

The Ultimate List of Jobs for a Flexible Life

The FatChix Guide to Paying Rent as an Artist

By Margaret Boschini

Being an artist isn't easy, and it isn't cheap either. Whether it's auditions, shoots or art shows, the creative life is busy as hell. With such a hectic schedule, it can be hard to find a side hustle that helps you support your creative career without stifling it. This work-art balance is something that all artists struggle with. Ideally, you could follow your passion AND pay the bills—but this is New York City, and your apartment isn't rent controlled. Finding your way to financial security can suck, and here at FatChix, we appreciate the hustle. That's why we put together this guide to finding a job that pays the bills AND allows you to do what you love.

Top Jobs

Nanny

Nannying is one of the best side jobs for creative types. Part-time work can mean a flexible schedule, and school-aged kiddos are out of your hair from 9-3 on weekdays. If you're close with the family you sit for, arranging for time off can be much easier than figuring out your schedule in a corporate setting. Also, nannying usually pays much better than hourly retail or waitressing jobs (typically \$15-20 per hour, depending on number of kids, etc.). Memorize your lines or perfect your shot list while little Jimmy takes his nap—it's the perfect deal!

Where to look:

www.Care.com
www.sittercity.com
www.thenannyleague.com
www.urbansitter.com

Pro Tips:

-BUILD A NICE PROFILE

Adding a picture and short, upbeat description of yourself can go a long way in making your online profile stand out from other applicants.

-GET PERSONAL

Many sites will have you apply to a listing by writing a brief note to the parent(s). Treat this as your cover letter. Write up a template that includes a basic intro (your name, age, experience) and add a few lines at the end specific to the listing.

EXAMPLE:

Hello! My name is Margaret Boschini (but most people call me Madge!). I am a recent graduate who moved to New York in the fall. I studied theatre and anthropology, so my passion is for culture and the arts. I love kids, and looking after little ones is something that I genuinely enjoy. I have about 6 years of regular babysitting experience, and am open to looking after kids of all ages as well as any family pets. I know that leaving your child in the care of someone else can be a worrying experience, so let me know if you would like any further information on me—whether that looks like a coffee meeting, a reference list, or a chat on the phone. *I also see that you are looking for help with twins. I sat for a family in TX with young twin toddlers as well, so my past experience, as well as my proximity to your location, makes me think this could be a great fit! Thanks! MB

-GO MOBILE

Many sites like Care.com also have apps available. Take a break from swiping through Tinder to check on the most recent postings on the go.

-TEAM UP

If you have a buddy who is also looking for a nanny job, consider finding a family willing to let you both tackle half of their childcare needs. This is an amazing arrangement for actors, because you can always switch around shifts when one of you has to make an audition.

Rideshare Driver

Working for a rideshare company can be a great way to make money on your own time. With so many apps such as Via, Uber, Juno, and Lyft, it has never been easier to get a job as a driver. There are FIVE times more Uber/Lift cars in NYC than taxis, so app-based transit is definitely on the rise. Set your own hours, and work whenever you can between creative endeavors.

Where to look:

www.drivewithvia.com

www.uber.com

www.lyft.com

www.gojuno.com

Pro Tips:

-KNOW THE DEAL

The NYC TLC (Taxi and Limo Commission) requires rideshare drivers to obtain a license to offer commercial trips within the city. The fee to obtain this license can be anywhere from one to

four *thousand* dollars. Be sure that if this money is coming out of your own pocket, you are committed to earning it back!

-CONSIDER YOUR AVAILABILITY

The investment it takes to get into this business can be steep, so [do the math](#) to make sure that this is your best job prospect considering the amount of hours you will be able to work.

P.A.

Working as a production assistant can be a great way to make (a little bit of) money while still gaining artistic experience for your resume. Though it can definitely be a thankless job, you do stand to gain production skills as well as important contacts from the shoot. Working as a P.A for a production company is a great way to get your name in there for future opportunities, and having a company's name on your CV is a huge plus if you decide to apply for a full time gig with them.

Where to look:

www.Craigslist.com

www.Staffmeup.com

www.Entertainmentcareers.net

Pro Tips:

-KEEP A GOOD ATTITUDE!

It can be easy to slink through a P.A job—a lot of the work is unskilled, the hours are long, and your place in the pecking order can seem depressingly low. Even so, do your best to show the staff that you are all about this project, and volunteer for anything you can. This is how you get asked back onto set.

-ASK QUESTIONS

Use this gig as an opportunity to learn about any aspect of the industry that you are unfamiliar with. I once spent an hour of what would've been boring down time talking to a friendly stylist on set. I left with about a million new insights into her job (as well as some hot tea on all the celebrities she had worked with!).

-FOLLOW UP

Write a quick thank you note (or email) to your producers, or whoever oversaw your work on the project. Tell them you are grateful for the opportunity to learn from them, that you had a great on-set experience, and that you would love the chance to P.A for them again. If you feel awkward reaching out, send your note in with your invoice. It's a great way to solidify connections, and to get your name in there just one more time.

DOG WALKER

Dog walking can be a fun and lucrative way to make money, especially in NYC. Besides, walking is good for you, and getting some time outdoors can also be nice (looking at you, theatre folks in eternal backstage darkness). If animals are your thing, this could be the perfect job to fill your time.

Where to Look:

www.care.com

www.rover.com

www.wagwalking.com

Pro Tips:

-DON'T LOOK SKETCHY

Reading these dog walking sites can be hilarious. Most of the profile-building process makes the gig seem like only the dog whisperer is qualified. You might be asked all kinds of things about our four-legged friends: Do you know doggy CPR?? Are you a trained veterinarian? Do you make custom doggy treats for your clients??? (That last one was real, by the way.) Fret not, my job searching friend. These overzealous questions are just that: overkill. Most dog owners are just looking for someone who won't rob their house. So take the time to build a profile with a nice picture and a bio that screams normal normal normal.

-KEEP IT SIMPLE

In the same vein as tip #1, don't try to overdo things or fake doggy qualifications you don't have. Stick to the truth. Here are some things that you can (and definitely should) say about yourself: I pride myself on being timely and never late. I know the streets of New York well, and will be careful and responsible while your dog is in my care. I take this gig seriously. I love animals and know how to care for them. These kinds of statements, though not as impressive as having 20 years of veterinarian experience, are all most people are gonna ask for.

ONLINE LANGUAGE TUTOR

Those Spanish classes momma made you take are about to pay off big time if you can swing a job as an online language tutor. Many actors in NYC can speak to the benefits of this sort of job—from flexible hours to the ability to work remotely from your laptop. I have heard from a lot of creatives that this job has worked super well for them. Fair warning though—I have also been told that the application process can be difficult, and that not every good candidate will get the job.

Where to look:

<https://teacher.qkids.net>

<https://t.sayabc.com>

www.italki.com

Pro Tips:

-BE A GOOD FIT

Emphasize your teaching and intercultural skills, as well as your commitment to a job that requires interpersonal relationships. Express how this job is right for YOU, and not just a convenient way to get some cash (even if it is).

-GET CERTIFIED

You will most likely need to obtain a Teaching English as a Foreign Language certification, or a [TEFL](#). You can take these courses online or in person. Check out the link for more details on this process.

-GET INFORMED

The wages for these jobs vary widely depending on the company you work for and your experience level. Make sure you know what your payment plan will look like before committing to anything.

SALESPERSON/WAITRESS

While these two standbys are certainly not the most glamorous or out-of-the-box jobs on this list, working at a shop or a restaurant can be great ways to make money on a flexible schedule. HOWEVER, these sorts of jobs can range from flexible to completely time consuming, depending on where you work. So the trick here is to find a place with flexible hours, and an easy system for switching shifts if you book that last minute show.

Where to look:

www.Indeed.com

www.Glassdoor.com

Pro Tips:

-KEEP YOUR FRIENDS CLOSE AND YOUR COWORKERS CLOSER

Make every friend you can at work ASAP— yes, even that girl with the weird smelling lunches. The more connections you have at work, the more favors you can ask. The more favors you can ask, the more shifts you can get covered in a pinch.

-BE A BUDDY

It takes a friend to be a friend, so be sure to cover shifts for others when you can. People will return the favor when you *really* need a day off to edit that script.

-LOOK FOR ARTISTS

Look for places that other artists work. Odds are that the employer offers flexible hours, and is used to dealing with the hectic lives of creative types.

-JUST ASK

If you make it to an interview, DO NOT forget to ask about your hours. Be honest and upfront about your career trajectory, and what your needs would look like as an employee. This way, no one can blast you for needing more or less hours later. After all, you TOLD them what to expect if they wanted you on board. (PS- if management gives you a vague answer, go to the source. Discreetly pull a nice looking employee aside on your way out, and ask them what scheduling is like at the store.)

FREELANCE WRITER

Landing a regular freelance writing gig can be tough, but it can also be one of the best flexible jobs out there. Being able to work from your laptop at rehearsals, galleries or auditions can be invaluable for an artist trying to pay the bills without missing out on any creative endeavors.

Where to look:

www.indeed.com

www.glassdoor.com

www.craigslist.com

Pro Tips:

-BUILD A CV

Bolster your portfolio by writing spec pieces to send out with your resume, or build experience by lending your voice to a website pro-bono. It will be much easier to get hired with strong writing samples behind you.

-GET OUT THERE

Submit your work anywhere you can. You might not even get paid at first, but if you stay with it the relationships you build will pay off.

ONLINE SELLER

Think about the skills that you possess. Can you knit? Paint? Sew? If so, consider opening a store on Etsy or Ebay to sell your wares! Those canvasses you crank out may be worth more than gifts for your family and friends, and selling online via an Etsy account is a convenient and time saving way to make some money on the side. Additionally, check out helpful sites like Poshmark or Offerup to sell your old stuff online.

Where to look:

www.etsy.com

www.ebay.com

www.poshmark.com
www.offerup.com

Pro tips:

-THINK OUTSIDE THE BOX

Just because you aren't artistically inclined doesn't mean that you can't still make a buck on Etsy. Go check out the site and look at what other accounts are selling. Things like homemade candles, lotions and makeup are little known wares that you can peddle on Etsy.

-STAY ON YOUR HUSTLE

Those who make consistent money selling products online will tell you that persistence is key. Be prompt and professional with your customers, and create a shop that is cute and eye-catching.

There are a ton of ways to make money in the city, but the key is finding an opportunity that works for YOUR life and schedule. If one job doesn't work out, go find something else! Check for new applications posted on job sites like [Indeed](#), [Career Builder](#), [Glassdoor](#), [Entertainment Career](#), [Linkedin](#), or [Monster](#). Don't slave away in a job you absolutely hate in a city with so many opportunities.

That being said, always be wary of scam-jobs that sketchy companies offer to struggling young people. Don't trust anyone who offers you a job up front, makes YOU pay anything to work with them, or contacts you via social media. Google search your potential employer and do your due [diligence](#) always. These companies KNOW that young artists in the city are looking for flexible ways to make money, and they use this knowledge to lure us in with promises of easy money from home. Don't fall for it! You're too smart to waste time peddling snake oil.

Now that you are armed with all this knowledge, go forth and WERK, friends! Remember: you can do it. And when you are spraying whipped cream on that nineteenth mocha frappe, remember that it all contributes to you following your (totally badass) dreams.

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