

Shopify Blogs

Ecommerce

Retail

Shopify Updates

Enterprise

How to Use Reddit: For Beginners and Business Owners

by Braveen Kumar How to Sell Online

Jan 27, 2017 12 minute read 20 comments



Reddit is a website with two reputations.

For Redditors (as its users are called), it's a good way to keep your finger on the

For outsiders who haven't learned how to use Reddit, though, it might seem like a haven for snark and sarcasm, where anonymity runs rampant, and users commit to weird inside jokes and try to one-up one another for upvotes.

Reddit is an entirely different world compared to Facebook, Twitter or wherever else you might spend your time online. So in a way, Snoo—Reddit's iconic alien pictured in this post's header—is a fitting mascot for this strange, wildly popular community-based website.

But there are plenty of reasons to put some time into learning how to use Reddit.




With 234 million unique users and 8 billion monthly pageviews, **Reddit is the 7th most visited site online** and considers itself “the front page of the internet”.




Reddit is also where a lot of viral content gets early traction, where celebrities and interesting people open up to let the world “ask them anything”, and people come together to talk about every topic under the sun.




There is a subreddit for (almost) everything—from r/Fitness for exercise and nutrition enthusiasts, to r/CatsStandingUp which is literally just a bunch of pictures of cats...standing up .




Cats Standing Up




Cat. Cat. Cat. Cat. Cat. Cat. Cat.




1540   **Cat.** (self.CatsStandingUp)
submitted 6 months ago by  **Cat.** - announcement
1356 comments share save hide report pocket buffer




590   **Cat.** (i.redd.it/uploads.com)
submitted 5 hours ago by  **Cat.**
44 comments share save hide report **[+c]** pocket buffer


215   **Cat.** (i.redd.it)
submitted 9 hours ago by  **Cat.**
19 comments share save hide report **[+c]** pocket buffer

1957   **Cat.** (i.imgur.com)
submitted 22 hours ago by  **Cat.**
56 comments share save hide report **[+c]** pocket buffer

18   **Cat.** (i.redd.it)
submitted 2 hours ago by  **Cat.**
1 comment share save hide report **[+c]** pocket buffer

14   **Cat.** (i.redd.it)
submitted 2 hours ago by  **Cat.**
3 comments share save hide report **[+c]** pocket buffer

12   **Cat.** (i.imgur.com)
submitted 2 hours ago by  **Cat.**
2 comments share save hide report **[+c]** pocket buffer



This subreddit isn't even among the top 100 weirdest things you'll find on Reddit.

Once you get past the complicated-looking interface, understand the basics of how “sharing” works on the platform, and get to know its weirdness, Reddit can add a lot of value to your life and—despite being generally averse to marketing—your business.

Understanding the Basics of Reddit

“ Reddit thrives on anonymity, but it's kept in check by transparency. „

TWEET

Using your real name or birth year in your username is strongly discouraged unless you plan to invest in your own personal brand. Speaking and engaging freely with others is how you get the most out of Reddit. That's because other users can easily see your entire posting/commenting history, which makes it easy for the community to police itself and gauge how authentic a person is based on past behavior on the site.

Creating an account is easy enough. All you need is a username and password—you only need to enter your email if you want to verify your account for long-term use.

For this reason, it's not uncommon for users to have one or two "main" accounts that they rely on and several "throwaway accounts" that are only used once or in certain situations.

Once you've signed up, you'll be automatically subscribed to several popular subreddits like r/videos and r/gifs, but should also subscribe to other subreddits you want to be a part of based on your interests, which you can search through here.

Subreddits are niche communities within Reddit—each with its own rules, subscribers and posts—indicated by *r/subreddit* (based on the URL structure:

The screenshot shows the Reddit interface for the Entrepreneur subreddit. At the top, there are navigation tabs for 'hot', 'new', 'rising', 'controversial', 'top', 'gilded', 'wiki', and 'promoted'. Below the navigation is a search bar and a login section. The main content area displays a list of posts. A red arrow points to the subscriber count for the subreddit, which is 230,773. A red text box highlights the subscriber count and the text 'How many people are subscribed to a subreddit.'

If you're interested in handcrafts, you might join [r/SomethingIMade](#) or [r/Crafts](#).

If you run your own business, maybe you'll weigh in at [r/entrepreneur](#) or [r/smallbusiness](#).

If you're into cooking, you'll probably check out [r/cooking](#) or [r/AskCulinary](#).

If there's a subreddit you want that doesn't exist (though it's unlikely), you can even [create your own subreddit](#).

Learning the Language of Reddit

On Reddit, people tend to be fluent in not only “internet speak” but also terminology that's specific to the platform. There are a whole host of terms and abbreviations you'll end up learning over time.

A Glossary of Reddit Terms

Upvote: A positive vote that indicates a post or comment contributes value to the subreddit or discussion.

Downvote: A negative vote that indicates a post or comment is irrelevant, promotional, or doesn't contribute any value.

Karma: There's post karma and comment karma, both of which reflect the quality of your account on Reddit. These points are awarded based on the upvotes you get from your actions on Reddit, and only exist to give the community a sense of your legitimacy and experience as a Redditor.

Reddit Gold: A premium Reddit membership with additional features that can be bought for yourself or awarded to users who you think have made a significant contribution to Reddit.

OP (Original poster): Referring to the person who shared the post that the comment is made on.

Mod (Moderator): An account that polices the subreddit to make sure its rules are being followed with special permissions to ban and remove users, posts, and comments as they see fit.

TL;DR (Too Long; Didn't Read): A short summary briefly describing a large body of text, usually in a lengthy text post.

X-post (Cross Post): Sharing a post from one subreddit to another by submitting the URL of the original submission on Reddit and adding to the title that it's an "X-post from [original subreddit]". This is considered the

Lurking: Actively consuming a subreddit, but not actively contributing to it. Many people use Reddit this way.

Throwaway account: A Reddit account that isn't a user's main account and wasn't made for long-term use. A user can have several accounts made for different occasions.

OC (Original content): Content that isn't reposted from elsewhere, but is something a user has created themselves.

IRL (in real life): Synonymous with the offline world and refers to your actual experiences outside of your Reddit identity.

NSFW (Not Safe For Work): Explicit or inappropriate content you might not want to open in a public place. This is usually found in the post's title to warn people before they click the link.

FTFY (Fixed That For You): A correction made regarding a typo, a factual error, or sometimes used as a tongue-in-cheek comment.

TIL (Today I Learned): Something the user didn't know before, but now knows (probably) because of the internet. There's an entire subreddit for these lessons in [r/TodayILearned](https://www.reddit.com/r/TodayILearned).

AMA (Ask Me Anything): An invitation for Redditors to ask any questions they may have with the promise that the user will answer. It usually starts with "I Am A [something unique/interesting about you], Ask Me Anything". Visit [r/AMA](https://www.reddit.com/r/AMA) for examples.

Shadow Banning: Since a person with a banned account can just go make another one, "shadow banning" is a special punishment where the user is prevented from being able to see their posts, instead of banning their account.

the subreddit's rules will require you to use a Flair to indicate you are a specific type of poster.

By no means is this a comprehensive list, nor should you expect to grasp it all right away, but it's a good resource to refer back to as you get to know Reddit.

Reddiquette: Understanding the Rules of Reddit

Online etiquette is important wherever you post online. But it's even more important on Reddit where it's easy to hide behind anonymity and engage in bullying, spam, and sneaky self-promotion.

You can read up in full about Reddit's own guidelines or **Reddiquette**, but it boils down to one simple rule:

Aim to contribute value with every action and consider the community first.

When you post something, ask yourself if it's relevant to the subreddit and do a quick search to see if it's already been posted there.

When you upvote, downvote, or comment on someone's post, consider how it's benefiting the greater good of the subreddit.

Posts and comments need to add value—posting the same thing someone else has posted or commenting with "that's hilarious" or "cute dog" won't get you upvotes, but something new, witty, insightful, or educational will.

Each subreddit also has its own rules and guidelines, which you can find on the right sidebar.

The image shows a screenshot of a Reddit feed with several posts. On the right side, there is a sidebar titled "In-Depth Rule Explanation" with a red border. The sidebar contains a list of rules for the subreddit. A red arrow points from the text "Each subreddit has its own rules." to the sidebar.

Each subreddit has its own rules.

In-Depth Rule Explanation

Rules

0. Videos Only
1. No Politics
2. No Personal Information
3. No Witch-Hunting
4. No Videos of Police Brutality or Police Harassment
5. Submit Direct Link to Video
6. No Porn or Gore
7. No Solicitation of Votes or Views. No Asking for Votes or Sharing Submission Links On or Off-Site (Facebook, Twitter, etc.)
8. No Hate Speech
9. No Videos of Real-Life, Malicious, Person-On-Person Assault/Battery or Physical Abuse of Animals
10. No Third Party Licensing

These rules are enforced through a combination of:

- **Manual moderation** via the subreddit's moderators.
- **Automation** via moderator "bots" that flag posts that break certain rules.
- **The subreddit's community** via the downvoting and reporting system.

Posting and Commenting on Reddit

Posting and commenting on Reddit is how you get upvotes that lead to "Karma", which is Reddit's way of quantifying the contributions of each user.

There are two types of submissions you can make on Reddit (although certain subreddits might limit themselves to just one or the other):

- **Links:** Take visitors directly to a webpage or piece of content when they click through on your post.
- **Text Posts:** Expand into a text-based post that you can format and add links to provoke a discussion.

You can submit these from the [Submit page](#) or by clicking on Submit Link/Text Post on the right sidebar.

Before you submit, however, be sure to use Reddit's [search](#) feature to make sure you're not reposting an existing post (Redditors frown upon this). You can find [tips here](#) on how to get specific with your searches.

Timing, the text you write, and the subreddit you submit to all play a role in gaining traction on Reddit. Get enough upvotes and comments in a short amount of time, and your post could end up at the top of the subreddit and then eventually the front page of Reddit where millions of people will see it.

The more Karma you have, the more seriously Reddit will take you. But there are two kinds: Post karma and Comment Karma.

You get Post Karma for the upvotes you get on posts and Comment Karma for the upvotes you get on your comments, so it's a good idea to be active in the comments of your own submissions and in posts by others. You can also lose Karma if your individual posts or comments are irrelevant and get enough downvotes for the count to fall below zero.

There's no easy way to build Karma on Reddit. You'll need to consistently contribute to Reddit in meaningful ways. However, there are strategies to help you get going:

- Make a list of very niche subreddits that you're in a good position to contribute to because you're an expert or enthusiast. Then go to the "new" tab and see if there any relevant questions you can answer.
- Go to [r/AskReddit](https://www.reddit.com/r/AskReddit) and ask/answer questions for post and comment karma.
- Make an effort to incorporate Reddit submissions into your regular day-to-day browsing. When you find something worth sharing, post it on one of the highly active subreddits [on this list](#), wherever it would be most relevant.

3 Free Tools to Improve Your Reddit Experience

To help you see more success with your posting on Reddit, I highly recommend the following free tools to up your Reddit game.

Reddit Insight: Track the status of a post in real-time from the amount of Karma to the number of comments. With it, you can basically watch a post go viral moment-by-moment.

Reddit Later: Find the best time and day to post to a specific subreddit and schedule your posts to go out at that time. This is invaluable insight for giving your posts the best chance of getting seen.

Together, these tools will make it easier for you to do well on Reddit.

How to Use Reddit for Businesses

Reddit's community puts a lot of effort into protecting its integrity. Users will go out of their way to vet suspicious activity by browsing the account's posting history to gauge its authenticity.

Reddit generally hates shameless marketing, self-promotion, URL shorteners, and anything that makes you seem like you're only using Reddit as a place to sell your products or services.

If you want to understand the level of disdain Redditors have towards this behavior, just look at [r/HailCorporate](#).

But that doesn't mean Reddit can't be useful for business owners.

While you might be tempted to use your anonymity to drop a sneaky link to your

Once you've built up some Karma and a decent posting history, you can begin harnessing Reddit to grow and improve your business.

1. Pay for Reddit ads

Advertising on Reddit is probably among one of the safest ways to market your products on Reddit.

With Reddit ads, you can target people based on the subreddits they've subscribed to, which lets you get in front of some very specific, super-passionate niches.

Keep in mind that Reddit advertising operates on a cost-per-impression (CPM) basis rather than cost-per-click (CPC) as you might be used to with Facebook ads or Google AdWords.

However, merchants have experienced success on this channel. Be sure to check out: [How to Make Your First \\$1,000 With Reddit Ads](#).

2. Promote deals in the right subreddits

There's a subreddit for *everything* and that includes deals. If you've got a discount code or are running a sale, you can share it in communities such as [r/deals](#) where savvy shoppers tend to hang out.

3. Customer service and community management

4. Post something interesting (that happens to do with your business)

Reddit might not like marketing, but it does like authenticity. For a lot of entrepreneurs, their business is an extension of their life and it won't come across as inauthentic to share it in certain contexts.

Take a look at how [Findlay Hats](#) did it (and as a result [made \\$28K](#)).

5. Do an AMA if you have a compelling story

You can raise your company's profile and build your personal brand by doing an AMA on Reddit.

Post in [r/AMA](#), or find a relevant post and comment on it with "I Am the CEO of _____. Ask Me Anything."

AMAs are conducted by regular folks, like [this car salesman](#), all the way up to [Steve Wozniak](#), the co-founder of Apple. As long as you can position yourself as someone with unique insight, Reddit will have some good questions to ask.

6. Curate viral content

Reddit is an endless source of good content. By subscribing to the subreddits that relate to the niche you're selling in, you'll get a steady stream of top quality content to curate: articles, videos, GIFs and more.

the job in your city or region's subreddit (e.g. [r/toronto](#) if you're hiring in Toronto). Or you can post in the subreddits dedicated to the skills you need (e.g. [r/copywriting](#), if you're looking for a copywriter.).

8. Market research and feedback

Depending on the subreddit, you can ask its subscribers to give you feedback about your website or product idea. Be careful and transparent about doing this in non-business related subreddits, especially when you are a new user.

When in doubt, ask for feedback in business-related subreddits such as [r/entrepreneur](#).

9. Run a contest in a subreddit

Running a content can be a good way to engage a subreddit in a way that contributes value through engagement.

If you want to run a contest or giveaway, you can reach out to the mods of a subreddit (you can find them in the sidebar) and work out an arrangement.

Prizes could be your products, Reddit Gold, or some combination of the two.

Reddit Is Best When You Put the Community First

But once you've subscribed and contributed to a few subreddits, and understand how to find the discussions you want, it becomes a great source of value in your life where you can freely ask your questions to a community of enthusiasts, learn new things every day, and contribute front page worthy posts.

Hopefully now you've got a better understanding of how to use Reddit.

Reddit won't always make sense. It can be hard to familiarize yourself with the site when every subreddit has its defined rules and inside jokes, each carving out its own unique corner of the internet. But that's what makes it so great.

Have an idea for a business?

Start your free 14-day trial of Shopify—no credit card required!

Create your store



About the Author

Braveen Kumar is a Content Creator at Shopify where he develops resources to help aspiring entrepreneurs succeed.

Follow @braveenk




TOPICS:

[How to Sell Online](#) [Reddit Marketing](#)

Join 446,005 entrepreneurs who already have a head start.

Get free online marketing tips and resources delivered directly to your inbox.

Email Address

 Recommend 10 Share

Sort by Oldest ▾



Join the discussion...




LOG IN WITH

OR SIGN UP WITH DISQUS **platetone** • a year ago

I groaned when I read the title, but this is really well done... good article.

  • Reply • Share ›**Braveen Kumar** Mod  platetone • a year ago

Haha thanks. It can be risky to mention Reddit and business in the same breath. And Reddit can be overwhelming for new users. I wanted to make sure I captured the nuances of the website and communicate the value of having a Reddit account or two.

1   • Reply • Share ›**thomachuck**  Braveen Kumar • a year ago



I was taking a utilitarian, research-y POV, hoping in vain that I could cut through all the sarcasm and irreverent, inside humor that many posts contain. "Overwhelming for new users" indeed seems to be where I am at. It appears that I need to work harder in understanding the nuances and mechanics of finding the right hand-holds. Thanks for responding.

  • Reply • Share ›**John Borofka** • a year ago

Agreed - this is a great article and impressively comprehensive. Braveen definitely did his "research"

  • Reply • Share ›**Braveen Kumar** Mod  John Borofka • a year ago

Appreciate the kind words. The hardest part of the "research" was trying not to let Reddit distract me from it lol

1   • Reply • Share ›



Braveen Kumar Mod → Karen Demers • a year ago

Awesome to hear! :)

1 ^ | v • Reply • Share ›



Muzzlington • a year ago

Great article! I needed this.

1 ^ | v • Reply • Share ›



Braveen Kumar Mod → Muzzlington • a year ago

Glad it was helpful!

^ | v • Reply • Share ›



thomachuck • a year ago

If asking a question does not "add value", is asking a question welcomed on Reddit? That seems to be the only obvious thing not dealt with here at all.

^ | v • Reply • Share ›



Braveen Kumar Mod → thomachuck • a year ago

Fair point. Since "adding value" is determined more by the context (i.e. the subreddit) rather than the question, it's about finding the right place to ask—whether to use general Q&A subreddits like r/NoStupidQuestions/ or ask in a subreddit that attracts the specific experts you want. I'll expand on that. Thanks!

^ | v • Reply • Share ›



Visakan @ ReferralCandy → thomachuck • a year ago

Longtime redditor here. People generally love smart questions, and sometimes they especially love oddball ones. But they hate the boring, predictable 101 questions that they get every single week from newbies who haven't taken any trouble to read the FAQs. So for example, going to /r/fitness and asking "how do I get fitter?" will probably get you insulted.

Do the reading first, then ask questions about the specifics. People love good questions.

2 ^ | v • Reply • Share ›



thomachuck → Visakan @ ReferralCandy • a year ago

Who determines the goodness of the question?



Mary Mooney • a year ago

I have tried to use Reddit but I still do not get it. I do not have time to read it all the time as I am trying to run a business. One Shopify Blog had the guy posting his T-shirt for sale in shutupandtakemy money ...but they do not allow this.....

^ | v • Reply • Share ›



Rahat Ali • a year ago

Great article: I would like to recommend a best place for choosing a nice account as per your choice at: <http://freeupvotes.com>

I always buy best accounts for my products promotion from there. I hope it will help you guyz as well. Thanks

1 ^ | v • Reply • Share ›



Martin Gorrie • a year ago

Hey great article, Im about to start running some reddit ads with my Shopify store. But I am a little concerned as to how I will track conversions for my campaigns with sales? Any help in this department?

^ | v • Reply • Share ›



Erika • a year ago

I totally agree with this! Reddit can be a great way to get traffic to your site. Someone linked to my website answering a question in a thread about where to get aprons, and I'm still getting customers coming to my site from that one buried post from months back. Ideally I could find ways to get more people on Reddit to do that again, but then I suppose it wouldn't be as authentic, which is why it's such a great community :-)

^ | v • Reply • Share ›



techbyday • 6 months ago

This is very useful information. Great Work

^ | v • Reply • Share ›

ALSO ON SHOPIFY BLOG

How to Get More Followers On Pinterest: Reach New Audiences To ...


4 comments • 6 days ago

Wilfred Obi — Absolutely refreshing with good fins Thanks

Diaper Money to Debt-Free: How a Designer Grew His Own Passive Income

1 comment • 5 hours ago

James Hendley — It is always inspiring to read stories like this one because it proves

 [Subscribe](#)  [Add Disqus to your site](#) [Add Disqus](#) [Add Disqus](#)  [Disqus' Privacy Policy](#) [Privacy Policy](#) [Privacy Policy](#) [Privacy Policy](#)

Start your free 14-day trial of Shopify

Enter your email address

Start your free trial

[About](#) [Careers](#) [Press and Media](#) [Enterprise](#) [Sitemap](#)

ONLINE STORE

[Sell online](#)

[Features](#)

[Examples](#)

[Website editor](#)

[Online retail](#)

[Ecommerce website](#)

[Domain Names](#)

[Themes](#)

[Shopping cart](#)

[Ecommerce hosting](#)

Point of sale

Features

Hardware

POS software

SUPPORT

24/7 Support

Shopify Help Center

Forums

API Documentation

Free tools

Free stock photos

Websites for sale

SHOPIFY

Contact

Partner program

Affiliate program

App developers

Investors

Blog topics

[Terms of Service](#) [Privacy Policy](#)