

A FREE GUIDE FOR UK SMALL BUSINESSES

Squarespace or Shopify: how to choose *your platform.*

One question, four things to check and a cost you can work out yourself, with UK prices and fees. Made to be finished in one sitting, before you pay for either.

FOR Business owners who have not started building
CHECKED 29 September 2026, Squarespace and Shopify UK pricing
MADE BY Sophie Evans, Squarespace Circle Gold Partner

DECIDE BEFORE YOU PAY

START HERE

What is the site's *main job*?

I build on both, and the choice is rarely about design. Either platform can look the way you want. What decides it is the job the site has to do, and how much of that job is selling products.

A SQUARESPACE JOB

Win the enquiry.

The site has to make someone trust you enough to get in touch, book a call or buy a service.

A SHOPIFY JOB

Sell the product.

The site has to sell physical products, keep track of stock and get parcels out of the door.

Most businesses already know the answer. The confusion comes from the middle: a studio that sells a few prints, a consultant with a paid download, a maker with a small range.

A small shop can sit happily on Squarespace. Once you are managing stock, variants and shipping across more than a handful of products, Shopify is the better call. If you are in the middle, the next page gives you four things to check.

Who this is for. You run a small business in the UK, you have not started building, and you are about to pay for one of these two. You do not need to know anything about web design to use this guide. You will need a pen and a rough idea of what you expect to sell.

IF YOUR ANSWER WAS A BIT OF BOTH

Four things to check in the middle ground.

Use these only if the first question did not settle it. The advice is my judgement, and the limits under it are the ones each company publishes.

01 How many versions of each product?

Take your most complicated product and count every size in every colour. A small, stable range fits either platform. Kits, bundles and long runs of sizes lean towards Shopify.

SQUarespace

6 options and 250 variants for each product.

SHOPIFY

3 options and 2,048 variants for each product.

02 Is shipping a daily job?

If parcels go out most days, you will want postage worked out by the carrier and labels printed from the order.

SQUarespace

Carrier-calculated rates and shipping labels are on Core and above. Basic has local and regional rates.

SHOPIFY

Shipping is included on every plan, with 10 stock locations on the standard plans.

03 Do you sell abroad as a routine?

The odd order from overseas is fine on either. Pricing a range for several countries is a bigger job.

SQUarespace

One store currency. Customers can pay in their own currency at checkout through Squarespace Payments or Stripe.

SHOPIFY

Shopify Markets is on every plan and sets currency, language, prices and duties for each market.

04 Who needs a login?

Count the people who will add products, pack orders or answer customers.

SQUarespace

2 contributors on Basic. Unlimited on Core and above.

SHOPIFY

No extra staff accounts on Basic, 5 on Grow and 15 on Advanced.

Checked 29 September 2026. An option is a choice such as size. A variant is one combination.

UK PRICES, CHECKED 29 SEPTEMBER 2026

The numbers, side by side.

On plan fees alone, billed yearly, Squarespace Core comes to £204 and Shopify Basic to £228. The gap at the entry level is small, so do not let it decide for you.

	SQUarespace	SHOPIFY
Built for	Services, portfolios, content and small shops	Product brands and online stores
Price a month, paid yearly	Basic £12, Core £17, Plus £29, Advanced £79	Basic £19, Grow £49, Advanced £259
Price a month, paid monthly	Basic £16, Core £24, Plus £36, Advanced £89	Basic £25, Grow £65, Advanced £344
Free trial	14 days	3 days, then £1 a month for 3 months
Fee on product sales	2% on Basic. 0% on Core, Plus and Advanced	None with Shopify Payments. With another payment provider: 2% on Basic, 1% on Grow, 0.6% on Advanced
Fee on digital products and memberships	7% on Basic, 5% on Core, 1% on Plus, 0% on Advanced	No separate fee listed on the pricing page
Card fee, UK online	2% + 25p on Basic and Core, 1.7% + 25p on Plus, 1.5% + 25p on Advanced. Business and corporate cards 3% + 25p	2% + 25p on Basic, 1.7% + 25p on Grow, 1.5% + 25p on Advanced, with Shopify Payments
Abandoned cart email	One email, sent 24 hours after. Check this on your plan: see page 08	Abandoned checkout recovery on every plan
Bookings	Acuity Scheduling, a separate subscription from the website plan	Not listed on the pricing page. Check before you rely on it
Selling in person	Point of sale on every plan	The same, with an in-person card rate of 1.7% on Basic

Sources: squarespace.com/pricing, the Squarespace Help Center and shopify.com/uk/pricing. Both change their plans, so check before you commit. Look on each pricing page for whether VAT is included in the price shown.

WORKSHEET

Work out your own *first year*.

Fill in both columns, with the plan you would choose on each.

Use the prices on page 04, or today's if they have changed.

SALES I EXPECT IN THE FIRST YEAR, IN POUNDS

NUMBER OF ORDERS I EXPECT

	SQUarespace	SHOPIFY
Plan The name of the plan you would start on.		
Plan cost for the year Monthly price multiplied by 12.		
Domain Squarespace includes the first year of a domain on annual plans.		
Email on your domain Google Workspace starts at £5.90 for each user a month.		
Extras Bookings, apps and anything else paid monthly.		
Sales fee Your sales multiplied by the sales fee for your plan, from page 04.		
Card fees Your sales multiplied by the card rate, plus 25p for every order.		
First-year total Everything above it in the column, added up		

An example with round numbers. Sales of £12,000 across 480 orders at 2% + 25p: £240 plus £120, so £360 in card fees on either platform. Squarespace Basic adds its 2% sales fee, another £240. Core costs £60 a year more than Basic and has no sales fee, so Core is the cheaper plan once product sales pass £3,000 a year.

PRINT THIS PAGE

Three steps to one answer.

01 The site's main job

☐ To make someone trust me enough to get in touch, book a call or buy a service.
Squarespace, then step 03

☐ To sell physical products, keep track of stock and get parcels out of the door.
Shopify, then step 03

☐ A bit of both, so I need step 02

02 The four checks

Tick one box in each row. The left column leans towards Squarespace and the right towards Shopify.

- | | | |
|----|--|---|
| 01 | ☐ VERSIONS
A small, stable range with a few sizes or colours. | ☐ Kits, bundles, or many sizes and colours of one product. |
| 02 | ☐ SHIPPING
Orders go out now and then. | ☐ Parcels go out most days. |
| 03 | ☐ ABROAD
Mostly UK customers, paying in one currency. | ☐ Several countries, with prices set for each. |
| 04 | ☐ LOGINS
Several of us need a login on an entry plan. | ☐ Only I log in, or I would pay for Grow to add staff. |

TICKS ON THE LEFT

TICKS ON THE RIGHT

If the count is level, count your products. More than a handful means Shopify. One tick overrules the count: a product with more than 250 variants will not fit on Squarespace.

03 My answer

☐ Squarespace

THE PLAN I WILL START ON

☐ Shopify

DATE I CHECKED THE PRICES

FIND THE ONE CLOSEST TO YOURS

Eight businesses, and the platform *that fits each*.

These are made-up examples. The reasons are my judgement, built on the limits and fees in this guide.

01 A therapist who needs enquiries and a way to book a first call

The job is trust and enquiries. Booking is Acuity Scheduling, which is a separate subscription, so put it on the worksheet.

SQUarespace

02 A studio with twelve products that also takes bookings

Twelve products sits well inside the limits, and Core removes the 2% sales fee.

SQUarespace, CORE

03 A consultant with one paid download

One download does not need a shop platform. The fee on digital sales is 7% on Basic, 5% on Core and 1% on Plus, so do the sum against what you expect to sell before you pick the plan.

SQUarespace

04 A printmaker with eight designs in three sizes each

Three variants of each print, against a limit of 250 for each product.

SQUarespace, CORE

05 A shop with 400 products that sells abroad

Shopify Markets sets currency, language, prices and duties for each country. Squarespace has one store currency.

SHOPIFY

06 A maker whose product comes in 6 sizes, 8 colours and 6 fabrics

That is 288 variants of one product. It is over the 250 that Squarespace allows and well inside the 2,048 on Shopify.

SHOPIFY

07 A seller on a marketplace who wants the customers to be their own

With a small, stable range, Squarespace on Core. With a growing range and parcels going out daily, Shopify.

DEPENDS ON RANGE

08 Three people who will pack orders and answer customers

Shopify Basic has no extra staff accounts and Grow has 5. Squarespace Core has unlimited contributors, so a small range tips this one back to Squarespace.

DEPENDS ON RANGE

SQUarespace, PLAN BY PLAN

Know your plan first.

Squarespace has four current plans: Basic, Core, Plus and Advanced. Choose the plan before you count on a feature. If you already have a site, open **Settings**, then **Billing**, and write the plan name down.

01 Product reviews

NATIVE

On all four current plans. Stars show on product pages only, and the email asking for a review goes 14 days after the order is fulfilled.

02 Related products

DEPENDS ON PLAN

On Core, Plus and Advanced. Up to five products, chosen by category or tag.

03 Announcement bar, carrier rates and shipping labels

DEPENDS ON PLAN

All three start on Core. Basic has local and regional shipping rates.

04 Code injection and JavaScript

DEPENDS ON PLAN

These need Core or above. Squarespace's own pages disagree on whether the CSS editor is on Basic, so check this on your plan.

05 Abandoned cart email

CHECK YOUR PLAN

It is one email, sent 24 hours after. The Help Center lists it on all four plans and the pricing page lists it from Core. Check this on your plan before you count on it.

06 Colour swatches

NOT NATIVE

Variants show as a dropdown or as buttons.

07 Pre-order and coming soon

NOT NATIVE

Hidden products do not show at all. A product can be scheduled to publish on a date.

Checked against the Squarespace Help Center on 27 and 28 September 2026. I have left out the same list for Shopify because I could not check each line on Shopify's own pages.

CHANGING YOUR MIND

What stays behind *if you move later.*

Products can be exported from Squarespace to a spreadsheet, which Shopify can import, and the reverse is possible too. More than the design stays behind.

LEFT OUT OF THE PRODUCT EXPORT

- ☐ Customer reviews. Shopify says reviews cannot be migrated from Squarespace.
- ☐ Featured images, variant images and the alt text on every image.
- ☐ The additional information sections under each product.
- ☐ Any option after the third on a product.
- ☐ Download products, which cannot be exported.

DONE AGAIN BY HAND

- ☐ Page addresses. They differ between the two, so each old address needs a redirect.
- ☐ The design. The store is rebuilt around the products.

Before you move. Save your product photographs and their descriptions somewhere outside the platform, and keep a list of your page addresses.

It is cheaper to make the call before the first build than after it.

From Squarespace's help article on exporting products and Shopify's on migrating from Squarespace, read on 29 September 2026.

TEN TICKS

Try it before you pay for a year.

Squarespace gives you 14 days free. Shopify gives you 3 days, then £1 a month for 3 months. Use the time to test the one thing your shop depends on.

ON PAPER

- ☐ I have answered the question on page 02.
- ☐ The decision sheet has one answer ticked.
- ☐ I have filled in the cost worksheet with my own numbers.
- ☐ I have looked at both pricing pages today.
- ☐ I know who else needs a login, and which plan allows it.

IN THE TRIAL

- ☐ I have started a trial on the platform I chose.
- ☐ I have added one real product, with every size and colour it comes in.
- ☐ Shipping is set for my main country.
- ☐ I have run a test order from start to finish.
- ☐ Every feature I am counting on is there, on the plan I intend to pay for.

THEN

Write the plan name and its yearly cost on the decision sheet, and keep the sheet. It is the brief for whoever builds the site, including you.

Let Claude walk you through it.

Give Claude this guide and your own numbers. It asks the questions on the decision sheet in order and does the sums on the worksheet.

THE PROMPT

I have attached a guide to choosing between Squarespace and Shopify for a small UK business.

My business: [what you sell, and who to, in two sentences].

My products: [how many, and how many sizes or colours the most complicated one has].

Sales I expect in the first year: [amount in pounds], across about [number] orders.

Where my customers are: [UK only, or which countries].

People who need a login: [number].

Walk me through the decision sheet in the guide, one step at a time. Ask me the question in step one and wait for my answer. Go on to the four checks only if my answer is a bit of both.

Then fill in the first-year cost worksheet for both platforms, using my numbers and only the prices and fees printed in the guide. Show each sum.

If the guide does not cover something, say "not in the guide". Do not guess, and do not use a price from anywhere else.

HOW

01 Open Claude at claude.ai and start a new chat.

02 Attach: This PDF.

03 Paste the prompt. Replace everything in [square brackets].

THEN

01 Ask: "Which plan would I need on each platform, and which page of the guide says so?"

02 Check Claude's sums with a calculator, then look up today's prices on both pricing pages.

Claude can be wrong. Check every figure, font name and setting against the guide before you use it.

Do not paste anyone's private details into any AI tool. Take names and contact details out first.

Whichever you chose, I can *help you build it.*

I build on both platforms, and you can do all of this yourself. If you would like support, I offer a free audit of where you are now, which you can ask for at sophie-evans.com. I price any work separately after that.

A single page Squarespace site starts at £995 and a four to five page site at £1,500. Shopify builds are quoted one at a time.

sophie-evans.com • hello@sophie-evans.com

Made by Sophie Evans of S Evans Design, an independent designer based in the UK, in design since 2012 and a Squarespace Circle Gold Partner. Prices, fees and limits were checked on 29 September 2026 against squarespace.com/pricing, shopify.com/uk/pricing and both help centres. The Squarespace shop facts on page 08 were checked on 27 and 28 September 2026. This is an independent guide and is not affiliated with or endorsed by Squarespace or Shopify.

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