

10 Steps to Getting Started on Pinterest!

By Nancy Alexander - Ladybug Wreaths



Getting Started on Pinterest

When it comes to getting started on Pinterest, people tend to fall into one of these three categories:

1. I've heard of Pinterest, don't know what it is, and would like to learn more...
2. I understand what Pinterest is, but don't know how to

get started...

3. I joined Pinterest because someone told me I should, but I haven't really done anything with it...

If you find yourself in any of these categories—this post was written for you.

1. Get your names straightened out

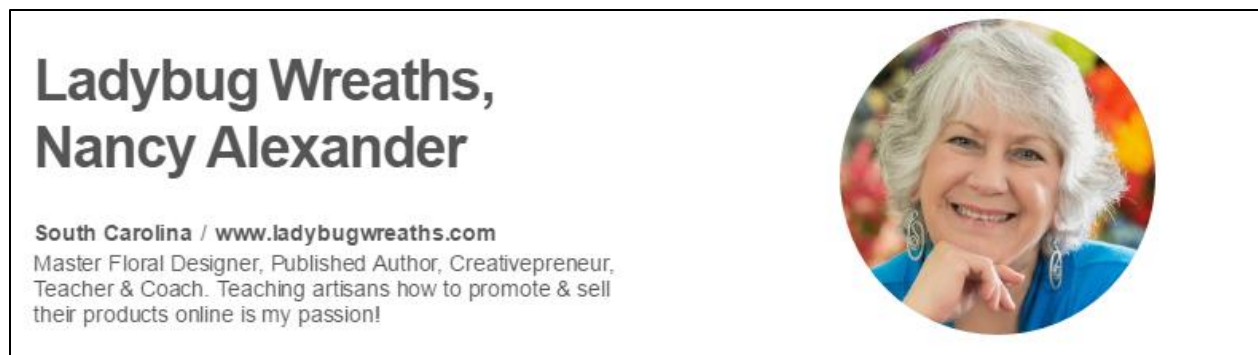
On Pinterest, there are two names you need to be aware of: your username and your account name. Your username is the name that will be used in the URL of your Pinterest page

(www.pinterest.com/username) – mine is: www.pinterest.com/LadybugWreaths but will not be the name that is displayed on my profile.

The name that will be displayed on your Pinterest page (and will be the name that people use to search for you on Pinterest) is your account name. So if you're setting up a page for your business, Pinterest will still ask for your "First Name" and "Last Name." What you will need to do is fill in those fields as if your business' name was your name. (For example, Ladybug Wreaths would fill in the account name as First Name: Ladybug, Last Name: Wreaths.)

2. Upload a profile picture that's Pinterest-worthy

Let me clarify by saying your profile picture does not need to be a work of art. But you do want it to be something that catches people's attention, clearly demonstrates who you are, and stands out in the visual realm that is Pinterest. Photos with bold colors tend to stand out better on Pinterest's all-white background. (Keep in mind that the dimensions of your Profile picture are 600×600 pixels—photos smaller than that will look stretched.) A screen shoot of profile is below to show you how and where your photo will appear.



3. Create a profile that captures your business

The focus of Pinterest as a site for content curation—where people are constantly looking to find content they love and want to share—makes it a place where a lot of new people are going to be exposed to your business.

Here's how it works:

- *You're a bakery* and you pin a picture of a fresh batch of muffins.
- *My friend*, who's already a customer and follows your "Muffins" board, sees the picture ... LOVES IT! and repins it to *her* "Muffin Madness" board.
- *I*, a lover of muffins, but not currently a customer of yours, see the picture ... LOVE IT! repin it to my "MMMuffin" board and click on your name to find out who you are...

So who are you? Tell me, or any customer: who you are, what you do, and why I should want to follow you or your boards.

4. Connect to the right social networks

One of the things that makes Pinterest unique is its connectivity with other social networks. When you sign in to Pinterest from either Facebook or Twitter, Pinterest is going to put an icon on your profile that links your followers to each of those networks.

Keep in mind that when it comes to Facebook, Pinterest will connect users to your personal profile, not your Brand Page. If you're going to log in with Facebook, just be careful that your profile is not *too* personal for your followers. And don't forget to link your profile to your website!

Ladybug Wreaths, Nancy Alexander

South Carolina / www.ladybugwreaths.com

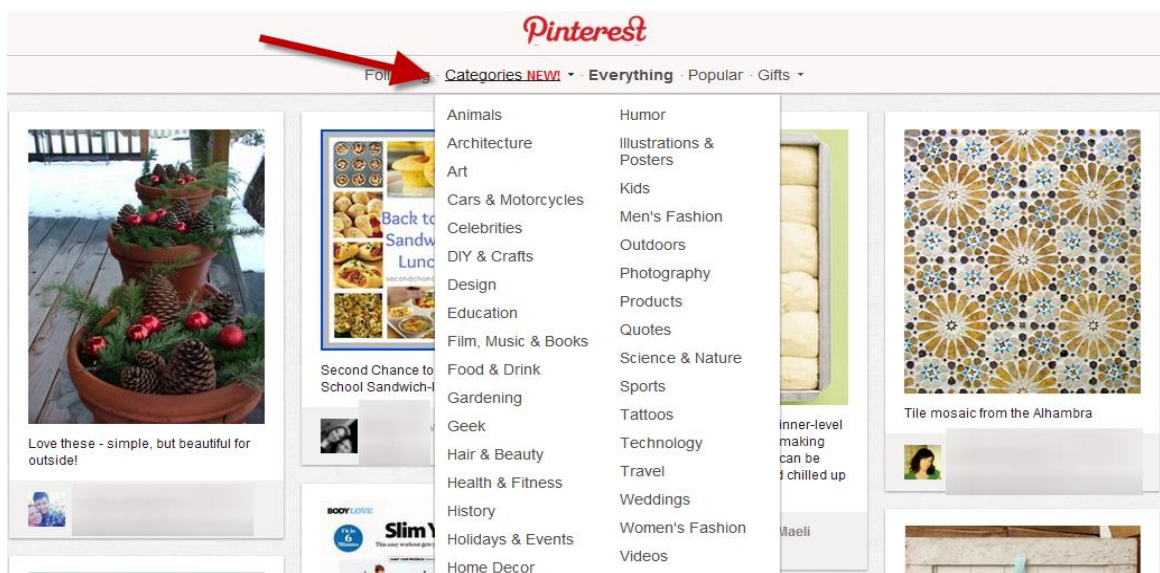
Master Floral Designer, Published Author, Creativepreneur,
Teacher & Coach. Teaching artisans how to promote & sell
their products online is my passion!



5. Find businesses similar to yours on Pinterest

Guess what? You're not the only business that's in the beginner stages of Pinterest. In fact, with a lifespan of just over two years, the vast majority of Pinterest users would probably tell you they still have more to learn.

For that reason, and because Pinterest in its very nature is a site based on collaboration—you shouldn't be afraid to look to other businesses for help when you're getting started. Reach out to other local businesses, search for bigger businesses in your industry, ask your customers, or navigate to Pinterest's different "Categories" to find inspiration.



Use Pinterest "Categories" to find businesses similar to your own.

6. Get the tools you need

Like with anything else, if you don't have the right tools for the job—it's tough to be successful.

Lucky for you, there are a couple of free tools you can access right from day one that will improve your chances of success on Pinterest.

Install the pin it button to your browser: Pinterest offers a free integration with all online browsers that will let you pin content to your page directly from any website. The “pin it” button not only makes it easy for you to curate content, but it will also link that content directly to the website it’s sourced from, helping you avoid any possible problems.

Download the Pinterest iPhone app: If you’re an iPhone user, the Pinterest app lets you manage your page

7. Create your first 3 boards

Believe it or not ... you’re now ready to start creating your own boards.

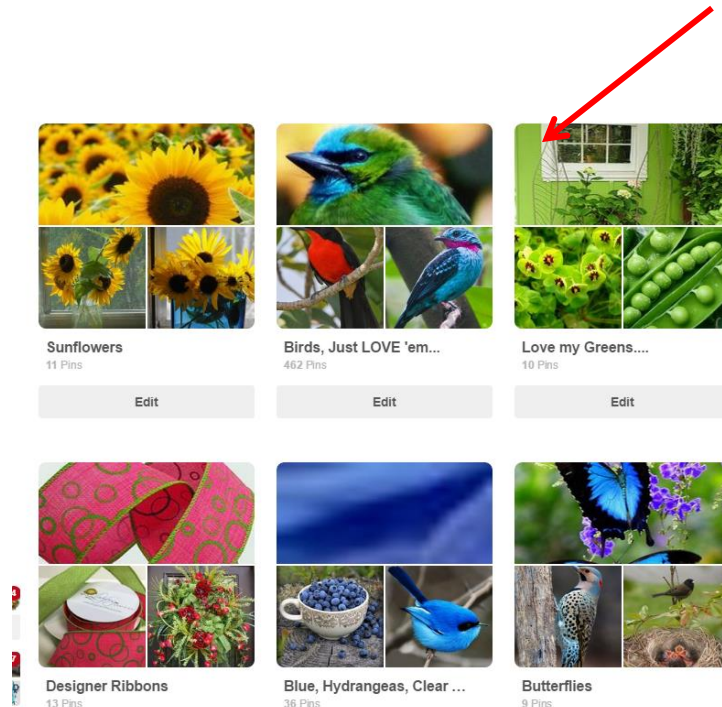
I recommend creating at least three boards with a few pins on each, before you really start promoting your page. You don’t want to tell people you’re on Pinterest, until you’re actually *on* Pinterest.

Here are three ideas you can use to get started...

A board about your products or services: This board can be a great way to start contributing to the Pinterest community and to showcase your business. Be careful not to be too promotional, even when you’re just starting off. Make sure to give your board a better name than “*Services*” (maybe try... “*What We Do*”) and make sure your pins all have descriptions and link to your website.

A board designed to help: A key to not being too promotional on Pinterest is creating boards that your customers can actually use. For example, if you have your own wreath business then you could create a interior design tips and tricks board to get them interested.

A board that's just fun: I know getting started can be a little stressful, but try to lighten up. The beauty of Pinterest is that you can showcase your business *and* have fun while you do it. Think of something you love and that your customers will find entertaining. Don't be afraid to think outside the box.



My bird board is one of my top five repined boards!

8. Tell your network

Pinterest users LOVE finding out that their favorite business or organization is on Pinterest. Use the networks that you already have to spread the word. You can use Facebook and Twitter to tell people to find you on Pinterest.

If someone has already joined your email list, they most likely would love to connect with you on Pinterest too.

Send out an email to your contact list, inviting people to follow your boards or business. It's easy to do with Constant Contact's email templates.

9. Connect your touch points

A recent study found that 80.5% of small business websites do not link to social media networks. Not connecting your website to your social networks is a bad practice for all social networks, but especially for Pinterest. Adding a Pinterest logo to your website will not only help drive traffic to your page, but will act as a reminder to people who visit your website to pin your content. You'll also want to make sure you're inserting a link in your email newsletter with a strong call to action.

10. Keep pinning!

You've set up your profile, you've created a foundation, and you've begun spreading the word—don't stop there! Continue to explore and find new and creative ways to market your business on Pinterest.

It won't be long before you're the one that other businesses look to for advice on getting started.