

FIND YOUR NICHE & WINNING PRODUCTS

Product scorecard

Score every product idea from 1 (poor) to 5 (excellent) on the same eight criteria, then add it up out of 40. Same rules for every idea, so you choose on evidence, not gut feeling.

Criterion	Example	Idea A	Idea B	Idea C
Product idea Name it and who it's for	Silicone food bags (UK)			
1. Demand Is there steady search interest and proven sales?	4	/5	/5	/5
2. Margin Can you make at least a 30–40% gross margin after product and shipping costs?	4	/5	/5	/5
3. Competition Can you stand out, or is it dominated by giants with huge budgets?	3	/5	/5	/5
4. Problem / passion Does it solve a genuine problem, or serve an interest people already spend on?	4	/5	/5	/5
5. Shipping Is it small, light and durable?	5	/5	/5	/5
6. Return risk Is it low risk for sizing, fit or breakage?	5	/5	/5	/5
7. Repeat purchase Will customers buy again, or buy related items from you?	3	/5	/5	/5
8. Your interest Can you stay interested in this for a year or more?	3	/5	/5	/5
TOTAL	31/40	/40	/40	/40

What your total means

32–40

Strong candidate.

24–31

Workable. Look for ways to improve the weak areas.

Under 24

Probably move on. That's the scorecard saving you months of work.

Be honest when you score. It's easy to inflate the numbers for a product you're already excited about, and then you've just built an expensive opinion.

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Reading the example, and what to avoid

Why the example scored 31 (illustrative)

Demand 4: steady interest, plus the sustainability trend.

Competition 3: several established brands already exist.

Shipping 5: light, flat and durable.

Repeat 3: they last, though customers may add to a set.

Margin 4: cheap to make, sells at a decent markup.

Problem 4: cuts plastic waste and saves money.

Return risk 5: no sizing, nothing to break.

Interest 3: honest score for the seller's own interest.

31 is workable. The weak area is competition, so it needs a different angle, such as a bundle or a design made for kids' lunches. The scorecard tells you what to fix, not just yes or no.

Red-flag products for a first store

1 Regulated products

Cosmetics, food, supplements, electronics, toys and children's items carry safety, labelling and sometimes testing rules.

2 Fragile or bulky items

Breakage, heavy shipping costs and returns quietly eat your margin.

3 Sizing-heavy clothing and shoes

People order two sizes and send one back, and you pay for that journey.

4 Branded or trademarked goods

Unauthorised branded items, characters, logos or phrases you don't own can get your store shut down.

5 Pure fads

A quick spike can leave you with stock nobody wants, or ad spend that never pays back.

6 Very low price points

At around £5 you need huge volume, because fees and shipping can wipe out the profit.

7 Medical claims

Don't make health promises you can't back up. UK advertising rules are strict.

None of these are banned. They need extra care, money and knowledge, so avoid them for your first store.

Your homework

- 1 List 5–10 niche ideas and run the research steps on each.
- 2 Score your top three on this scorecard.
- 3 Check the margin with the profit worksheet from Lesson 1.
- 4 My top one or two products: