YouTube Money Guide (Start With Your Phone)

Pick a niche, grow a channel, reach monetization and get paid in Kenya.

Honest note: nobody can promise how much you will earn. Results depend on your effort, skills, time and luck. Never pay anyone who "guarantees" income.

1. Choose a channel idea people search for

YouTube rewards videos people look for again and again. Pick a topic you can make 50 videos about. Ideas that work in Kenya: phone and app tutorials, cooking on a budget, KCSE and campus revision, farming (poultry, kienyeji, greenhouses), football analysis, beauty on a budget, Kiswahili lessons, side-hustle stories, product reviews.

- Type your idea into the YouTube search bar and look at the suggestions: those are real searches.
- Look at small channels in your niche with views higher than their subscribers — that topic has demand.
- Write it down: "My channel helps ___ to ___."

2. Gear: what you actually need

Item	Budget option
Camera	Your phone, back camera, filmed horizontally for long videos
Sound	A quiet room; a wired earphone mic close to your mouth
Light	Face a window during the day
Editing	CapCut or VN on the phone (free)
Thumbnail	Canva (free)

3. Make videos people finish

- Title = the search term + a promise: "How to start poultry farming with KES 5,000".
- Say what the video gives in the first 15 seconds. No long intros.
- Thumbnail: a face or the result, 3 to 4 big words, bright contrast.
- Cut pauses and repeated sentences — keep it moving.
- End by pointing to your next video.

4. Long videos and Shorts

Shorts (under 3 minutes, vertical) help people discover you. Long videos (8 minutes or more) earn more per view and build watch hours. A simple mix: 2 Shorts and 1 long video per week, on the same topic.

5. How monetization works

YouTube pays through the YouTube Partner Program (YPP). Thresholds change, so always check YouTube Studio → Earn. As of late 2026:

Level	What you need (check Studio for current rules)	What you unlock
Fan funding	500 subscribers, 3 uploads in 90 days, and 3,000 watch hours in 12 months OR 3 million Shorts views in 90 days	Memberships, Super Thanks, Super Chat, Shopping
Ad revenue (now)	1,000 subscribers and 4,000 watch hours in 12 months OR 10 million Shorts views in 90 days	Share of ad money
Ad revenue (new applicants from 1 Feb 2027)	8,000 watch hours in 12 months OR 20 million Shorts views in 90 days	Share of ad money (Shorts ad share needs 10M Shorts views in 90 days)

6. Getting paid in Kenya

- You need a Google AdSense account linked to your channel, with your real name and address.
- Google mails a PIN to your address to verify it; keep your postal address correct.
- Add your tax info in AdSense — without it, more tax may be withheld.
- Payment goes to your bank account in Kenya once you pass the payment threshold shown in AdSense.

7. Earn before monetization

- Affiliate links in the description (see the Affiliate Marketing guide).
- Sell your own service or product: tutoring, design, an eBook.
- Small brand deals with local shops once you have a loyal audience.

8. Rules that protect your channel

- Do not reupload other people's videos, movies or music — copyright strikes can delete your channel.
- Do not buy subscribers or views; YouTube removes them and may reject your application.
- Mass-produced, repetitive videos are not monetized. Add your own voice, ideas and value.

Your first 30 days

1. Week 1: choose niche, set up channel name, logo, banner, description.
2. Week 2: publish 1 long video + 2 Shorts.
3. Week 3: same again; reply to every comment.
4. Week 4: check Analytics → which video kept people watching longest? Make more like it.