

Your WhatsApp Shop, Set Up Properly

A beginner's guide to catalogues, customer labels and organised orders for Nigerian small businesses

OBUSKKO

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Introduction

A customer asks whether you still have a carton of noodles. Another sends a picture of a dress and asks for a different size. Someone else wants food delivered on Saturday, but their address is buried beneath several voice notes.

You intend to reply to everyone. Then customers arrive at the shop, you leave to buy stock, or cooking takes longer than expected. By evening, it is difficult to remember who has paid, who needs a price and whose order you promised to prepare.

If this sounds familiar, this guide is for you.

Organise the selling you already do

You do not need to be starting a new business to use this book. It is written for market traders, small shop owners and people running businesses from home who already sell to neighbours, friends, referrals and familiar customers.

You may already be comfortable sending WhatsApp messages, photographs and voice notes. But perhaps you have not set up a catalogue, organised chats with labels or saved answers to questions you receive every day.

WhatsApp Business can help you put a simple structure around those conversations. A catalogue gives customers somewhere to view product details. Labels help you find conversations that need attention. Quick replies reduce

repeated typing.

These tools do not guarantee more customers or more sales. They help you organise the business already happening in your chats, so you can see what needs doing next.

The aim is not to spend all day on WhatsApp. It is to make the time you spend there more useful.

What you will build

This is a setup-first manual. Rather than asking you to learn every feature before doing anything, it guides you through building one working part of your shop at a time.

By the end, you should be able to:

- Set up a business profile with clear contact details, opening hours and sensible security settings.
- Publish a small catalogue with useful photographs, descriptions and prices.
- Use labels to organise enquiries and active orders.
- Prepare reusable replies without making every conversation sound automatic.
- Record each order, confirm its details and check bank transfers through your own trusted banking channel.
- Send appropriate follow-ups and ask permission before sending promotional updates.
- Follow a manageable daily routine for checking messages, payments and outstanding commitments.

You will also learn an important distinction: an enquiry, a catalogue selection and a payment screenshot are not the same as a confirmed, paid order.

Three businesses to learn alongside

Throughout the guide, you will follow three fictional businesses:

- **Mama Bisi's Provision Shop** sells everyday household goods. Customers need to know pack sizes, quantities and whether items are available for collection.
- **Amaka's Clothing Corner** sells clothing through photographs and customer chats. Sizes, measurements, colours and availability need careful confirmation.
- **Tunde's Home Kitchen** prepares food to order. Portions, preparation notice, relevant ingredient information and delivery arrangements matter before an order is accepted.

Their products differ, but their basic needs are similar: clear information, accurate records and a reliable next step.

Use the example closest to your business, but read the others too. A clothing seller's method for recording options may help someone selling different drink sizes. A food business's order deadline may be useful for a trader arranging special purchases.

What to have ready

Before starting, gather:

- A smartphone that supports the official WhatsApp Business app.
- Access to mobile data or Wi-Fi.
- A phone number you control and can receive verification messages or calls on.
- Your business name, contact details and usual working hours.
- A few products or services to list, with current details and clear photographs.
- A notebook and pen, or a simple spreadsheet, for recording individual orders.

If you already use WhatsApp on your chosen number, do not delete the app or rush into switching accounts. First follow the guidance on backing up chats and transferring your account using the official instructions.

You do not need paid automation tools or the WhatsApp Business Platform to follow this guide.

Keep your phone beside you

Read a short section, then try the task on your phone. If you are reading this PDF on the same phone, move between the guide and the app at your own pace.

Menu names, button positions and feature availability can vary by phone, app version and account. Your screen may not look exactly like a described example. Look for the closest matching option, and consult WhatsApp's official help

if you cannot find it.

Complete each practical task before moving on. Start small, test what you have set up and correct anything confusing. A modest shop that you can maintain is more useful than an elaborate setup you cannot keep accurate.

SAMPLE

Chapter 1: Set Up Your Business Account

If customers already send you messages such as “Do you have milk?” or “Can I collect my dress tomorrow?”, you already have a selling channel. The next step is to give that channel a proper business identity.

WhatsApp Business helps you separate business information from everyday conversation. Customers can check your opening hours and see what you sell, while you gain tools for organising chats and answering common questions.

Start with the basics: the right app, a suitable number, a clear profile and a secure account. You do not need to set up everything in one sitting.

1. Install the right app

WhatsApp Messenger is the ordinary app many people use for personal conversations. **WhatsApp Business** is a separate app designed for businesses. It includes features such as a business profile, product catalogue, customer labels and saved quick replies.

This guide uses the **WhatsApp Business app**. You do not need the WhatsApp Business Platform, an API connection, a chatbot or a paid automation service.

Find the official app

1. Open **Google Play Store** on Android or the **App Store** on iPhone.
2. Search for **WhatsApp Business**.
3. Check that the listing belongs to WhatsApp's official publisher. The app icon normally has a white telephone inside a speech bubble with a **B**.
4. If you are unsure, use the app-store link from WhatsApp's official website.
5. Install the app.

Avoid modified apps, installation files sent through chats, or anyone offering a "special business version".

Menus can differ by phone and app version. Business settings may appear under **Settings**, **Business tools** or a similar heading. If a menu does not match these instructions, check the app's Help section rather than guessing.

2. Choose the number customers will use

Your business number should be one you control and expect to keep. You must be able to receive the verification call or message needed during registration.

Do not build your shop around a staff member's personal number or a borrowed SIM. If that person leaves or the number becomes unavailable, customers may lose their usual way of reaching you.

You have two practical choices.

Option A: Keep your existing selling number

This can make sense if customers already know it. However, consider the consequences:

- Personal and business conversations will remain connected to that number.
- Customers may contact you outside working hours.
- Your profile needs to suit customers as well as personal contacts.
- Linking another device for business work may expose personal conversations.

The same number cannot remain registered in ordinary WhatsApp and WhatsApp Business at the same time.

Option B: Use a separate business number

A separate number creates a clearer boundary between home and work. You can generally keep ordinary WhatsApp and WhatsApp Business on the same phone when each uses a different number.

You will still need to maintain access to the business SIM or number. Keep it active according to your mobile provider's requirements.

Tell existing customers clearly which number to use. For example:

Hello, this is Amaka from Amaka Provisions. Please use this number for shop enquiries and orders from now on. You can save it as Amaka Provisions. Thank you.

Send this to people who already deal with your business, not to strangers.

3. Protect existing chats before moving

If you are moving your current WhatsApp number into WhatsApp Business, **back up your chats before beginning**.

Before you register

1. Open your existing WhatsApp app.
2. Find **Settings → Chats → Chat backup**, or the equivalent menu.
3. Check which backup account is selected.
4. Run a fresh backup and check that it finishes.
5. Make sure you can access the relevant Google or Apple account.
6. If you enabled an encrypted backup, make sure you have its password or recovery method.

Keep a separate record of important unfinished orders, customer commitments and payment details. A chat backup should not be your only order record.

Next, read WhatsApp's current official instructions for moving from WhatsApp Messenger to WhatsApp Business. Follow the instructions for your phone and situation, especially if you are also changing phones or moving between Android and iPhone.

Do not delete the old app or erase the phone until you have

checked that the transfer worked. A backup does not guarantee that every transfer method will work across different phones.

If your previous chats do not appear as expected, stop and consult official help before taking further steps.

4. Build a clear business profile

Open **Business tools → Business profile**, or the equivalent menu. Complete the available fields carefully.

Customers should quickly understand:

- Who they are buying from.
- What you sell.
- When you operate.
- How collection or delivery works.
- How to contact you.

Business name

Use the name customers recognise from your signboard, packaging or previous messages. Avoid adding claims such as “Nigeria’s Best” or a long list of products.

Check spelling before saving. Name changes may be subject to WhatsApp’s current rules or review process.

Category and description

Choose the closest available category. The wording may differ between app versions.

Your description should explain the business in plain language. These fictional examples show what useful profiles can look like.

Business	Name	Suitable category, if available	Description
Provision shop	Amaka Provisions	Grocery shop	Everyday provisions, drinks and household essentials. Collection from our shop in Agege. Please confirm stock and collection time before paying.
Clothing seller	Zainab Everyday Wear	Clothing shop	Ready-to-wear outfits for everyday use. Send the item code, preferred size and colour to check availability. Collection and delivery by arrangement.
Home kitchen	Tola's Home Kitchen	Food service	Freshly prepared meals by advance order in Ibadan. Availability depends on our cooking schedule. Please discuss ingredients, dietary needs and delivery before ordering.

A food description should not promise that every dietary request can be accommodated. Discuss the customer's needs honestly before accepting an order.

Profile picture

Use a clear logo, shop sign or recognisable business photograph. Check how it looks as a small circle on your phone.

Avoid an image crowded with tiny text. Customers should be able to recognise the business without enlarging it.

Contact details

Add a business email address and website if you genuinely use them. Do not add an email account that nobody checks.

Check that any website link opens correctly and that your displayed contact details are accurate.

5. Set hours and location without oversharing

Opening hours are not response times

Opening hours describe when your business operates. They do not necessarily mean you can answer every message immediately.

For example:

- Amaka's provision shop may open from 8 am to 7 pm, Monday to Saturday.
- Zainab may arrange clothing collections from 10 am to 5 pm on weekdays.
- Tola's kitchen may operate by advance order, with agreed collection windows.

Use hours you can realistically keep. If the app offers an appointment-based option that suits your business, consider it.

Explain message expectations separately:

We serve walk-in customers during shop hours. WhatsApp messages are checked between customers, so replies may take some time. Please wait for confirmation before coming to collect an order.

Do not mark the business as always open simply because customers can send messages at any time.

Decide how much location information to publish

A public shop usually benefits from a clear address and an accurate map pin. Check the pin yourself: a nearby street is not necessarily your entrance.

A home business needs more care. You do not have to publish your full residential address merely to look professional.

You could write:

Based in Ibadan. Collection is by appointment. We share collection directions privately after confirming the arrangement.

Give customers enough information to judge whether collection or delivery is practical. Never use a false address

or direct customers to another business without permission.

If the app requires information you are uncomfortable publishing, check the field's requirements and leave optional details blank.

6. Secure the account before taking orders

Your WhatsApp account contains customer details, order discussions and payment conversations. Treat access to it as access to part of your shop.

Turn on two-step verification

Look under **Settings → Account → Two-step verification**, then follow the prompts.

Choose a PIN that is not easy to guess. Avoid your birthday, repeated digits or a PIN you have shared with workers.

Add a recovery email address you control, and complete any email confirmation requested. Protect that email account with a strong password and two-factor authentication where available.

Store recovery information securely, not in an open note labelled "WhatsApp PIN".

Never share registration codes

A registration code sent by SMS or call is different from your two-step verification PIN. **Do not share either one.**

Someone may claim to be a customer, supplier, bank worker or support agent and ask you to forward a code "sent by

mistake". Refuse.

Receiving a customer payment does not require you to disclose a WhatsApp code, PIN, bank password or card details.

Lock your phone

Enable a phone screen lock using a strong PIN, password or suitable biometric option. Set the screen to lock automatically.

Where supported, enable WhatsApp's additional app lock. Consider hiding message previews on the locked screen, especially if payment or customer details could be visible.

Review linked devices

Open **Settings → Linked devices**, or the equivalent menu.

Check every listed computer or device. Log out anything you do not recognise or no longer use. Only link devices you control, and never scan a linking code because a stranger says it is needed to receive payment.

If someone helps with messages, remember that linked access can reveal customer conversations. Agree who may use the account and remove access when it is no longer needed.

Exercise

Complete this worksheet on paper or in a private note.

My account plan

- Business name:
- Number customers will use:
- Existing number or separate business number:
- Person responsible for keeping access to the number:
- Backup completed and checked, if transferring:
- Official transfer instructions checked, if needed:

My profile

Write and enter:

- A suitable category.
- A description of two or three short sentences.
- Realistic opening hours.
- A separate sentence explaining when messages are checked.
- The location information customers need.
- A working contact email or website, if used.

My security check

Tick each completed action:

- ☐ Official WhatsApp Business app installed.
- ☐ Two-step verification enabled.
- ☐ Recovery email added and checked.
- ☐ Phone screen lock enabled.
- ☐ Linked devices reviewed.
- ☐ Verification codes and PINs kept private.

Finally, ask someone you trust to view your profile from their phone. Can they tell what you sell, when you operate and how collection works? Correct anything unclear before sharing the account more widely.

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