

# PRICING YOUR WORK



## A SIMPLE GUIDE FOR COMMUNITY MAKERS

This guide is for anyone who's ever wondered how to honour the time, teachings, and care in what they make - and how to share that work in a good way, with good boundaries.

### KNOW YOUR MARKET & COMMUNITY

Before you set prices, pause and ask:

- Who are you selling to - neighbours, community members, visitors?
- Where will you be selling your work? Markets, local shops, online?
- What are other makers in your community charging?

#### REMEMBER:

You're not just charging for *the thing*. You're charging for the time, tools, care, and community that live inside it.

### THE REAL COST OF CREATING



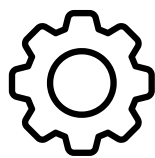
#### MATERIALS

The physical supplies that go into each piece - like beads, fabric, thread, paint.



#### LABOUR

Your time, skill, and lived experience. What feels fair for your energy? Many makers start with \$20/hour or more.



#### OVERHEAD

All the behind-the-scenes things that help your craft happen - even if they don't go into a single item.

### A SIMPLE FORMULA

If you're just starting out or don't have every number tracked yet - this formula can you figure out a price that helps honour your time, care, and effort.

**WHOLESALE PRICE =**  
**(MATERIALS + LABOUR) x 2.2**

**RETAIL PRICE =**  
**WHOLESALE PRICE x 2**

#### EXAMPLE

Materials	\$10.00	Wholesale =	\$66.00
Labour (1 hour)	\$20.00	Total Cost x 2.2	
Total Cost =	\$30.00	Retail Price =	\$132.00
		Wholesale x 2	

### WHOLESALE VS. RETAIL

#### WHOLESALE

the lower price a shop or gallery pays you so they can resell your work.

#### RETAIL

the full price a customer pays - whether they buy it from you or through a shop.

### RESPECT YOURSELF

Pricing your craft is about respect: for your time, your teachings, and your talent.

You deserve to be paid fairly for what you create. Be proud of the beauty and skill you bring to every piece.

Your work carries story, culture, and care. That's priceless.

# THE REAL COST OF CREATING

## MATERIALS

The physical supplies that go into each piece - like beads, fabric, thread, paint.



### STEP 1

Write down how much each material costs when you buy it:

Examples:

- A sheet of beading foundation costs \$4
- A bag of seed beads costs \$10
- A spool of thread costs \$5

### REMEMBER:

Tracking your material costs gets easier the more you practice.

### STEP 2

Think about how much of each material went into your project. Do your best to estimate how much of each you used. You can measure it a few ways:

#### BY PORTION

If you used about  $\frac{1}{8}$  of your \$4 foundation, divide  $\$4 \div 8 = \$0.50$  used

Beading foundation or felt; Leather, hide, or fur pieces; Fabric (ribbon skirts, lining, regalia panels); Canvases or paper sheets; Polymer clay blocks; Metal components or findings (for jewelry making)

#### BY WEIGHT

Weigh your beads before and after your project. If you used 10g out of a 100g bag that cost \$10, then  $10 \div (100g) = 0.1 \rightarrow \$1.00$  worth of beads

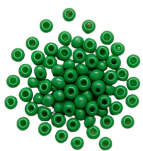
Beads (seed beads, bugles, crystals, gem chips); Paint and glitter; Resin and hardener mixtures; Clay or sculpting medium; Embroidery floss or wool sold by weight

#### BY LENGTH

If your \$5 spool of thread has 50 metres, and you used about 5 metres  $5 \div (50 \text{ metres}) = 0.1 \rightarrow \$0.50$  worth of thread

Thread, sinew, or string; Ribbon, lace, or binding tape; Wire, chain, or leather cord; Fringe trim, rhinestone bands, or beaded edge; Yarn or macramé cord

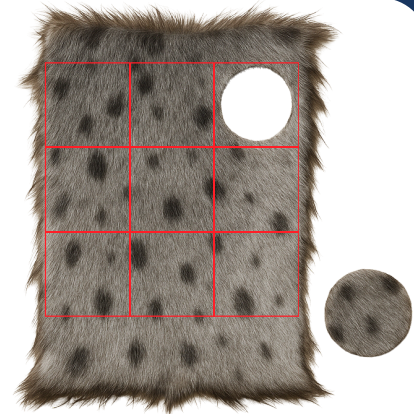
### STEP 3



Add the cost of each item you used:

- Beading foundation - \$0.50
- Beads - \$1.00
- Thread - \$0.50

**Total Materials Cost = \$2.00**



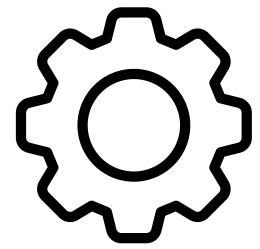
### REMEMBER:

Knowing costs now will help you when your business grows

*It might not seem like much on its own, but those small costs add up!* Knowing them helps you set fair, sustainable prices over time. When you include your time, tools, and overhead, that's when you start to see the true value of your work, and your worth.



# THE REAL COST OF CREATING



## OVERHEAD

All the behind-the-scenes things that help your craft happen - even if they don't go into a single item.

## LITTLE THINGS THAT ADD UP

Overhead includes things like:

- 📱 Your phone, internet, & banking fees (for posting, messaging, taking orders, e-transfer fees)
- 🏠 Workspace costs: even if it's just a corner of your home, you need electricity and space
- 🚗 Gas or transportation to markets or post office trips
- 🛠️ Tools and equipment (pliers, sewing machine, thread, needles, glue, camera, etc.)
- 📄 Memberships or subscriptions (Canva, Shopify, Artist Memberships, etc.)
- 📦 Shipping supplies & packaging (envelopes, tags, boxes, tape, labels)
- 🗣️ Marketing costs like labels, business cards, or website hosting
- 💰 Fees for market booths
- ✉️ Time spent emailing or taking orders

### REMEMBER:

These aren't "extras." They're part of the work.

## UNDERSTANDING OVERHEAD

When you see x 2.2 in the formula, that extra 0.2 (or 20%) is there to cover your **overhead**. Think of it as a small safety net that keeps your business sustainable.

## STARTING OUT

If you're new and don't have many overhead expenses yet, it's still smart to build in a small amount. We have chosen 20% to start (Version 1), but you can use a set amount of overhead per order (even \$2-\$3) if you prefer that method (Version 2).

### Version 1:

Wholesale price = (Materials + Labour) × 2.2

### Version 2:

Wholesale price = (Materials + Labour + **Overhead**) × 2

You're just adding your chosen overhead (a set dollar amount) before multiplying (instead of using a percentage). Either method works: what matters is that you include some overhead.

## THE FORMULA

**WHOLESALE PRICE =**  
**(MATERIALS + LABOUR) x 2.2**

**RETAIL PRICE =**  
**WHOLESALE PRICE x 2**

## EXAMPLE

Materials	\$10.00	Wholesale =	\$66.00
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## BENEFITS OF ADDING OVERHEAD

That little bit can help you:

- Cover unexpected costs (extra thread, shipping labels, repairs)
- Start a fund for better tools or paid apps later
- Build the habit of pricing sustainably from day one

As your business grows, start tracking your actual yearly expenses and adjust your overhead percentage or flat rate to match reality.



# WHOLESALE VS. RETAIL

As your business grows, you might connect with shops or galleries that want to sell your work for you. These are called **retailers**. Working with them can be a great way to reach more people—but it's important to understand how wholesale and retail pricing work, and what to consider before you dive in.

## WHAT IS THE DIFFERENCE?



### WHOLESALE

the lower price a shop or gallery pays you so they can resell your work.



### RETAIL

the full price a customer pays - whether they buy it from you or through a shop.

$$\text{WHOLESALE PRICE} = (\text{MATERIALS} + \text{LABOUR}) \times 2.2$$

$$\text{RETAIL PRICE} = \text{WHOLESALE PRICE} \times 2$$

Businesses usually buy your work at wholesale price and sell it at retail price (approximately x 2). Retail price should be **the same** whether a customer is buying your work from you directly, or the retailer.

## EXAMPLE

Materials	\$10.00	Wholesale	\$66.00
Labour (1 hour)	\$20.00	Total Cost x 2.2	
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The business (retailer) will pay \$66 to you for each item they buy from you to sell in their shop.

The customer will pay \$132 whether buying from you **or** the retailer.

## AVOIDING UNDERCUTTING

If a shop sells your work for \$80, but you also sell it online for \$60, **that's undercutting**. Doing this can make the shop less likely to carry your work in the future.

## THE TRADE-OFF

When you sell through a business/retailer (wholesale), you trade a bit of profit for the chance to have your work seen by more people.

That's why the retail price (price the customer pays) should be the same: whether the customer buys your work from a business you partnered with, or directly from you.



# RESPECT YOURSELF

Every piece you create carries your time, skill, culture, and spirit. **That's worth honouring.** Respecting yourself as an artist means valuing your work, your boundaries, and your growth.

**REMEMBER:**  
Do not let guilt or worry keep your prices too low.

When you set fair prices, you're not just charging for materials: you're recognizing the years of learning, the care behind your craft, and the community that supports it. Stand proudly in the worth of your work. You deserve to be compensated, respected, and celebrated for what you create.

## COST SAVING TIPS (WITHOUT UNDERVALUING YOURSELF)

- Reuse nice packaging (tissue, bags, etc.)
- Share bulk supply orders with other makers
- Display work on thrifted/found objects (bowls, stones, wooden trays)
- Print tags or cards in batches
- Consider handwriting notes to your customers instead of fancy tags and cards
- Use QR codes for info instead of full brochures
- Use coupons at local retailers (like Michaels)
- Check out supplies offerings at Dollarama or other low-cost retailers

**REMEMBER:**  
Save where you can - but don't take it out of your own pay.

## COMMUNITY-BASED PRICING

**REMEMBER:**  
Do what feels generous and sustainable.

Money isn't the only way we circulate value. You could offer:

- Sliding scale for community members
- Trades with other artists or aunties
- Gifting one piece a month as part of your practice

## WHAT TO SAY IF SOMEONE SAYS "THAT'S TOO EXPENSIVE"

It happens. Here's some soft but steady language you can use:

- "I totally understand — there's a lot of time and care in each piece."
- "I know it's not in everyone's budget — I appreciate you asking."
- "I price my work to reflect the materials and teachings that go into it."

**REMEMBER:**  
Not everyone is your customer - and that's okay.

## RESPECT YOUR WORK

**You don't owe people an explanation.** Sometimes people ask why your work costs what it does. You can choose to explain — or not. A simple *"That's the price I've set for this piece"* is enough.

## IT'S OK TO BE UNSURE

Start where you are. Adjust as you go. You don't have to be "perfect" to be valuable. **You are allowed to take up space.**

For more workshops, programs, and support, visit [firstlightnl.ca](http://firstlightnl.ca) or contact [info@firstlightnl.ca](mailto:info@firstlightnl.ca)

