childcare businesses offer a potentially lucrative and long-lasting business opportunity. A home environment is often appealing to parents and once their kids are settled (and assuming you are doing a great job), then it's likely you'll have that business until they are old enough not to need care.

For information on starting a child care business including financing options, licensing requirements and other regulatory matters read: **Starting a Child Care Business? Government Tools and Resources that Can Help.**

### Special consideration for starting a home business

Starting a home business is much like any other business venture. You'll need to ensure you comply with certain legal and regulatory requirements (yes, even home businesses need various permits and licenses), most of which are listed in this guide: **10 Steps to Starting a Business.**

If you're not sure what applies to your business idea, give your local **Small Business Development Center** a call. You might even benefit from the advice of a

mentor, which you can get this for free via email or in-person from **SCORE**.

In addition, look into buying insurance (even if you operate as a freelancer). Check with your homeowner's or renter's insurance if you intend to work with customers in your home. Liability insurance, as mentioned above, is also a wise investment. For more information, read **What Kind of Business Insurance Do You Need?**

Finally, contact your local planning and zoning office to see if there are any restrictions on home-business activities and what permits you'll need. If a homeowner's association (HOA) (or resident's association in the UK) administers your community, read over the HOA documents to see whether there are any restrictions on certain types of home business (especially if you intend to have people visit your home and park in the street).

Good luck!

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### About the Author

Caron Beesley is the founding partner of April Marketing, a writer, and marketing communications consultant.

Caron works with the US SBA.gov team to promote essential US government resources that help entrepreneurs and small business owners to start-up, to grow and to succeed. She has been in the marketing business for 15 years, starting her career as an assistant with a London graphic studio. Caron progressed to hold senior marketing roles with several global and US-based corporations with a particular emphasis on information technology and Internet services marketing.

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