

# Freelance Focus

*Exclusively*  
**created by**  
**Capital**

**A GUIDE TO GOING FREELANCE IN THE  
HAIR & BEAUTY INDUSTRY**

BUSINESS START-UP | PRO TIPS | INSIGHTS | EXPERIENCES | PRODUCTS

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# Contents



**3** How to know when it's time to go freelance

---

**3** How to become self-employed

---

**4** How to decide what to earn

---

**4** Time to review

---

**5** Keeping on top of finances

---

**6** Choosing the right manufacturer

---

**6** Setting up

---

**7** Staying organised

---

**8** Growing your clientele

---

**8** Retaining clients

---

**9** Education is key

---

**9** Pricing – it doesn't have to be painful!

---

**10** Importance of social media

---

**11** Prioritising your mental health

---

## How to know when it's time to go freelance



There are so many reasons for you to consider going freelance. You might be someone who loves the salon atmosphere but inside you're itching to experiment more. Perhaps you have some dream projects that have been kicking around in the back of your head? Perhaps you need to prioritise your

family? Or you simply just want more flexibility to work when you want, for as long as you want?

You might be looking for new opportunities or you might just be feeling confident and ready to start something new! In this guide to going freelance, we share insights and experiences to help you understand if becoming a freelance hair stylist, nail tech or beautician is for you.

If anything proves helpful be sure to let us know over on our social channels!

### Pro tip

Rachael Todd is a London-based makeup artist. She says: "The best thing about working for myself is having control over my own narrative. I'm able to set a standard. It's great to have friends or peers to turn to when you need advice, but ultimately you are in charge of what you do and how you do it."

**Rachael Todd**  
Freelance makeup artist



## How to become self-employed

It's never been easier to make your own way in business. First of all, visit the [revenue.ie](https://www.revenue.ie) online portal to register for income tax as a Sole Trader with Revenue.

Once your account is processed, Revenue will contact you with your 'Notice of Registration' confirming that you are registered for income tax (and if applicable VAT), and your Tax Registration Number (TRN) – you need to keep these somewhere safe as you will need to provide them as a reference for any payments, enquiries and tax returns you make – so don't lose them.

If you would like to use a business name, you must also register your chosen name with Companies Registration Office. Simply complete the RBN1 (pdf) or online at [core.cro.ie/](https://www.core.cro.ie/). Once completed you will receive a Certificate of Business Name certificate which you must display at your place of Business (if mobile keep it in your kit and/or display it on your website). You will also need this if setting up a business bank account. **Note;** you may also have to register for VAT if your turnover exceeds €37,500 (for Services) or €75,000 (for Goods).

Also, when you're self-employed you're able to claim your expenses back, so be sure to hang on to all of your receipts. For further reading **check out this blog:** [capitalhairandbeauty.ie/inspiration/top-tips-for-managing-your-finances](https://capitalhairandbeauty.ie/inspiration/top-tips-for-managing-your-finances).

It is recommended you seek independent professional advice from an accountant or tax consultant before commencing in business.

## How to decide what to earn

**Try:** Using an online calculator, like [calconic.com](https://calconic.com) that allows you to input your expenses, including your salary.

**Ask yourself:** What do you want to earn?

The easiest way to go freelance is to rent a chair or space in an existing hair or beauty salon. You can pay a fixed monthly fee for unlimited use of the chair or it could be worked out as a daily rate. Or you could agree on a split of your business income. For example 60/40 in your favour, or the salon could say they need a guaranteed minimum amount per week/month.

If you'd rather be a mobile or home-based freelancer, then you need to consider the figure that you're happy to have in your personal bank account at the end of each month. To do this you need to take into account monthly expenses such as:

- **Wifi**
- **Water/Utilities**
- **Phone**
- **Products/Retail stock**
- **Virtual Office/Assistant**
- **Advertising**
- **Legal fees/Insurance**
- **Petrol/Travel costs**
- **Booking/Accountancy Apps**

Add all of the above together and then multiply them by 12. Then add on your desired annual salary and divide that entire amount by 12. This is the amount you need to take in each month. Then you need to work out how many clients you need to service each month to meet that amount. This will help you get to your final cost per service.



Charisse Kenion



Charisse Kenion

## Time to review

From time to time you will need to review your prices; this should first be based on your own costs. Have your costs gone up in the past year? Have things become a little tighter? Is it time for you to add in new treatments?

Find out where and why your costs have increased and if you are able to pass this on to your clientele. Also, look at the rise in inflation; most businesses increase their prices by 10% year upon year to reflect this so don't feel like you can't!

## Pro tip

Hairstylist Rianna Henry says you can go freelance and have a regular job. "Yes, you can be freelance and have a regular job, there have been a few times throughout my freelancing career where I have been employed in salon one day a week or even worked night part time in a warehouse while freelancing during the day."

**Rianna Henry**  
**Freelance hairdresser**



[@theblowdryartist](https://www.instagram.com/theblowdryartist)



## Pro tip

Indola UK Ambassador Abbey Jarrold on pricing. “How much you charge will depend on experience and also the area in which you work. Do your research and make sure that your prices are clearly outlined on your website/social pages and promotional leaflet.”

**Abbey Jarrold**  
Freelance hairdresser and  
Indola Ambassador



@abigail\_jarrold

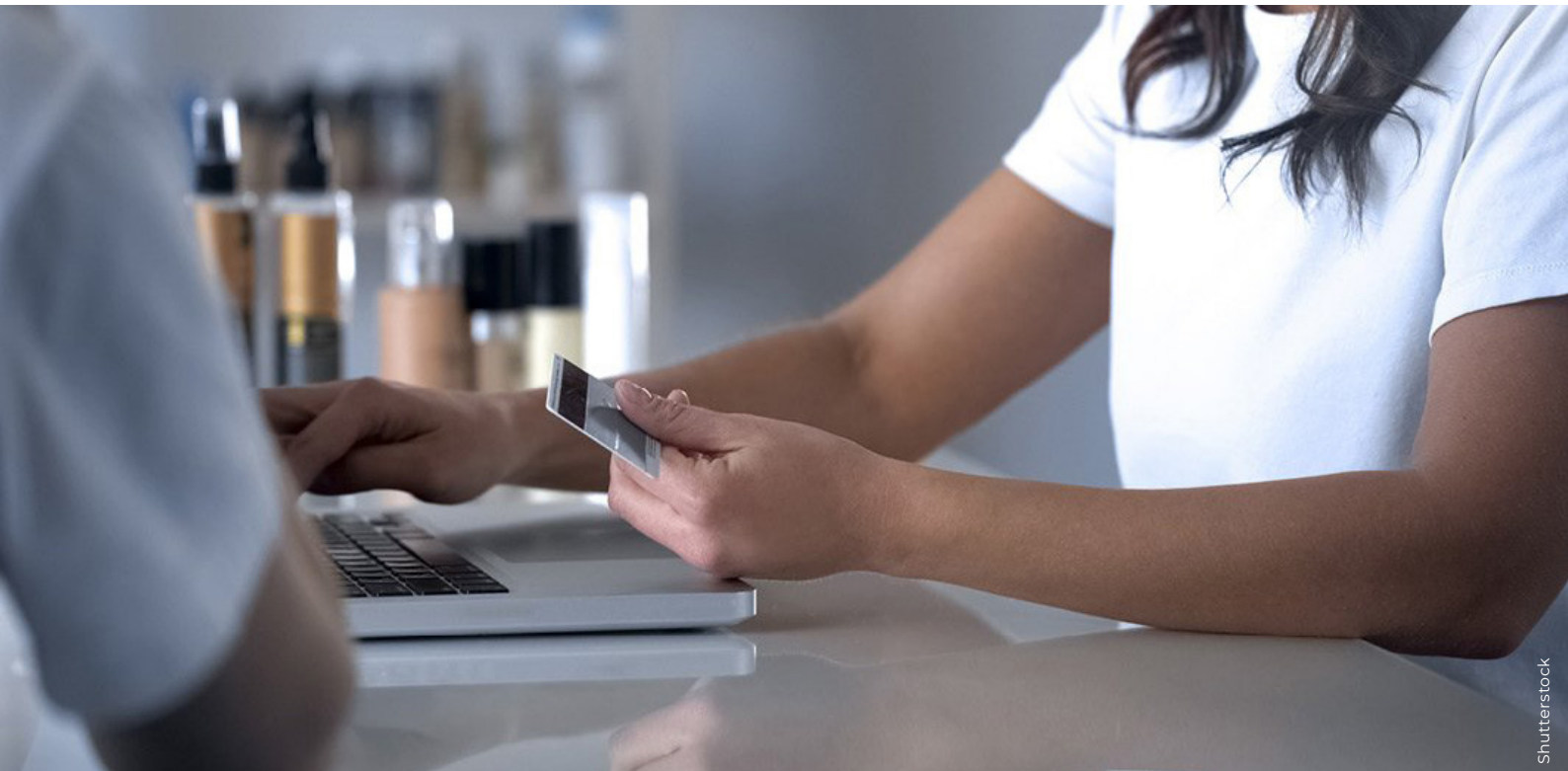
## Keeping on top of finances

While it's vital to have goals, cashflow plans and revenue aims when you're starting out, you must not avoid handling your outgoings and taxes.

The easiest way to keep on top of your finances is to hire an accountant/tax advisor for a monthly fee. They will handle everything from VAT returns to self-assessments. Or,

if you want to save some money, you can use online software such as QuickBooks, which offers a simple package from as little as €4.50 per month. A good in-between option? Do your own recording and invoicing via QuickBooks, then hire an accountant/tax advisor when it's time for tax returns. For further reading check out our blog:

**Managing Finances**





## Choosing the right manufacturer

One of the most important decisions you'll need to make when it comes to going freelance as a hairstylist or beautician is, which brand to use.

Some factors to consider that will help you make that decision include:

- **What's my budget?**
- **What's the price per usage? Speak with each manufacturer or our store staff to find out how many uses you can get from each product.**
- **How quickly will I make back these costs?**
- **How often will I need to re-order?**
- **Do I want to cater for vegan clients?**
- **Do I want to be associated with cool, cult-like brands?**
- **Is this brand well-liked amongst my pro peers?**
- **Which brands are my competitors using? You might want to use what they use or offer something completely different.**
- **What are the brands my clients often mention?**
- **Do I need extra support from the brand when it comes to education?**

## The set-up

So, depending on how you choose to go freelance, you undoubtedly need the tools, and you might also need some furniture.

Some essentials you could need:

- **Chair** – As a professional setting up in your own home or going into your client's home, you need a chair that's comfortable, easy to clean and stylish. Whether you're there for a cut and colour or a makeup application, comfort is key.
- **Wash Basin** – if you're working in hair that means you'll need to rinse out treatments and of course, give your clients a nice, comfy experience while you're at it.
- **Nail station** – add a touch of luxury to the nail experience with one of our nail stations. Whether you like to keep things clean and clinical or comfy and cosy, we've got a whole array for you to choose from.



From scissors to lash and nail accessories to mobile tanning tents, you can shop for everything a freelancer needs at [capitalhairandbeauty.ie](https://capitalhairandbeauty.ie) today.

**Did you know?** To make things easier, if you buy your stock through Capital we offer same day Click & Collect!

*Pro tip*

Hairstylist Rianna Henry says time management is key to being freelance.

"Time Management is essential to my business as I have to know how much time I need between appointments, but also need to take into account traffic and peak times each day."

**Rianna Henry**  
Freelance hairdresser



@theblowdryartist

## Staying organised

While starting your own business can feel like an endless list of tasks, there is so much you can do via your phone and a variety of apps. Plus, as you're working solo, using your phone means you don't have to carry a laptop around, on top of all that kit!

From keeping appointments organised, to managing your receipts, there's an app for everything. When it comes to bookings check out **Fresha**, **Timely** or **Simple Salon** and find the right app that suits your needs.

Another great way to keep up is to hire a Virtual Assistant. We know, it

sounds kinda fancy, but basically it's someone who could be anywhere in the world, attending to anything from your emails, to taking bookings to organising your travel plans. It might seem like another cost but hiring a VA can be super cost-effective and the time you get back is invaluable.

If you're spending hours a day wondering how to compose a caption when you could be prepping for your next client, it might be time to consider some social media support. Again, they could be situated anywhere in the world – all you need to do is supply them with imagery of

your work and they can do the rest, providing you with a social media schedule for months at a time.

Finally, there are some great accounting apps out there. Software such as **Quickbooks** and **Xero** offer phone apps that allow you to record your expenses as you go, making self-assessment time less of a stress!

Need more info? Check out this blog on time management for additional resources:

**[capitalhairandbeauty.ie/inspiration/time-management-for-hair-and-beauty-freelancers](https://capitalhairandbeauty.ie/inspiration/time-management-for-hair-and-beauty-freelancers)**





## Growing your clientele

We know it might seem daunting. You've finally decided to go it alone and you're wondering where to start. Well, the easiest place is right in front of you; your local network. Let everyone know that you're stepping out on your own and that you'd love to offer them an initial discount. You can even offer them a referrals discount if they really spread the word!

What's even better than referrals? Testimonials. If you have a website (and you should because your favourite social media platform could go down at *any* time) this is where you can post reviews and testimonials. Referrals are great at the time, but reviews and testimonials are up 24/7 meaning that anyone can search for you, the services you provide, and learn

firsthand why they need to book with YOU. Make sure to utilise local business listings, as well as Google listings, and if you really want to make the most of your website, try and learn more about SEO – it's all about keywords that your new potential clients could be using to search for you. We've found a great guide on SEO for Beginners [moz.com/beginners-guide-to-seo](https://moz.com/beginners-guide-to-seo).

If you don't yet have a website, check out [Squarespace](#) and [Wix](#); both offer easy to use templates that allow you to build your own site and you can often get a free trial too. If you don't feel like you have the time then search online for a web designer – you can try [Fiverr](#) for affordable options anywhere in the world, or search locally for a designer near you.

## Retaining clients

Once you're up and running with a steady clientele, it's important to stay in touch with them. Emails and newsletters are great for letting them know your latest offers; [Mailchimp](#) is super reliable and offers a range of plans to suit your budget while [Substack](#) is free no matter how many subscribers you have and is really easy to just type into and press send!

Social media is even more immediate when it comes to sharing your news, but not only is it great for staying in touch; it's also a solid option for finding new clients. For instance, if you're looking for more bridal clients, head to Facebook and look for online groups that discuss events, weddings etc. Request to be added and let people know you're there when they might need you. Don't start spamming everyone and every post though; be selective and let that community grow to trust you and your work. Building a clientele isn't just about letting them know

what you're up to and what you're offering; it also means that you need to ask more questions and above all: listen. Retaining your clients means addressing their needs; how much do you really know about your clients? Find out if they're concerned about sustainability; do they prefer vegan or natural products? The more you know, the better you can serve your clients, meaning they won't need to go anywhere else.

# Pro tip

**Hairstylist Darrel Starkey says:**  
“Working for yourself gives you the freedom to take time off when you require, work when you like to suit your own needs and of course make every decision to suit you individually without worrying about anyone else.”

**Darrel Starkey**  
**Session Stylist and Owner**  
**of Darrel of Taylors**



[@darrelstarkey90](#)



Charisse Kenion



## Education is key

Upskilling and training shows your clients you're serious about being able to give them the very latest in trends and techniques. Continuing your training shows you care about your craft and that you're truly passionate about what you're doing.

Adding a new skill not only offers value to your clients; it also boosts your profits. If you've got a client booked in for a blowdry, you could also offer them a lash tint and brow lamination while they're there!

Here at Capital we pride ourselves on being able to offer the very best in training, partnering with a wide range of industry experts across a wealth of areas. From lashes and brows to bridal hair and modern colour techniques and nails, there's no excuse to not stay ahead of the game.

Visit our UK website for a full list of courses that are taking place over in Northern Ireland [capitalhairandbeauty.co.uk/training](https://capitalhairandbeauty.co.uk/training) or contact Paula Gibbons ([pgibbons@capitalhb.co.uk](mailto:pgibbons@capitalhb.co.uk)) to find out about a range of Keune specific courses from Tinta Colour Techniques to Derma Scanner Scalp Clinic offered by Keune Ireland.

### Pro tip

**Training Solutions Hair  
Director Derry Vilcans-Moody  
says: "Never stop learning;  
it means you stay ahead of  
the trends and can continue  
to evolve in your craft."**

**Derry Vilcans-Moody  
Salon owner and Hair  
Director at Training Solu-**

 [@trainingsolutionsgroup](https://www.instagram.com/trainingsolutionsgroup)

## Pricing – it doesn't have to be painful!

Deciding on your costs can be one of those super difficult decisions that you'd rather not deal with. On the one hand you want to price fairly, and on the other – you have bills to pay!

The best thing to do when it comes to pricing is to remove emotion and instead look at the facts. Pick several local beauty pros that you know and do some research on what they're charging and what exactly each service entails. Then consider how long each service takes and then analyse that against their cost. Remember the area will greatly affect what they're charging, and also, if they are known for celebrity clientele the prices will be inflated.

### Pro tip

**Rachael Todd is a London-based makeup artist. She says: "Confidence is key too, you don't necessarily have to be the loudest or most assertive, but just knowing your strengths and having 100% confidence in your skills and worth will open doors."**

**Rachael Todd  
Freelance makeup artist**

 [@rtmkup](https://www.instagram.com/rtmkup)

Another thing to consider when it comes to pricing is COVID. PPE is a must for you and your clients and you'll also need to be realistic on how many people you can cater to in one day, as you will need to clean kit/surfaces etc regularly. If you have to cut down on the amount of people you see, then consider what you're offering. If a client is booked in for a cut and/or colour, you could also book them in for a hydrating Olaplex treatment too – this means you can maximise the time you spend with each client without worrying about the bottom line.

# The importance of social media

As mentioned earlier, social media and having a website mean that you can talk to your customers and potential new clients any time of the day. Each social media platform has its merits for different reasons:



**Instagram** is known as the place to showcase your work – for instance, the Highlights section is the perfect place for you to show your menu, actual treatments and price information, as it's always at the top of your account page.



**Facebook** is known for its community groups and support; it's a great place to ask questions of your peers.



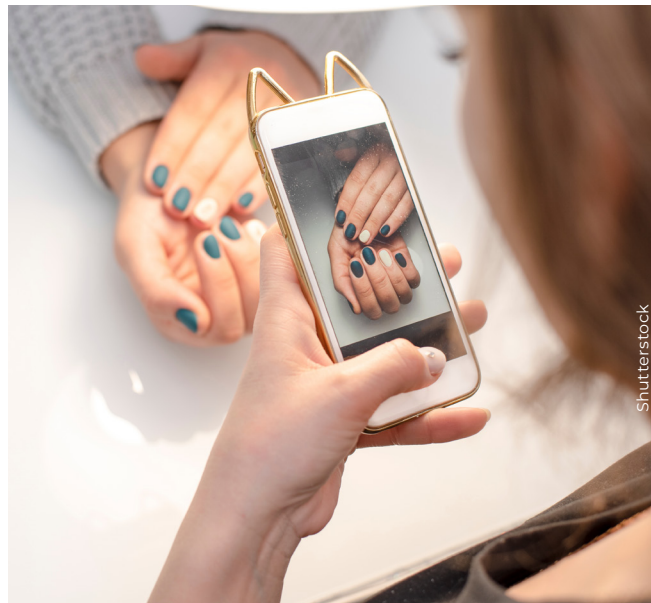
**TikTok** is the place to be if you love to have fun with your clients and challenge yourself and because it's relatively new compared to the rest, it's easier to stand out there.



**Pinterest** is really upping its game when it comes supporting small creative businesses and now offers video.



**YouTube** is the place to be if you want to show your personality and build your brand for a global audience – you never know who might be watching! If you're thinking about starting your own YouTube channel, **check out this blog: [capitalhairandbeauty.ie/inspiration/starting-a-youtube-channel-hair-beauty](https://capitalhairandbeauty.ie/inspiration/starting-a-youtube-channel-hair-beauty)**.



Whichever platform you choose, consistency is key. Stay on top of your messages and always respond to anyone who contacts you. This doesn't mean you have to post every single day and constantly be on your phone; instead you might want to commit to posting three times per week. Two of those times could be on Instagram – perhaps a shot of a look you created – and the third could be a more informative post on Facebook letting clients know about new services.

**Remember:** Social media never sleeps, but you do! Set aside some time each month to batch some content. Even if you can only spare a couple of hours on a Sunday, use that time to plan and create what you want to share with your online audience. Catch up with your schedule for the next few weeks; if you know you've got some bridal clients coming up, think about sharing ideas ahead, doing polls on social, and of course, share the final looks after the event. Your clients love to see what you're up to; just make sure you do it in a way that suits you.

If you need some creative support, **Canva** is a brilliant resource to create social posts on your desktop (you can opt for the free version or pay for Pro Canva), and you can also try **Unfold** and **Tezza** – perfect for creating content on your phone. There's even help when it comes to scheduling, with apps like **Planoly** and **Unum** allowing you to arrange your feed in advance and set dates and times for uploading.

## Prioritising your mental health

If you're finding yourself dwelling on a lack of bookings or lack of social engagement, that means it might be time to reflect on all the things you have done, and you can only do that by giving yourself a break.

It's so easy to spend hours on social media looking at your competitors or the pros who inspire you and question as to why you're not where they are. There is no set path on the freelance journey, so don't beat yourself up. It is great to have goals and aims but if you don't meet them, just think about why, and what you can do next time.

Instead of focusing on the nitty gritty, take time out for you. Book yourself into a spa for a relaxing massage, treat yourself to a short solo staycation, or simply take yourself out for a meal! For more tips on how to unwind, **check out this blog: [capitalhairandbeauty.co.uk/inspiration/unwind-apps](https://capitalhairandbeauty.co.uk/inspiration/unwind-apps)**.

### Links that could help:

**[Betterhelp.com](https://www.betterhelp.com)** – a site that helps you find a therapist that suits you online, anywhere.

**[Samaritans.org](https://www.samaritans.org)** – a help line that offers a listening ear. Visit the website or call 116 123

**Mind** – with 1 in 4 of us dealing with issues that seem impossible, Mind is here to help.

### **Mental Health Foundation**

– focuses on prevention of mental health problems.



## And breathe...

Every single day is an opportunity for a new client, a new booking or a new experience. Taking time out is the easiest way to stay refreshed so that you're ready to take on these new opportunities!

Whether you're a nail tech, a massage therapist or a hairdresser, fundamentally you are a creative person. This means a visit to an exhibition, a botanical garden or even hanging out in a café could inspire you to try something completely new. Keeping your eyes open also means you keep your options open - and you never know, you might meet your next client! Also look for beauty business communities online or check out the **Freelance Hairdressers Association** – you are not alone and you never need to feel like you are.

If you do feel that you need a professional's help you can research online or visit your local Capital store and speak to a member of staff (many of whom are hair & beauty professionals) for the latest brands or trends. As well as keep an eye on our website for new content for every step of your career.

**[Betterhelp.com](https://www.betterhelp.com)** is a relatively new online resource that aims to match you with your ideal therapist, anywhere in the world. These days we can have therapy via Zoom, so there's no excuse to leave your mental health as your last priority. You can't give your clients your best if you're not checking in with YOU.





## WHERE TO FIND US

Stay on track with all our latest news on brands, training, offers and informative blog content at [capitalhairandbeauty.ie](https://capitalhairandbeauty.ie).

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## WHAT'S NEXT

Keep an eye out for the next issue of The Capital Cut magazine! It's packed with inspiration and information all aimed at building a better beauty business.

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## FOLLOW US

You can find us on [Instagram](#) and [Twitter](#) @capitalhairireland and look us up on [Facebook](#) and [YouTube](#) at capitalhairandbeauty.

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## LISTEN IN

Have you listened to The Capital Cut Podcast yet? Hosted by hair and beauty journalist Charisse Kenion we chat to guests around the world as they share their most fun and inspiring experiences. Find us on Spotify and start listening!

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## KEEP LEARNING

We have so much more creative blog content to keep you inspired and informed. From starting on social media, to managing your time and communicating with clients, we've got you covered! Visit [capitalhairandbeauty.ie/inspiration](https://capitalhairandbeauty.ie/inspiration)

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