CHAPTER

01

Signing up and creating your site

This chapter takes you from the RacingOwl home page to a site of your own, with its own web address, your email address confirmed and a plan chosen. By the end you will be looking at your site's dashboard, with a green card telling you your site is live, and you will know how to find your way back to it next time.

WHERE
racingowl.com → Create your site

TIME NEEDED
About 10 minutes, plus a minute to open the confirmation email

BEFORE YOU START
A name for your site, the one-word address you want, an email address you can open now, and a password of at least 10 characters

PLAN
Every plan. You choose the plan at the end of this chapter

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How you make money on RacingOwl

Before you create anything, it helps to know how the money works, because it shapes every decision after this one.

- **You decide what to charge your learners.** Your site charges one way: price each course, or one monthly membership that opens every course you mark Members only. Free courses are allowed either way. See Pricing your courses.
- **Learners pay you directly.** Every payment goes straight into your own bank account through Razorpay, RacingOwl's payment partner. RacingOwl never touches or holds that money. Razorpay's fee on each payment and the GST on it, currently 2% plus GST (2.36% in all), come off before the money reaches you. RacingOwl does not take a cut of your sales.
- **You pay RacingOwl a flat monthly fee** to run your site: one of four plans, priced mainly by how many learners your site can hold, plus any add-ons you switch on. It is a subscription, not a percentage of what you earn.

The whole journey, start to finish, looks like this: sign up, confirm your email, pick a plan, activate payments, build your first course, price it, publish it, learners find it and pay you, and you track your earnings on your dashboard. This chapter covers the first three steps.

What you are creating

When you sign up, RacingOwl makes two things at once.

- **Your RacingOwl account.** This is you as a person: your email address and your password. The same account signs you in everywhere on RacingOwl, including any other site where you happen to be a learner yourself.
- **Your site.** This is your own place on the internet, with its own address, such as `meera-yoga.racingowl.com`. It holds your courses, your learners, your branding and your money settings. You are its owner, which means you see the **Manage** pages (as does any instructor you add), and only you choose the RacingOwl plan.

Your learners never need to know about RacingOwl's own home page. They visit your address, see your name and your courses, and pay you.

Before you start: three decisions

The form takes a few minutes, but three of its boxes are worth a moment's thought first.

Your site's name

This is what learners see at the top of every page of your site, in emails from your site, and on receipts. It can be your own name ("Meera Iyer"), a brand ("Pranayama Studio") or a description ("Meera's Carnatic Vocal Classes"). You can change it later from **Manage → Settings**, so do not agonise over it. See Branding your site.

Your site's address

This is the one decision you cannot undo. The address you choose becomes the start of your web address, followed by `.racingowl.com`, and **it cannot be changed later**. It will be printed on your visiting cards, shared in WhatsApp groups and typed by your learners, so choose something that is:

- **Short and easy to say aloud.** `meera-yoga` is easier to share over the phone than `meerasyogaandwellnessclasses`.
- **Made only of letters, numbers and hyphens.** No spaces and no dots. Capital letters are turned into small ones for you. Use a hyphen where you would put a space.
- **Starting and ending with a letter or a number,** not a hyphen.
- **One word, not a web address.** Type `meera-yoga`, not `meera-yoga.racingowl.com` and not `www.meerayoga.com`.

A few words are reserved by RacingOwl and cannot be used, such as `admin`, `api`, `www`, `help`, `support`, `blog`, `billing` and `test`. And every address can belong to only one site, so if someone else already has the one you want, you will be asked for another.

What you teach

You pick one subject from RacingOwl's list. This is **optional** and low-stakes: it only decides where your courses appear when somebody browses the RacingOwl marketplace by subject. If nothing on the list is close, pick the nearest one or leave it blank. You can change it whenever you like. There is deliberately no "Other" box, because a catch-all box quickly becomes the biggest group in the marketplace and stops helping anyone find you.

> **TIP.**
> Not sure what RacingOwl can do for you yet? Under the form is a link, **Read the FAQ before you start**. It opens in a new tab, so nothing you have typed on the form is lost while you read.

Filling in the sign-up form

1. **Open the form.** Go to `racingowl.com` and choose **Create your site**. The button appears in the header and on most of RacingOwl's own pages. You arrive at a page headed **Create your site**, with the line "Your courses get their own address, and your own learners."
2. **Type your site name.** In **Site name**, type what learners will see. The hint under the box reminds you that you can change it later.
3. **Choose your address.** In **Your site's address**, type your one word. The end of the address, `.racingowl.com`, is already printed inside the box to the right of what you type, so you can see the full address take shape as you go.
4. **Pick your subject, if you want to.** Open **What do you teach?** and choose one subject from the grouped list, or leave it on **Choose one**.
5. **Type your name.** **Your name** is optional, but fill it in: it is how RacingOwl greets you in emails, and it is the natural starting point for your instructor card later (see Your instructor profile).

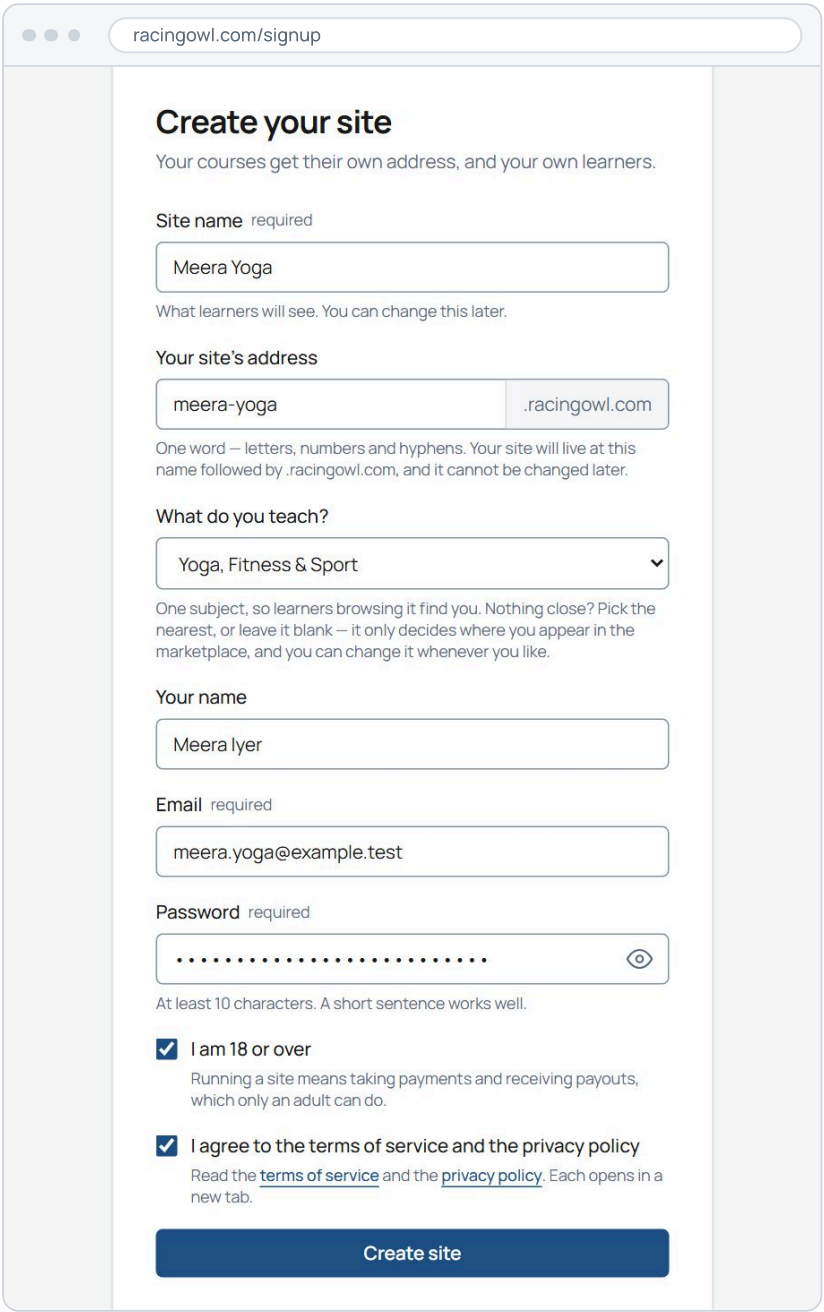
6 **Type your email address.** Use an address you can open right now, because the very next step asks you to confirm it. This is also where RacingOwl will send your invoices, renewal reminders and anything important about your site.

7 **Choose a password.** In **Password**, type at least 10 characters. The hint suggests a short sentence, which is both easy to remember and hard to guess.

8 **Confirm you are an adult.** Tick **I am 18 or over**. Only an adult can run a site, because running one means taking payments and receiving payouts.

9 **Agree to the terms.** Tick **I agree to the terms of service and the privacy policy**. The links under the tick box open each document in a new tab, so you can read them without losing the form.

10 **Create the site.** Press **Create site**. While it works, the button says **Creating…**.



The Create your site form, filled in. The address box shows the rest of the web address beside the word you type.

The fields at a glance

Field	Required?	What to put in it
Site name	Yes	What learners see. Your name or your brand. Can be changed later.
Your site's address	Yes	One word: lowercase letters, numbers and hyphens. Becomes `yourword.racingowl.com`. **Cannot be changed later.**
What do you teach?	No	One subject from the list. Only decides where you appear in the marketplace. Can be changed later.
Your name	No	Your own name, as you would like to be greeted.
Email	Yes	An address you can open now. Your sign-in, and where RacingOwl writes to you.
Password	Yes	At least 10 characters. A short sentence works well.
I am 18 or over	Yes	Tick it. Only an adult can run a site.
I agree to the terms of service and the privacy policy	Yes	Tick it once you have read them.

If the form says no

If something is wrong, the form tells you under the box concerned and keeps everything you typed, apart from the password, which you type again. The messages you are most likely to see:

What you see	What it means and what to do
Type just the first part	You typed a whole web address into the address box. The message names the word it thinks you meant. Type just that word.
This is one word, not a web address	The address has a space, a dot, a slash or a colon in it. Use hyphens instead, for example `yoga-with-meera`.
"…" is reserved by RacingOwl. Choose another.	That word is kept for RacingOwl's own use. Pick a different one.
Use lowercase letters, numbers and hyphens only…	Something else is in the address, or it starts or ends with a hyphen.
That address is already taken. Try another.	Another site has that address. Nothing has been created, so change the address and press **Create site** again.
This email already has an account. Sign in instead.	You already have a RacingOwl account with this email, perhaps from learning on another site, and the password you typed is not that account's password. See the next section.
Use a password of at least 10 characters.	Make the password longer.
Too many … Try again in …	Several attempts were made in a short time from your connection. Wait for the time shown, then try again.

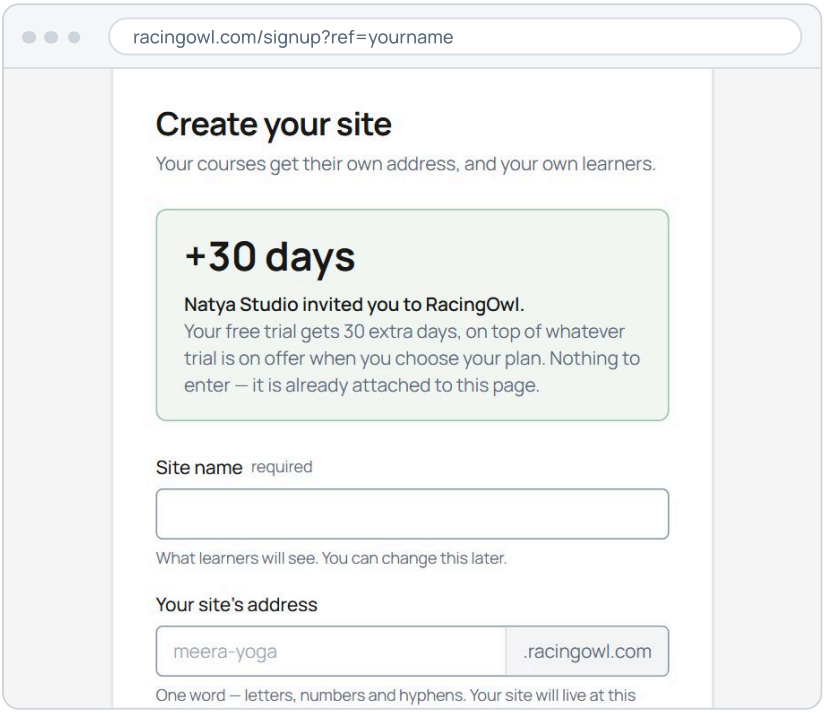
If you already have a RacingOwl account

Perhaps you have learnt on another trainer's site with the same email address. That is fine: you do not need a second account. Fill in the form as normal, but type **the password you already use for RacingOwl**. Your new site is then added to the account you already have, and you sign in to everything with one password.

If you type a different password, the form refuses with "This email already has an account. Sign in instead." and shows a link, **Sign in to your RacingOwl account**. The answer is to type your existing password on the form. If you have forgotten it, use **Forgotten your password?** on the RacingOwl sign-in page to choose a new one, then come back to the form and use that.

If another trainer invited you

If another trainer sent you their referral link, the sign-up page opens with a green card above the form. It shows **+30 days** in large type and says which site invited you. It means your free trial will be 30 days longer than whatever trial is on offer when you choose your plan. There is nothing to type: the invitation is already attached to the page, so just fill in the form as normal. If the link belongs to a site that no longer exists, the card simply does not appear, and your site is created exactly the same way without the extra days. More on referrals in Choosing your RacingOwl plan.



Signing up through another trainer's link: the invitation card with the 30 extra days, above the form.

What happens when you press Create site

Several things happen in the few seconds after you press the button:

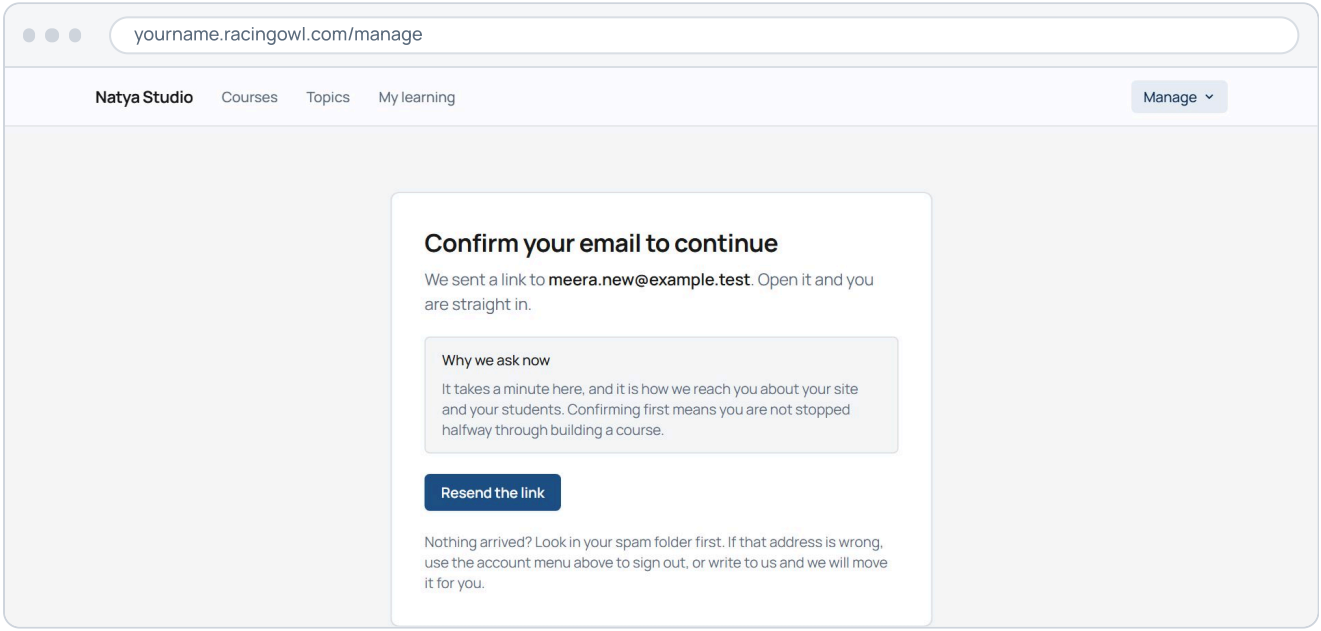
1. RacingOwl checks the address is free, then creates your account (or finds your existing one) and your site, with you as its owner.
2. Two emails are sent to you: one titled with your site's name and "is ready", which gives your site's address and a **Choose your plan** button, and one asking you to confirm your email address, with a **Confirm my email** button. (If you signed up with a RacingOwl account you already had, only the first is sent.)

3. You are signed in automatically. A short page says **Your site is ready** and "Taking you to it now…", and moves on by itself in a second or two. If it does not, press **Go to your site**.
4. You land on your new site's own address, inside the **Manage** area.

Occasionally the automatic sign-in does not go through, for example on a browser that blocks the step. Your site has still been created. You land on your site's sign-in page with the message "Your site is ready. Sign in to start building." Sign in with the email and password you just chose.

Confirming your email address

The first thing you see inside Manage is not your dashboard. Until you confirm your email address, the whole Manage area is replaced by one screen headed **Confirm your email to continue**. It shows the address the link was sent to, and a short note, **Why we ask now**, which explains that confirming first means you are never stopped halfway through building a course. If you signed up with an existing RacingOwl account whose email is already confirmed, this screen is skipped.



The confirm-your-email screen. It stands in for every Manage page until the link in your email is opened.

1. **Open the email.** Look for the message asking you to confirm your email. It was sent the moment you signed up. It usually arrives within a minute or two.
2. **Press Confirm my email.** The link opens a RacingOwl page headed **Your email is confirmed**. You can open it on any device: your phone is fine, even if you signed up on a computer.
3. **Carry on.** If you opened the link on the same computer, press **Go to your site** on the confirmation page. If you opened it on your phone, simply look back at your computer: the confirm screen checks every few seconds and moves on by itself once the address is confirmed.

If the email does not arrive

- **Check your spam or promotions folder first.** It is the most common reason.

- **Check the address shown on the screen.** A typing slip in the email address is the next most common reason. If the address is wrong, use the account menu at the top of the page to sign out, or write to RacingOwl and the team will move the account to the right address for you. The **Ask RacingOwl** button at the bottom right of the screen reaches them directly (see Ask RacingOwl).
- **Ask for another link.** Press **Resend the link**. The screen says "Sent. It should arrive within a minute or two." and the button becomes **Send it again**.

If the link says it has expired

A confirmation link works once. If you open it a second time, or open an old one after asking for a new one, the page says **That link has expired**. If you have already used it, your email is confirmed and there is nothing more to do. Otherwise, sign in to your site and the confirm screen will offer to send you a new link.

> **IMPORTANT.**
> Confirm your email before anything else. It is how RacingOwl reaches you about payments, renewals and your learners, and the Manage area stays closed until it is done. It takes a minute, and nothing you build is lost by doing it first because there is nothing built yet.

Choosing your plan

Once your email is confirmed, you land on the **Choose a plan** screen, and nothing else in Manage opens until you pick one. The screen shows your site's name and logo in the header, so you can see your site exists, but the Manage menu is not there yet.

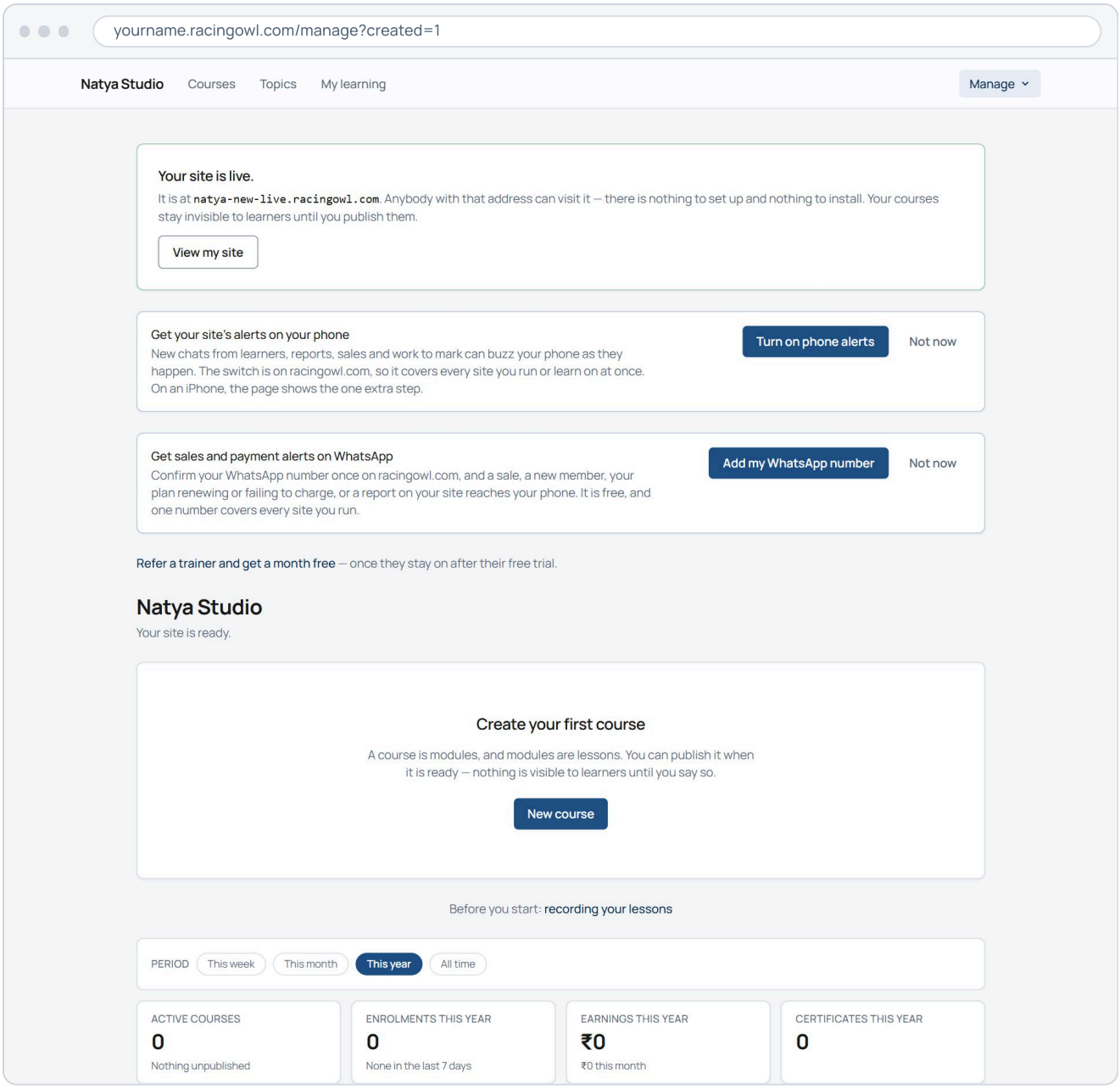
There is no free tier, but most plans start with a **free trial**, shown on each card, and nothing is charged until the trial ends. You can move to another plan later: up at any time, paying only the difference for the days left; down from the end of the period you have paid for.

The plan screen, the trial, add-ons, promotion codes and auto-renew are explained in full in Choosing your RacingOwl plan. Read that chapter before you press anything on this screen if you are unsure which plan suits you.

> **TIP.**
> The **Ask RacingOwl** button lives on the Manage pages. The plan screen does not carry it. If you have a question about plans before choosing, pick the trial on the plan you think fits: moving up or down later costs nothing during a trial.

Your site is live

After your first plan is set up, you are taken to your dashboard at **Manage → Dashboard**. At the top is a green card headed **Your site is live.** It prints your full site address and explains that anybody with that address can visit it, with nothing to set up and nothing to install, and that your courses stay invisible to learners until you publish them. The card shows once only, on this first arrival.



The dashboard on your first arrival, with the Your site is live card and the View my site button.

Press **View my site** to see your site as a visitor does. It will look bare at this point: your site's name, and a home page with no courses yet. That is expected. It fills up as you work through the next chapters.

Below the green card you will also see:

- A card offering to **Turn on phone alerts**, so new sales, chats and reports reach your phone (see Notifications and keeping your site safe). **Not now** hides it.
- A card, **Get sales and payment alerts on WhatsApp**, if you have not confirmed a WhatsApp number yet. Its **Add my WhatsApp number** button takes you to the page on racingowl.com where you confirm it once, so a sale, a new member, your plan renewing or failing to charge, or a report on your site reaches your phone.
- A line, **Refer a trainer and get a month free**, which takes you to your referral link (see Choosing your RacingOwl plan).
- Your dashboard figures, all at zero for now (see Your dashboard and earnings).

> **WHAT YOUR LEARNER SEES.**
> At this moment, a visitor to your address sees your site's name and an empty catalogue. They cannot see your Manage pages, your plan or anything you have not published. Nothing is on sale until you have activated payments and published a priced course.

Finding your Manage pages

Everything you do to run your site lives under **Manage**, a menu in your site's header that only you (and any instructors you add) can see. It is grouped into three parts:

- **Teaching:** **Dashboard**, **My courses**, **Learners**, **Groups**, **Chats**, **Topics**, **Email learners**, **Marking**, **Membership offer**, **Discounts** and **Reports**.
- **Money:** **Earnings**, **Payments** (where your payouts go) and **Your RacingOwl plan** (what you pay RacingOwl, shown to the site owner only).
- **This site:** **Settings** and **Your instructor profile**.

Stuck at any point once you have signed in? Every page under Manage has an **Ask RacingOwl** button at the bottom right, and the RacingOwl team answers you there. See Ask RacingOwl.

Signing in again next time

You sign in to run your site **on your site's own address**, not on racingowl.com. There are two ways to get there:

- **Go straight to your address.** Type `yourword.racingowl.com` and choose **Sign in**. If you are already signed in to RacingOwl on that browser, you are let straight in without a form. Bookmark your Manage page for next time.
- **Start from racingowl.com.** Choose **Sign in**. The page asks "Which of these is you?" Choose **I run a site here**, type your site's address in **Your site address** (the one word, or the whole address pasted in, both work) and press **Continue**. You are taken to your site's own sign-in page.

Your password is your RacingOwl password: the same one signs you in to your own site and to any site where you learn. Signing out anywhere signs you out everywhere, which keeps a shared computer safe.

A checklist for your first day

With your site created, work through the rest of this guide in order. The launch checklist:

1. Create your site and confirm your email (this chapter).
2. Choose a RacingOwl plan and tick the add-ons you want (Choosing your RacingOwl plan).
3. Ask your learners to verify their WhatsApp number, if you took that add-on (WhatsApp alerts for your learners).
4. Activate payments (Setting up payments).

5. Build your first course: content, details, quizzes (Creating your first course).
6. Decide how you charge: price each course, or one monthly membership (Pricing your courses).
7. Set your site's branding: logo, colours, about text (Branding your site).
8. Publish your course.
9. Set up your instructor profile (Your instructor profile).

Common questions

Q Can I change my site's address after I have created it?

No. The address is permanent, which is why the form says so under the box. Your site's name, logo, colours and subject can all be changed later from **Manage → Settings**, but the address stays. If the address is badly wrong, tell RacingOwl through **Ask RacingOwl** before you build anything, and the team will talk you through your options.

Q Can I use my own domain, like www.meerayoga.com?

Your site lives at your chosen word followed by **.racingowl.com**. That is the address to type on the form and to share with your learners.

Q I typed my email address wrongly. What now?

The confirm screen shows the address the link went to, so you will spot it there. Use the account menu at the top of the page to sign out, or write to RacingOwl through **Ask RacingOwl** on that screen and the team will move the account to the right address.

Q I confirmed on my phone but my computer is still showing the confirm screen.

It checks every few seconds while the tab is open and in front of you, so give it a moment. If it still has not moved, reload the page.

Q Do I need a GST number or a registered business to sign up?

No. You need neither to create a site. When you activate payments you will need your bank details and PAN; a GSTIN is optional and only needed if you are registered for GST. See Setting up payments.

Q I am under 18. Can I run a site?

No. Running a site means taking payments and receiving payouts, which only an adult can do. A parent or guardian can run the site in their own name.

Q Can I run more than one site?

Yes. Create another site from racingowl.com with the same email address and the same password; both sites sit under your one RacingOwl account. Each site has its own plan.

Q Can I sign up with Google?

The Create your site form uses an email address and a password. If you already have a RacingOwl account that you only ever sign in to with Google, it has no password yet, so the form has nothing to match. Give it one first: on the RacingOwl sign-in page choose **Forgotten your password?** and type your email. RacingOwl emails you a link to set a password, which becomes a second way in beside Google. Then use that password on the Create your site form.

Q Is anything charged when I sign up?

No. Creating a site is free. Money is only involved when you choose a plan, and most plans start with a free trial during which nothing is charged.

Related: Choosing your RacingOwl plan, Setting up payments, Branding your site, Ask RacingOwl.

THE REST OF THE GUIDE

This is chapter 1 of 17 of the RacingOwl Trainer's Guide. The full guide, every other chapter as its own PDF, and the online version are at racingowl.com/trainer-guide. Stuck? Press **Ask RacingOwl** at the bottom right of any Manage page.