✦ SUBSCRIBER EXCLUSIVE ✦

What Is Affiliate Marketing

An Easy Way to Add Another Income Stream — By Recommending What You Already Use

Level: Beginner-Friendly | **Time:** ~20 Minutes to Join Your First Program | **For:** Makers & Small-Business Owners

WHAT YOU'LL NEED

TO GET STARTED

- One tool, supply, or product you **already use** and honestly like
- A place you already share — Facebook, Instagram, YouTube, a blog, or email
- A few minutes to join a program and grab your link

TO KEEP IT HONEST

- Your real opinion — the same one you'd give a friend
- One plain disclosure line, ready to paste (Step 9 has one)

> **BUDGET-FRIENDLY NOTE**
> Joining affiliate programs is free — always. Never pay anyone to "set up" your affiliate account. Amazon itself warns that paid setup services are not authorized.

OVERVIEW & QUICK FACTS

If you've ever shared a product you love and had someone ask, **"Where did you get that?"** — you already understand affiliate marketing. You join a company's program, they give you a special link, and when someone buys through it, you earn a small commission. It costs the buyer nothing extra. For makers, it's one of the easiest income streams to add, because you don't have to create anything new — you just link the tools and supplies you're already using.

> **TECHNIQUE SPOTLIGHT: "WHERE DID YOU GET THAT?" IS THE WHOLE STRATEGY**
> Pay attention to the questions people already ask you — "What tool is that?" "Can you send me the link?" That's the opportunity, already happening. In my tutorials, viewers kept asking about the ring bender I use at my bench, so I started sharing my link — and that one tool became a real little income stream of its own.

Quick Facts
Cost to Join: Free
Buyer Pays Extra: No — commissions come out of the seller's side
Amazon's Window: 24 hours after a click (carted items get ~90 days)
Amazon's First Hurdle: 3 qualifying sales in your first 180 days
Disclosure: Required — every time, no exceptions

Phase 1: How It Works

1 Join a Program

Pick a program from Phase 2 and sign up — it's free and takes a few minutes. Once you're in, you can create links to their products.

2 Get Your Special Link

Every product you promote gets a link with your ID baked into it. That little tag is how the company knows the sale came from you — never share the plain store link when an affiliate link exists.

3 Share It Where You Already Talk

Put the link where your people already are: a tutorial description, a post, your storefront, a tools list. No new content required — you're just answering "where did you get that?" with a link instead of a store name.

4 Earn When Someone Buys

When a purchase comes through your link, the commission lands in your account. On Amazon, the click opens a **24-hour window** — anything that person buys in that window counts, and anything they put in their cart counts if they check out within about 90 days.

💡 **Kim's Pro Tip:** Commissions are small percentages, and that's normal. This is a stacking game, not a jackpot — see Step 10.

© 2026 Fork & Silver LLC. Subscriber Exclusive — Please do not share or distribute. Thank you for supporting handmade!

Phase 2: Where to Start

5 Amazon Associates — the Beginner Door

Probably the easiest program to learn on, because almost everything you'd recommend is already on Amazon. One heads-up: after you apply, you need **3 qualifying sales within 180 days** or the application closes — no drama, you can reapply once you're sharing regularly. Amazon also requires this exact line wherever you use its links: *"As an Amazon Associate I earn from qualifying purchases."*

6 Awin — Thousands of Brands, One Account

Awin is a big affiliate network: one free publisher account, then you apply to individual brands inside it. **Update from my earlier posts:** ShareASale is now part of Awin — it closed as its own site in October 2025, so if an old article sends you to ShareASale, Awin is where you land now.

7 impact.com & CJ Affiliate — for Bigger Brands

Two more long-running networks, both free to join as a publisher, with programs from larger and more established companies. Worth adding later, once the habit is built.

> 💡 **Kim's Pro Tip:** You do NOT need to join all of these. Start with ONE — the one that carries the products you already use every day — and add others only when a brand you love lives there.

Phase 3: Kim's Rules — the Part That Keeps It Working

8 Recommend Only What You'd Recommend for Free

If you wouldn't honestly tell a friend to buy it whether you got paid or not, don't link it. Your audience trusts you — don't trade that trust for a commission. Let the affiliate income be the bonus, never the reason.

9 Disclose Every Time — It's the Law, and It's Easy

In the US, the FTC requires it: if you might earn money from a link, say so — clearly, in plain words, right where people will see it **before** they click. Not buried in a footer, not hidden in a pile of hashtags. It takes one line: *"This post contains affiliate links — I may earn a small commission if you buy, at no extra cost to you."* Honestly? It's also just good manners with people who trust you.

> 💡 **Kim's Pro Tip:** Saying it out loud builds trust instead of costing it. My followers know my tool links help support the channel — and they use them *because* I only share what I actually use at my bench.

10 Start Small and Let It Stack

This probably won't make you rich overnight. But $10 here, $25 there, $100 somewhere else? Those little streams add up — and as a small-business owner, I'm a big fan of not having all my eggs in one basket.

✦ A NOTE FROM KIM ✦

This is exactly how it works. You use the tools already on your bench, people ask where you got them, and your link is right there. You don't have to build a new business — you just stop giving the link away for free.

So look at your own bench, your own supply shelf, your own software. Somebody is already asking you where you got it. Start there, disclose like a pro, and let it stack. 💙

Happy Making! — Kim

© 2026 Fork & Silver LLC. Subscriber Exclusive — Please do not share or distribute. Thank you for supporting handmade!