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The Faceless Shorts Playbook

The strategy, the workflow and the 30-day plan for building a YouTube Shorts channel without ever showing your face.

1

page of honest math on what it takes to get paid

5

reasons faceless channels die, and the fix for each

3

platforms from every video you make

30

days of tasks, from empty channel to 90 posts

The math nobody shows you

"How many views do you need to make money on YouTube?" is one of the fastest-growing questions about YouTube right now. Here's the real answer.

	Level 1: fan funding	Level 2: ad revenue
Subscribers	500	1,000
Shorts route	3 million Shorts views in 90 days, plus 3 uploads	10 million Shorts views in 90 days
Long video route	3,000 watch hours in 12 months	4,000 watch hours in 12 months

From February 1, 2027, new applicants for level 2 need 20 million Shorts views in 90 days or 8,000 watch hours. Level 1 stays the same. Figures checked October 2026.

What 3 million views in 90 days really means

Views needed per day	about 33,000
If you post 1 Short a day	each Short needs about 33,000 views on average
If you post 2 Shorts a day	each Short needs about 16,700
If you post 3 Shorts a day	each Short needs about 11,100

The lever you control

You can't control which video goes viral. You can control how many good videos you publish. Every extra Short is another ticket in the draw, and it lowers the views each one needs to carry. That's why the channels that make it almost always win on volume and consistency, not on one lucky video.

Don't wait for YouTube's money

Shorts pay far less per view than long videos. Channels that earn from Shorts usually have other income from the start: an affiliate link to a tool or product they really use, their own digital product, or brand deals once they have an audience. Plan for that from video one.

Why most faceless channels die in the first month

It's rarely the idea. It's almost always one of these five.

1

They run out of steam

Making each video by hand takes hours. Most people manage a week of daily posts, then slow down, then stop. The algorithm rewards channels that keep showing up.

Fix: Build a production system before you post (page 7) so a Short takes minutes, not an evening.

2

YouTube refuses to pay them

YouTube does not pay channels it sees as repetitive or mass-produced, and in 2026 it said it would look harder at generic AI and template content.

Fix: Use AI for speed, never as a replacement for your own angle. See page 10.

3

They lose people in 2 seconds

On Shorts, viewers decide almost instantly. A slow intro means the video is swiped away before it starts.

Fix: Use the hook formulas on page 5 and check your 'viewed vs swiped away' number.

4

They pick a niche they can't sustain

A niche that sounds exciting often runs dry after 15 videos.

Fix: Score your niche before you start (page 4). You need at least 100 video ideas.

5

They post on one platform only

The same 45-second video can run on YouTube Shorts, Instagram Reels and TikTok. Posting it once wastes two-thirds of the work.

Fix: Publish every video three times (page 6).

Strategy 1: Pick a niche that can last

Score each niche you're considering from 1 to 5 on these five questions. Pick one that scores 18 or more out of 25.

Depth	Could you make 100 videos on it without repeating yourself?
Visual	Can each idea be shown with stock footage, images or screen recordings?
Advertiser value	Do brands want to reach these viewers? Money, tech, careers and software score high. Jokes and riddles score low.
Product fit	Is there a tool, book or product you could honestly recommend to this audience?
Your interest	Will you still care about it in month three?

12 niches that tend to score well

Personal finance basics	High advertiser value; endless questions; easy with charts and stock footage
AI tools explained	Fast-growing; every new tool is a new video; strong product fit
Phone and computer tips	Screen recordings make visuals easy; strong product fit
Career and interview tips	High advertiser value; viewers save and share
Business origin stories	Story format holds attention; deep supply of ideas
Psychology explained	Broad appeal; one idea per video
History mysteries	Strong hooks; very deep; lower product fit
Space and science	Great visuals; broad audience
Productivity habits	Good product fit with apps and planners
Home and cleaning hacks	Practical, shareable; good product fit
Then vs now prices	Simple, repeatable format; numbers make good hooks
Animal facts	Huge audience; lower advertiser value

Avoid using clips from movies, TV, games or other creators. Even a few seconds can get your video claimed or your channel struck.

Strategy 2: Four formats, one structure

You don't need a new idea for how to make each video. Pick from these four formats and rotate them. Viewers get variety; you get a system.

Countdown

Top 5 [things]

- 0-2s: the hook. 'Number 1 surprised me.'
- 2-35s: items 5 to 2, about 7 seconds each
- 35-45s: number 1, the most surprising
- Last line loops back to the first

Myth buster

Stop believing [myth]

- 0-2s: state the myth as if it's true
- 2-10s: 'Here's what's actually true'
- 10-35s: the proof, one example
- 35-45s: what to do instead

Mini story

The day [something happened]

- 0-2s: start in the middle of the action
- 2-30s: build up, one detail at a time
- around 30s: reveal the key fact
- last 5s: one-line takeaway

3-step how-to

Do [result] in 3 steps

- 0-2s: show the end result first
- 2-35s: three steps, each one doable today
- 35-45s: the most common mistake
- Close with the result again

Hooks that work in the first 2 seconds

Bold claim	"This is the most useless button on your phone."
Mistake	"You've been cleaning your oven wrong."
Number	"3 words that get you a raise."
Call-out	"If you rent your home, watch this."
Open loop	"Stay until the end. Number 1 makes no sense."

Strategy 3: One video, three platforms

Interest in faceless Reels has grown fast this year. The same vertical video works on all three short-video platforms, so publish it three times.

	YouTube Shorts	Instagram Reels	TikTok
Best length	30 to 50 seconds	15 to 45 seconds	20 to 60 seconds
Captions	Burned into the video	Burned into the video	Burned in, plus on-screen text
Description	Title with your main keyword	First line is the hook	Short, with 3 to 5 hashtags
Watch out for	Repetitive, templated videos	Videos with another app's watermark	Copyrighted music

How to do it

- ☐ Export one clean 9:16 file with no watermark. Keep it as your master copy.
- ☐ Upload the master to each platform directly. Don't download from one app and re-upload to another, or you'll carry its watermark.
- ☐ Rewrite the caption for each platform. It takes two minutes and fits how each audience reads.
- ☐ Track each platform separately. A video that flops on Shorts can take off on Reels.

What this does to your workload

One Short a day becomes 90 posts a month. Posting is quick. Making the video is not. That's why the next page matters more than anything else in this playbook.

The production workflow

Every faceless Short goes through the same five steps. Here's how long each one usually takes a beginner doing it by hand. These are rough estimates; your times will vary.

Step	What you do	By hand, roughly
1. Idea	Pick a topic with the prompts on page 8	5 to 10 minutes
2. Script	Generate with AI, then rewrite in your own words	15 to 20 minutes
3. Voice	Record it yourself or generate it, then clean it up	10 to 20 minutes
4. Visuals and edit	Find footage for every line, cut to the voice, add captions, export 9:16	45 to 90 minutes
5. Publish	Upload to three platforms with a caption each	10 to 15 minutes

Where channels actually quit

Steps 1, 2 and 5 are fast, and AI already handles most of 1 and 2. Steps 3 and 4 are the wall: turning a finished script into a finished video. At one Short a day, step 4 alone can add up to more than 20 hours a month. That's the grind behind "they run out of steam" on page 3.

You have two ways through it:

The free way	Build one editing template in a free editor such as CapCut, batch-record 5 voiceovers at once, and reuse the same footage style. Slower, but it works and costs nothing.
The tool way	Use a tool that turns a script or prompt into a finished vertical video, with footage, voice and captions included. You review and adjust instead of building from scratch.

The tool I use for step 4

Viddeos AI makes 9:16 videos for Shorts, Reels and TikTok from a text prompt. It's built for volume, which is what the 30-day plan needs. It doesn't make long videos or AI presenters, and it costs \$299 a quarter or \$897 a year, so start with the free way and switch once you know you'll keep posting.

[See how Viddeos AI works](#)

Affiliate link: if you buy through it, I earn a commission at no extra cost to you.

15 AI prompts

Copy into ChatGPT, Claude or Gemini and replace everything in [square brackets]. If the first answer is weak, reply "more specific" and try again.

1 Niche question finder

I want to start a faceless YouTube Shorts channel about [niche]. List 20 specific questions people in this niche search for or argue about. Rate each 1 to 5 for how surprising the answer is and 1 to 5 for how easy it is to show visually in under 45 seconds. Sort by the combined score.

2 Comment miner

Here are 30 comments from popular Shorts in my niche: [paste]. Group them into recurring questions, complaints and misconceptions. Turn the top 10 into Short ideas, each written as a one-line promise to the viewer.

3 Myth list

List 15 common beliefs about [topic] that are wrong or only half true. For each: the belief, what's actually true, and one fact I can check. Clearly mark anything you're unsure about.

4 Hook generator

Write 10 opening lines under 12 words for a Short about [topic]. Use these styles: bold claim, question, number, common mistake, 'stop doing X', before/after. No promise the video can't deliver.

5 Hook doctor

Here is my hook: '[hook]'. Rate it 1 to 10 for curiosity and clarity, explain its weakest part, then rewrite it 5 ways.

6 The master script

Write a 40 to 45 second YouTube Shorts voiceover script about [topic] for [audience]. Structure: a hook in the first 2 seconds, 3 fast points with one concrete example each, a payoff, and a last line that loops back to the first line. Max 110 words. Short spoken sentences. Add [VISUAL: ...] notes under each line.

7 Countdown script

Write a 'Top 5 [things]' Short script counting down from 5 to 1, about 100 words. Number 1 must be the most surprising. Add a visual note for each item.

8 Mini story script

Write a 45-second story-style Short about [event, person or fact]. Start in the middle of the action, reveal the key fact around second 30, end with a one-line takeaway. Mark every detail I need to fact-check.

9 How-to script

Write a 3-step how-to Short teaching [skill] in under 100 words. Every step must be doable today. End with the most common mistake.

10 Myth buster script

Write a Short script busting the myth '[myth]'. Format: state the myth, say what's true, give the proof, say what to do instead. Under 100 words.

11 Tighten it

Here is my script: [paste]. Cut every word that doesn't move it forward. Make it 20% shorter but keep the hook and the ending.

12 Loop ending

Rewrite the last line of this script so it flows into the first line when the Short replays: [paste].

13 Shot list

Turn this script into a shot list for a 9:16 video. For each line: what's on screen, on-screen text of 5 words or fewer, and a sound effect. [paste]

14 Three captions

Write a caption for this video for YouTube Shorts (title with keyword '[keyword]'), Instagram Reels (hook first line) and TikTok (short, 3 to 5 hashtags). [paste]

15 Weekly plan

Plan 7 Shorts for next week for a [niche] channel, rotating countdown, myth buster, story and how-to. For each: title, hook and payoff.

Use AI without losing your pay

YouTube doesn't ban AI. It refuses to pay for content that's repetitive, mass-produced or adds nothing new. Stay on the right side of that line.

Gets channels rejected

- The same template with only the words swapped, video after video
- An AI voice reading facts copied from a website, with nothing added
- Re-uploading clips from other creators or TV
- Hundreds of near-identical videos posted in bulk

Keeps channels safe

- Your own angle, opinion or example in every script
- Scripts you rewrite in your own words, not raw AI output
- Rotating formats and visual styles
- Checked facts, and corrections pinned when you get something wrong

Label realistic AI content

When you upload, YouTube asks whether your video contains realistic altered or synthetic content, such as a real person saying something they didn't say or a realistic event that didn't happen. If it does, say yes. Animated or clearly unrealistic visuals and AI help with scripts don't need the label.

A simple test before every upload

Ask yourself: if someone watched ten of my Shorts in a row, would they learn something from each one, and would they recognise my voice and point of view? If yes, you're building a channel. If no, you're building a pile of videos.

The 30-day plan

30 Shorts, each posted to three platforms: 90 posts by the end of the month. Tick each box as you go.

1

Week 1: Launch

- ☐ Score 2 niches on page 4 and pick the winner
 - ☐ Set up your channel name, handle, profile image and 2-line description
 - ☐ Create matching Instagram and TikTok accounts with the same name
 - ☐ Write 7 scripts with prompts 6 to 10
 - ☐ Build your editing template, then publish 1 Short a day on all three platforms
-

2

Week 2: Rhythm

- ☐ Publish 1 Short a day on all three platforms
 - ☐ Batch the week: write 7 scripts in one sitting, make the videos in another
 - ☐ Reply to every comment within a few hours
 - ☐ At the end of the week, note which format got the best 'viewed vs swiped away' rate
-

3

Week 3: Double down

- ☐ Make half of this week's Shorts in your best format
 - ☐ Take your best Short's topic and make 2 more on the same idea from new angles
 - ☐ Add an affiliate link or useful resource to your descriptions and pinned comments
 - ☐ If you can sustain it, move to 2 Shorts a day
-

4

Week 4: Review and plan

- ☐ Compare platforms: which one gives you the most views per video?
- ☐ Rewrite your 3 weakest hooks with prompt 5 and re-test the ideas
- ☐ Plan month 2 with prompt 15, weighted toward what worked
- ☐ Decide honestly: is step 4 of the workflow slowing you down? If so, fix it now

Read the numbers that matter

Viewed vs swiped away In YouTube Studio, for each Short. The share of people who kept watching instead of swiping. This is your hook score: compare Shorts against each other, not against a magic number.

Average percentage viewed Over 100% means people rewatch. Loop endings push this up.

Subscribers per Short Tells you which topics build a following, not just views.

Views per platform Shows where to focus your captions and posting times.

The 3x rule

When a Short gets three times your usual views, don't celebrate and move on. Make three more on the same topic from new angles within the week. That's how one lucky video turns into a channel.

What happens next

Over the next few days I'll send you short emails that go deeper into each part of this playbook, including the exact way I'd launch a channel today. Keep an eye on your inbox.

Questions? Reply to any email or write to contact@vincentmmo.com. I read every message.

This playbook contains one affiliate link (page 7). Results depend on your niche, effort and consistency; no earnings are promised. Vincent Frank is not affiliated with YouTube, Instagram or TikTok.