

MODULE 1: HOW TO START

What Jobs You Can Do - How To Price Them + Mindset & Habits

1. Why I Started This Path

I didn't have a lot of money or resources when I started. I just knew I had some basic skills, and people around me needed help. I realized fast that if you show up on time, communicate clearly, and actually care, you'll stand out immediately.

2. Jobs I Took at the Start (and Jobs I Avoided)

Here's what I focused on early on — simple, high-demand tasks I knew I could do well. I avoided the risky or permit-heavy stuff until I had more confidence.

- ✓ TV Mounting & Shelves
- ✓ Painting interior/exterior
- ✓ Drywall Patching & Touch-Ups
- ✓ Light Fixture Replacements
- ✓ Faucet/Toilet Swaps
- ✓ Furniture assembly
- ✓ Landscaping - laying pavers, making small retaining walls
- ✗ Roofing or major plumbing/electrical
- ✗ Full remodels or structural framing, or anything that scarred the sh*t out of me

Here's a solid list for beginners (see my list of services attached to the guide for full list)

1. Furniture Assembly

- Beds, dressers, shelves, desks, chairs.
- Low tool requirement, easy to learn, and people will happily pay to avoid the hassle.

2. Hanging & Mounting

- TV wall mounts
- Curtain rods & blinds
- Pictures, mirrors, shelves

3. Minor Painting & Touch-Ups

- Painting a room or accent wall
- Touching up scuffs on walls, trim, or doors

4. Caulking & Sealing

- Around tubs, showers, sinks
- Window and door frame sealing to stop drafts

5. Replacing Fixtures

- Light fixtures
- Ceiling fans (basic swap with existing wiring)
- Faucets & showerheads

6. Minor Drywall Repairs

- Patching small holes or dents
- Fixing popped nails or screws

7. Basic Plumbing Fixes

- Replacing a toilet
- Unclogging drains (without major disassembly)
- Installing a new sink faucet

8. Door & Lock Adjustments

- Fixing squeaky hinges
- Replacing door handles or locks
- Adjusting doors that don't close right

9. Weatherstripping

- Adding or replacing door & window weatherstripping to save energy

10. Gutter Cleaning

- Removing leaves and debris
- Checking downspouts for blockages

11. Small Outdoor Projects

- Building/repairing simple fences or gates
- Assembling patio furniture or a BBQ grill

12. Basic Flooring Fixes

- Replacing a single cracked tile
- Installing peel-and-stick vinyl flooring in a small area

3. Your List Of Services + Tools You Need

The jobs you take on determine the knowledge level and tools you must acquire. Sounds overwhelming? It's not, just start small and build onto it. For example, start with drywall repair. For \$100 (or less if you are thrifty) you'll have all the tools you need to do basic drywall repairs.

Step 1:

- Review my list of services attached to the program, pick out all the services you want to offer. These skills will be what you advertise, and build upon. Beginner services like patching drywall, painting, and planting shrubs are the skills you will build upon to become the ultimate handyman.

Step 2:

- Gather your tools: If you want to start drywall repair, painting, and furniture assembly, go get the tools you need. If you have a limited budget for tools, start small with what services you offer. The more services, the more tools + knowledge you'll need.

I go into way more detail regarding tools in **Module 3**

This guide WILL NOT be going into detail about the tools you need for every job, that is up to your own research and preparation for the job you take on. However I list my My Starter Tool Kit (Under \$1,000) in **Module 3**

Knowledge Required

Use the resources available to you. Youtube tutorials, google search, and chatgpt can teach you everything you need to know. Most people are too lazy to ask "How Do I Replace Sink Faucet"

They assume it's too hard, and go to hire someone.

Really it's a 10min video, \$20 of tools (if that) and the courage to say "YES I CAN"

You'll get better and better, smarter and smarter, and as your skillset grows so will your capacity to make money

How I Built Confidence

I didn't know everything — I just learned on the job. I said yes to what I could handle and figured out the rest. Confidence came through action.

4. Hourly vs Estimates

Giving estimates is the best. There, all done. JK. Giving estimates is the best if you want to make more than \$30/hr, but there is risk involved and you need to be aware of a few things:

At first, I charged hourly. Then I started giving flat rates and felt like I was playing a video game — the faster I got, the more I made. Clients love a clear price, and it pushed me to work smart.

What to do as an absolute beginner:

- Start hourly if you don't know how long it will take
- Track how long it took
- Next time write out an estimate and make twice as much (if you like money)

If you are confident and don't want to start hourly, here's a basic formula for writing estimates I follow.

1. Get details of the job (every detail!) I like to visit every job in person unless it's something simple like a ceiling fan or toilet replacement.
2. Take pictures of the job or have the client send pictures
3. Sit down with a cup of joe, and ask yourself these questions
 - How long will this job take me? (Time and experience)
 - How likely is this job to get complicated and run long? (Unforeseen factors)
 - What materials and tools will I need? (\$ and time)
 - How far away is the job? (\$ and time)
 - Does the client seem happy to pay or more frugal?
4. Open up a google doc, and breakdown your estimate task by task (see picture below of a real estimate I sent out to a client)
5. Price each task according to market rates (google search or ChatGPT) + what your ideal hourly rate is.
6. I want to make \$100+/hr, so if the market rate for replacing a toilet is \$150, but I know I can get it done in 45min, I may charge \$125. More affordable price and I'm still making good money.
7. If you're giving a material estimate as well, keep it separate in your estimate and have a disclaimer like mine regarding material price and reimbursement.
8. Make your estimate easy to read, with all the details you need to cover your butt, and have the client knowing exactly what they are paying for

Here's some examples. Estimate 1 is simple, just labor, no material added because the client had everything. Estimate 2 is more complex, bigger job, includes material estimate and disclaimers. Example 3 is how my estimates look now using Invoicing.co

Client Name - 123 Address Rd - 123-456-7891 - client@gmail.com

Various Tasks - Labor Estimate

Replace/Install 2 ceiling fans - \$150 ea: \$300
Replace/Install Faucet \$125 ea: \$250
Install 2 toilet paper holder/ 2 towel rings/ 3 towel hooks \$150
Install Security Screen Weather Strip: \$55
Add Trim to Closet Door: \$125
Install broom closet handle and patch old holes: \$30
Fix outlet depth in kitchen: x2 \$75
Replace Outlet by TV: \$50
Install Curtain Ceiling Track: \$80
Repair Gate Sag: \$50

Total: \$1,165

Client Name - 123 Address Rd - 123-456-7891 - client@gmail.com

ESTIMATE

Repair, Sand, and Paint 24'x8' Deck (192 sq ft)

Scope of Work:

- Power wash deck surface to remove dirt, mildew, and loose paint
- Allow deck to fully dry before sanding
- Remove and replace 1 damaged deck board (match size and spacing)
- Orbital sand deck surface to paint-ready, feathering peeling paint areas
- Vacuum and clean dust/debris after sanding
- Apply 2 finish coats of deck/floor paint to walking surface
- Final cleanup and debris disposal
- Replace rotten post caps (2)

Labor Cost Breakdown:

Power Wash: \$250

Repair (replace 2 boards): \$150

Orbital Sanding: \$400

Painting: \$550

Total: \$1,350

- Price assumes no railing work and only 2 board replacements

Material:

Post Caps \$9 ea. \$18 total

2x6x24 2ct pt DF \$43ea \$86 total (special order rough estimate)

2-3 gallons of Paint \$50/gal

Sanding Pads \$30

Total: \$250-\$300 (Material estimate only includes items listed, any extra unforeseen materials needed to do the job right will be added to final invoice)

Materials are charged separately, and any materials purchased will be reimbursed by the client. Receipts will be held in an envelope to be given to the client once the job is finished.



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QUOTE

Quote Number 0003
Quote Date 23/May/2025
Total \$160.00

0005
Wailuku, HI 96793
United States
contact.mauimastercraftsman@gmail.com

Item	Description	Unit Cost	Quantity	Line Total
Material	Lumber, shade cloth, hinges, latch	\$60.00	1	\$60.00
Service	Labor	\$100.00	1	\$100.00
Quote Terms: Build a gate for backyard		Net		\$160.00
		Subtotal		\$160.00
		Total		\$160.00
		Paid to Date		\$0.00

Track Every Job (Especially in the Beginning)

When I was starting out, I charged hourly so I could learn how long things actually took. I kept mental and written notes on:

- How long it took to mud and sand a patch
- How long a faucet swap took
- What slowed me down — like finding tools or working around a client's mess

I didn't just track hours for billing — I tracked them so I could confidently quote flat rates later on. Knowing how long something takes (on average) makes you way more profitable.

This is the basic formula for handyman work

- Start hourly, \$20-\$30/hour
- Track how long the job takes

- Next time you do a similar job, go back to your notes. If the job took you 3 hours and you made \$90 at \$30/hr, then you can write an estimate for the job at \$150 Labor. If you get it done in 3 hours, you just made a whopping \$50/hr.

As you get better, and you can get the job done in 2 hours, or 1.5 hours, and soon you're making \$100+ an hour. All because you tracked.

Don't get stuck with the comfort of hourly work. Gamify your income, and see how good you can get.

How to Use Tracking to Build Your Pricing Model

Once I knew that installing a toilet took me about 90 minutes, I started quoting it at \$150 flat. If I finished early, great — I made more. If it ran long, I still knew it was close. That's how you win: use real data to inform your estimates.

Over time, you build your internal playbook. Eventually, you can look at a job and just know the price.

Bonus:

Chatgpt is surprisingly good at telling you how much to charge, here's what you do. Upload pictures of the job to gpt, tell it whatever details that might help (for example, if it's a painting job and the old paint is peeling, that will add to the time of the job) Give the chat these details so it can account for the time when coming up with the estimate.

Tell chatgpt that you need an estimate for labor only, and tell it how much you want to make an hour.

ONLY use chat gpt along with your experience on the job. Ai is a good tool to help you make estimates quickly, but you need to know what it takes to get the job done in order to get a reliable estimate. This only comes from experience

Materials For The Job

Every job takes something, and Lowe's and Home Depot will have whatever you need. Here's how I handle purchasing material for the job.

- Separate section in estimate for materials
- The client will assume for you to get the materials unless they said otherwise.
- I prefer to get materials myself because then I know exactly what's on hand for the job
- I offer to hold receipts and give them in an envelope with receipts when the job is done for reimbursement
- They can purchase the material via phone sale at Home Depot or Lowe's.

Invoicing - Getting Paid

I use Invoice Ninja/ [Invoicing.co](https://invoicing.co) to create professional invoices. You can also use this program to write estimates if you like.

My invoice has all the same details as my estimate, just a finalized description of the work performed, labor cost and material cost.

See Examples:



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Haiku, HI 96708
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INVOICE

Invoice Number 0078
Invoice Date 10/Aug/2025
Invoice Total \$388.72

0009

Pukalani, HI 96768
United States

Item	Description	Unit Cost	Quantity	Line Total
Service	Install Shower Valve	\$350.00	1	\$350.00
Material	ACE - plumbing parts	\$38.72	1	\$38.72

Invoice Terms:

Install Shower Valve – Add On/Off Control
Cut open drywall on back side of shower wall Install new shower valve at proper depth Secure valve to framing
Cut hole into shower wall for valve handle Install provided trim kit
Clean up work area
Close drywall on backside
Tape and mud joints
No texture matching required (per client)
Test shower and set thermostatic shower valve temperature
After completing the remodel, we realized the valve installed only controls temperature, and not flow. Since the valve was provided by the client and I didn't catch the limitation before finishing the walls, I'm only charging a reduced rate to cover the extra labor involved in accessing the plumbing, installing a standard on/off valve, and repairing the back wall. This avoids damaging the new Tadelakt finish and restores full functionality to the shower.

Net	\$388.72
Subtotal	\$388.72
Total	\$388.72
Paid to Date	\$388.72
Balance Due	\$0.00



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INVOICE

Invoice Number 0077
Invoice Date 10/Aug/2025
Invoice Total \$1,165.00
Balance Due \$1,165.00

0010
Kihei, HI 96753
United States
@gmail.com

Item	Description	Unit Cost	Quantity	Line Total
Service	Replace/Install 2 ceiling fans	\$300.00	1	\$300.00
Service	Replace/Install 2 Faucet	\$250.00	1	\$250.00
Service	Install 2 toilet paper holder/ 2 towel rings/ 3 towel hooks	\$150.00	1	\$150.00
Service	Install Security Screen Weather Strip	\$55.00	1	\$55.00
Service	Add Trim to Closet Door	\$125.00	1	\$125.00
Service	Install broom closet handle and patch old holes	\$30.00	1	\$30.00
Service	Fix outlet depth in kitchen	\$75.00	1	\$75.00
Service	Replace Outlet by TV	\$50.00	1	\$50.00
Service	Install Curtain Ceiling Track	\$80.00	1	\$80.00
Service	Repair Gate Sag Auto Latch	\$50.00	1	\$50.00
Net				\$1,165.00
Subtotal				\$1,165.00
Total				\$1,165.00
Paid to Date				\$0.00
Balance Due				\$1,165.00

6. Your Energy Is Everything

If you show up early, clean, and with a good attitude, people love having you around. If you show up grumpy or disorganized, your business suffers. Character wins every time.

7. My Go-To Professional Habits

- Communicate clearly
- Pick up the phone, email or text back immediately (don't delay!)
- Send estimate or hourly rate ASAP
- Track Everything! Time and Material costs
- Arrive 10 minutes early (if you're not 10 minutes early, you're LATE!)
- Clean work shirt and pants (once the job has started, dirtier work clothes are fine)
- Communicate job scope clearly
- Send a thank-you text after the job
- Always leave things cleaner than I found them

Most people are so lazy and careless none of those basic things get done. If you have these good habits, you will stand out and make more money.

Story: Learning By Doing

When I started out, I didn't know everything — I just started doing small things. One of the first calls I got was to fix cracks in the drywall all over this guys house. I needed to fix the cracks so that they wouldn't come back and then I needed to match the texture. I watched youtube videos on how to get it done. I arrived and fixed about 15 cracks for \$25/hr. It was about 4 days of work. I learned as I went and had to redo the first two cracks I texture matched cause it didn't look that good. I got it all done, the client was very happy, and I was happy to be making others happy making good money.

Now I can do the same amount of work in 2 hours and bid it out at \$500.

The most important thing is to track your work, I use the notes app on my phone. Track your hours and what was done so your client gets transparency on what they are paying for, then use that same note to help you come up with an estimate next time you get a similar job.

Module 1 RECAP - Checklist

- **Gather your list of skills - services you will offer (see list of services page)**
- **Start hourly if you are an absolute beginner**
- **Track how long your jobs take**
- **Write estimates based of your notes from past jobs**
- **Get your invoicing looking professional**
- **Use AI to help write estimates quickly**
- **Double and Triple your income by perfecting your services and estimating**

- **Add new services and skills to your skillset, the more you offer the more you can work and make more money!**

DO THIS TODAY TO START MAKING MONEY

Next in **Module 2** I'm going to give you some beginner examples of advertising so you can start making money just by reading **Module 1 and Module 2**