



UNTETHER YOURSELF

5 Portable Careers to Support You Overseas

[Future Expats Forum](#) looks at **who** decides to live overseas, **why** they do and **how** they accomplish it.

Most expats need to generate income to support their lifestyles abroad, but getting a job in the new country isn't an option for most of us.

This book shows you how to achieve an “untethered” life with a location-independent income.

UNTETHER YOURSELF:

5 PORTABLE CAREERS TO SUPPORT YOU OVERSEAS

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Preface	v
Introduction	- 1 -
Chapter One: Writing.....	- 3 -
Travel Writing.....	- 4 -
The Ultimate Travel Writer’s Program	- 5 -
Travel Blogging.....	- 8 -
Web Writing.....	- 9 -
Copywriting.....	- 11 -
Don’t be a Freelance Widget.....	- 11 -
Chapter Two: Teaching English as a Second Language	- 14 -
Choose Your Training	- 16 -

CELTA.....	- 16 -
SIT.....	- 17 -
Trinity	- 18 -
Others	- 18 -
Chapter Three: Photography.....	- 19 -
Chapter Four: Set Up a Money-Making Website or Blog.....	- 21 -
Sell a Service	- 22 -
Sell a Product	- 22 -
Sell Someone Else’s Product or Service.....	- 24 -
Affiliate Programs.....	- 24 -
Advertising.....	- 25 -
The Hybrid Approach.....	- 25 -
OK, I’m Interested. Where Do I Learn How?.....	- 25 -
Chapter Five: Expat Life Coaching	- 27 -
How Did You Become Interested in Coaching?	- 28 -

Where Do You Find Clients?	- 29 -
How Do You Get Paid	- 29 -
What Advice Would You Give Someone Who's Interested in Becoming a Coach?	- 30 -
Chapter Six: Conclusion	- 33 -

PREFACE

I've been a writer for over 20 years, and have wanted to live in another country for as long as I can remember. A couple of years ago, those interests merged as my husband and I began planning to move overseas.



1PHOTO BY KABACCHI ON FLICKR

The difficulty is, after the economic disasters beginning in 2008, we can't afford to retire. After starting [Future Expats Forum](#), I discovered that fully 80% of future expats will need to generate income overseas, and **none** who responded to my poll expected to find a job in their new country.

If you're living overseas, need income but aren't eligible to work for a company, you're left with only two choices: crime or self employment. Since I don't advocate the former, you'll have to start a business.

If you know where you want to settle down, and if you have business skills you can bring to your new home, you'll probably be in good shape.

But what if you don't?

What if you want to move around, sampling different places for a few years until you find somewhere you want to settle down (or not!)? What if

you don't have transferrable business skills?

In those scenarios, you'll have to develop some sort of location-independent income, or what I call an *untethered* income.

This book is meant to help you design the untethered career that will work for you.

Are there other careers or specialties you could practice? Of course. Hopefully, though, these suggestions will help you jump start your thinking and lead you to the perfect untethered career for you in your new overseas home.

Bon voyage!

UNTETHER YOURSELF

5 PORTABLE CAREERS TO SUPPORT YOU OVERSEAS

INTRODUCTION



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Who hasn't dreamed of lazing in a hammock slung between palm trees on a white-sand beach, sipping a margarita, piña colada or ice-cold beer? Exploring a rainforest while marveling at the array of colors and sounds emanating from the local bird life? Sitting with friends in a Parisian café? Riding an elephant or a camel? Sailing the Seven Seas?

These are some of the visions that drive us to trade existence in the home-grown rut for life in an exotic expat location.

Unfortunately, most of us also need to find a way to finance our expat lifestyles.

In a recent poll, I discovered that most – at least 80% – of you will have to generate some income when you move overseas.

None of you plan to hold an overseas job with your current employer, but fully half intend to develop some kind of self-employment income.

So what's an expat to do?

Some open dive shops, bars, restaurants, hotels or B&Bs. Some start retail establishments. Mail and package delivery, courier services, the possibilities are endless. There are all sorts of business opportunities, depending on your training, interests and the needs of the community where you're settling.

But what if you want to do something that's truly location independent? What if you want to be untethered completely, limited only by your internet or phone connection?

What kinds of choices will you have for an overseas career?

Here are a few of the jobs you can do as an untethered expat.

- Writing
- Teaching English as a Second Language
- Photography
- Money-Making Website or Blog
- Expat Life Coaching

Whatever you choose to do to support your new life overseas, it should be something that can maintain your interest. After all, you're moving to get **out** of that rut! Don't create a new one for yourself.

CHAPTER ONE: WRITING

Since it's what I plan to do, and what I know best, let's start with **writing**.



3 PHOTO BY RENNETT STOWE ON FLICKR

Writing is probably the most portable profession there is.

You don't need much equipment – these days, a laptop and an internet connection are all it takes. Some people don't even need that – JK Rowling hand wrote the first of her *Harry Potter* books on napkins in a café.

You don't need a special office. You can write in a hotel room or a cafe, or even in the park.

Of course, you need to be able to put together grammatically correct sentences and have something to say! Assuming you can already do that, you may need some special training for a specific type of writing.

Writers come in all shapes, sizes and interests. Let's look at a few of the easiest types of writing to do as an untethered expat:

- Travel Writing
- Web Writing, including Blogging
- Copywriting

TRAVEL WRITING

Sun, surf and white sand beaches. . . glamorous evenings. . . gourmet meals. . . what image does life as a travel writer conjure for you?



Travel writing is the writing hot button for most of us future expats. What could be greater than earning money writing about the exotic places we're visiting and the interesting new sights we're seeing and activities we're enjoying? Not a lot!

A good travel writer must be highly observant and curious. According to the [British Guild of Travel Writers](#), "Remember: travel writing is different from what you read in vacation brochures and on hotel web sites. It is not about generalities and platitudes; it is about the specific, the quirky, the iconic, the incomprehensible – things that make living in this world so fascinating."

You don't actually have to travel to be a travel writer. Your hometown is a destination for someone else, so you can hone your skills writing about an area you're already familiar with before you embark on your overseas adventure.

Travel writing courses are available. I'm personally familiar with [The Ultimate Travel Writer's Program](#) from AWAI (American Writers and Artists Inc), which comes with a 30-day, no-nonsense guarantee.

[MatadorU](#) also offers a travel writing course. Their website promises that they offer "the world's most comprehensive teaching program for travel writers," and they stress social media and the internet, not just print publications.

[Universal Class](#) offers an inexpensive online travel writing course. The first lesson asks the question, "Do You Have What It Takes to Become a Travel Writer?"

Let's not lose sight of the *self employment* aspect of travel writing, though. You'll also need to be able to come up with saleable story ideas, pitch them to editors, and then get hired to write them! This requires some entrepreneurial skills. I know that [AWAI's](#) course includes help with these issues.

THE ULTIMATE TRAVEL WRITER'S PROGRAM

Recently I joined a teleconference with Jennifer Stevens. Jen has spent two years as a Peace Corps volunteer and has traveled through 23 countries writing about the best locales for travel, investment and retirement. She was an editor for *International Living*. She's also the creator of The Ultimate Travel Writer's Program, which I have used.

Here are some of the highlights of Jen's teleconference.

GET PAID TO TRAVEL – THEN GET PAID AGAIN TO WRITE ABOUT IT!

As a travel writer, someone else pays for your travel, and then you get to earn money by writing about it. You experience a place differently when you're writing about it, because your status as a writer gives you an excuse to ask questions and go places you might not go as a tourist.

Usually you're not hired to write lengthy, literary articles (think *National Geographic*). Instead, editors want short pieces and guidebook-style narratives.

You don't actually have to travel to be a travel writer. Your hometown is a destination for someone else, so you can hone your skills writing about an area you're already familiar with before you embark on your overseas adventure.

You don't just write for travel magazines. Lots of magazines, newspapers and online publications will publish travel articles -- a knitting magazine might publish a story about an interesting knitting shop in London, for example. You can use your knowledge of hobbies or other interests to create travel articles.

YOU CAN MAKE A FULL-TIME LIVING AS A TRAVEL WRITER

By full-time living, Jen specified an income of \$50-60,000 annually. For that you have to write quickly, be good at it and have some regular clients.

However, if you're living in a country where it doesn't cost as much to live – Mexico, Malaysia or Panama, for example – a full-time living might be half that amount, allowing you to live comfortably and enjoy a fair amount of leisure time. Or you could work hard, earn your 50K and sock away some savings.

Travel magazines pay anywhere from \$75 for a short piece to \$2,000 for the cover story in an airline magazine.

If you can take some photos to go with your article, you can double your earnings. (More about photography as an untethered career later.)

YOU CAN SELL TRAVEL ARTICLES WITHOUT LEAVING HOME

Think about it. Wherever you live, it's likely a travel destination for somebody. When I lived in Central Florida, I could write articles about Walt Disney World, Sea World, Universal Studios, Kennedy Space Center, beaches, and a lot of other attractions. I could offer them to



4 PHOTO BY SHADOWBOX ON FLICKR

newspapers in the northeast or other regions of the country, or sell them to foreign English-language publications.

Now that I'm in Panama, I can write about the areas here that interest expats and travelers.

THE PERKS ARE FANTASTIC!

Hotels, airlines, tour operators, state and country travel and tourism agencies are great sources of freebies. It's worth their while to give an empty hotel room or airplane seat to a writer in hopes of getting some free coverage, which carries more credibility than an advertisement.

HOW'S THE DEMAND?

According to Jennifer Stevens, there's a great demand for travel writers who understand what editors are looking for. There are print magazines and newspapers with their corresponding websites. Newsletters and e-letters offered by tour operators are another source of assignments.

HOW DO I LEARN HOW?

As mentioned above, Jen has developed a program that teaches people how to become travel writers. It's called [The Ultimate Travel Writer's Program](#) and it's available through [AWAI](#). (In the interests of full disclosure, I have purchased several of AWAI's programs, including this one, and I also do some freelance writing for them.)

Hotels, airlines, tour operators, state and country travel and tourism agencies are great sources of freebies. It's worth their while to give an empty hotel room or airplane seat to a writer in hopes of getting some free coverage, which carries more credibility than an advertisement.



5 PHOTO BY CONTRAPTION ON FLICKR

If you're not sure you want to plunge in right away and invest in the program, you can sign up on the AWAI website for **free** e-letters that give you loads of actionable information about travel writing.

TRAVEL BLOGGING

There's another type of travel writing available to you – travel **blogging**.

Travel blogging combines the best of travel writing with your own web-based business.

As a travel blogger, you get to write about your travels, but you can skip the query letters and submissions because you publish on your own website.

Online you'll find some highly respected travel bloggers, people like Nomadic Matt, Wandering Earl and Paula Pant.

There's a new program to teach you all the ins and outs of becoming a successful travel blogger. [**Money-Making Travel Blogs: Your Step-by-Step Guide for Turning Adventures and Hobbies into Income**](#) will walk you through everything you need to know.

Travel writing is indeed a glamorous career, and it might be just the ticket for you to pay for your overseas life.

WEB WRITING

There is a huge demand for quality web content in many forms including blog posts, articles on nearly any subject, marketing materials, advertising, and reporting.

If you think you might enjoy writing for an online audience, I encourage you to take a good, hard look at your areas of expertise and your interests. It's much easier to write about something if you are passionate and knowledgeable about it. It's also easier to find ways to get paid for writing on a subject you know something about to begin with.

A good source of information about all aspects of writing for the web is a site called [Wealthy Web Writer](#). It includes both free content and a paid membership site. They rely on an extensive calendar of webinars and teleseminars, along with articles and videos to teach you what you need to know. There's a member forum as well.

Of course, the ideal would be to develop an income from your own blog or website. This is certainly possible, but it is not easy and not for the faint of heart. If you decide to go this route, you should plan to spend lots of time developing quality content for your blog and learning the business side of blogging from the masters – people like Darren Rowse of [ProBlogger](#) or Brian Clark of [CopyBlogger](#). A word of warning – the vast majority of bloggers do it for love and/or recognition alone.

There are several excellent programs where you can learn the ins and outs of basing a business on a blog. If you work well with a loosely structured format, check out [Authority by Clopyblogger](#). It combines online events – Seminars and Question and Answer sessions –



6 PHOTO BY
TOPRANKONLINEMARKETING ON
FLICKR

*The most important thing to remember is, if you want a freelance career and don't want to be treated (and paid) like a commodity, you **must** set yourself apart. The way to do that is through education, training and practice, practice, practice.*

with a very active user forum. Successful bloggers Brian Clark, Sonia Simone and Chris Garrett are all active in the forums as well.

Need a bit more structure? Try [A-List Blogging Bootcamp Club](#). This one is the brainchild of [Leo Babauta](#) and [Mary Jaksch](#). It includes ongoing seminars, and bootcamp-style training. As a member you'll have access to new bootcamp sessions as they are developed, and all previous bootcamps, with topics like "Kickstart Your Blog," "Create a Blog that Rocks," and "Skyrocket your Subscriber Count." It also features an active forum.

For an even more structured approach, along with a no-nonsense, take-no-prisoners attitude, David Risley's [Blog Masters Academy](#) might be what you need. This is a structured program that takes you from the very basics through some very sophisticated information and techniques for creating a successful blogging business.

[31 Days to Build a Better Blog](#) by Darren Rowse provides a months' worth of daily actions to build and improve your blog.

And there are lots more resources out there.

COPYWRITING

There is an ever-growing demand for good copywriters. If you have to ask what that is, you'll need some training. [AWAI](#), which I mentioned above, has extensive offerings for aspiring copywriters.

DON'T BE A FREELANCE WIDGET

I do **not** recommend trying to find freelance work from sites like Guru.com and Elance.com. Recently Nick Usborne, a veteran copywriter, coach and writing teacher, articulated clearly what has bothered me about these sorts of websites for a long time, but which I was not able to express nearly as well as he did.

Nick said that, if you participate in these sites you are agreeing that your skills – whether writing, editing, shooting video, photography, creating databases or any other freelance endeavor – are simply a commodity. You put yourself in the position of being one widget among many.

And when you commodify your talents, the only level of competition becomes **price**. That is the true reason why freelancers who participate in these demeaning online auctions are severely underpaid.

In order to separate yourself from this widget crowd – to be perceived as a uniquely able freelancer and be reasonably compensated for your work – you must offer specialized knowledge and authority.



7 PHOTO BY MARTINHOWARD ON FLICKR

Specialized knowledge doesn't come overnight. It's not just another commodity. It comes with education, time and practice.

Specialized knowledge doesn't come overnight. It's not just another commodity. It comes with education, time and practice.

So if you want to support yourself in your new country by writing, the time to start preparing yourself is **before** you leave your old country.

Perhaps you have some specialized knowledge and expertise from your home-country career you'd like to leverage after your move. Great!

What should you do if you don't already have that authority? Decide on a specialized niche and work to develop that expertise **now**, before you move. Take classes, hire a coach, subscribe to websites that provide what you want. Borrow books from the library and apply what you learn. There are lots of ways to gain knowledge.

After you've learned something, you need to put feet on it, put it into practice. Then do it again. And again. And again. Find the freelance work you want – here, now, before you go – and start developing a reputation.

If you plan properly and implement your plan, by the time you move overseas you will have an existing client base and a well defined group of prospects who will be willing to hire you for freelance assignments at a good rate of pay.

Is it easy? No. Especially if you're already holding down a full-time job. Will you be able to make money immediately? Probably not, unless you're already doing similar work or have tons of insider industry contacts. It takes work and dedication.

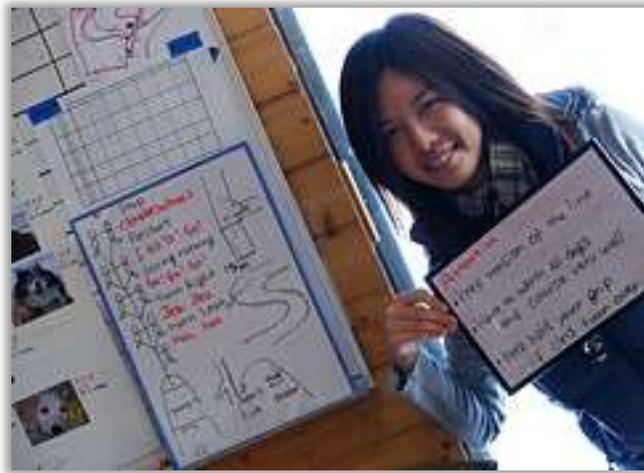
You can use this approach to become a travel writer, a copywriter, or any other kind of freelance writer. I'm sure you can also use this approach with non-writing types of freelance work, and I'd love to hear from some of you with those other areas of expertise.

It will pay off, though. Instead of working your butt off at menial, slave-wage assignments through a site that turns you into just another widget, you can work fewer hours at assignments that pay better, and have more time to enjoy your new surroundings.

The most important thing to remember is, if you want a freelance career and don't want to be treated (and paid) like a commodity, you **must** set yourself apart. The way to do that is through education, training and practice, practice, practice.

CHAPTER TWO: TEACHING ENGLISH AS A SECOND LANGUAGE

Teaching English as a second language is a very popular way to finance your new life abroad. Teaching is not strictly an untethered career. However, I'm including it here



8 PHOTO BY LAIHU ON FLICKR

because teaching contracts typically last from six months to a year, and you can stay or go somewhere else at the end of your contract period.

While formal teaching experience is not required, most programs require you to be a native English speaker and have a Bachelor's Degree. Training and certification as a TESOL (Teaching English as a second or other language) or TEFL (Teaching English as a Foreign Language) can be obtained through online courses or classroom settings in many US locations and throughout the world.

The website TEFL.com summarizes what you need to get started as a teacher of English as a foreign language. TEFL.net also provides information about certification.

One fantastic resource for prospective TEFL teachers is Dave's ESL Café, which calls itself "the internet's meeting place for ESL & EFL teachers and students from around the world"! Dave's ESL Café includes job listings, teacher resources, student resources, and tons of links to schools.

Another good resource is [Transitions Abroad](#), which includes a work abroad section dealing with English teaching.

[ELSJjobfeed](#) lists English teaching jobs around the world, broken down by region.

It's not easy to pick a school to attend for your training. Some schools guarantee you job placement in a particular country, while others simply offer to help you find work. Prices range from a few hundred dollars for an online course to thousands for intensive, classroom-based classes with practice teaching. Not all certificates are accepted everywhere. Some countries or regions prefer one type of certificate over another, so do your homework carefully before deciding which school is right for you.

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The greatest demand for English teachers is in Asia. If you have a Bachelor's degree in just about any subject and some specialized training, you can find a job teaching English in almost every Asian country.

Teachers in Korea tend to be highly paid. If you want to save money while traveling and teaching, Korea is the place to do it. China is another good choice if you're chasing the money.

However, if you have a particular country or region where you'd like to live, chances are they need English teachers there as well. Just be aware that in some countries, your low cost of living will be offset by low pay.

[“Young Americans Flock Overseas to Teach English”](#) is the headline of a March 1, 2010 article in the *Atlanta Journal Constitution*. Job boards for English teachers in China,

Japan, S. Korea, Malaysia, Indonesia and Thailand are bursting at the seams, but if you're adventurous, you can also find jobs in Vietnam, Cambodia and Laos. I even saw some listings in Tibet, and the Kingdom of Bhutan wants English teachers as well!

CHOOSE YOUR TRAINING

Use your training course as an opportunity to explore. If you think you'd like to teach in Korea, go there for your training. You'll get to experience the country before you commit to living there.

While some English-teaching jobs abroad require only that you be a native English speaker, others expect at least a bachelor's degree in some subject, and the best insist on certification.

And here's the bugaboo. There seems to be a large difference of opinion as to which types of training and certification are the best. Acronyms like TEFL (Teaching English as a Foreign Language), TESL (Teaching English as a Second Language), ESL (English as a Second Language) and TESOL (Teaching English as a Second or Other Language) fly about. Every school promises that its program is the best, the most widely accepted.

A discussion by actual English teachers at [Dave's ESL Café](#) casually dismisses all training except **CELTA**, **SIT** and **Trinity**.

CELTA

The CELTA certificate is issued by the prestigious [University of Cambridge](#) in England. Although actual courses are offered by many different institutions in different countries, the courses must be validated by Cambridge. Setting CELTA apart is the required practicum –

students must successfully complete six hours of practice teaching to real English language students, and the overall course is at least 120 hours.

[Teaching House](#) offers CELTA classes in New York, Boston, Miami and San Diego. Another CELTA provider is [Bridge TEFL](#). They teach US classes in Denver, CO. Other locations include Central and South America, Europe, Turkey, Cambodia, Vietnam, Thailand, Russia and China.

Not all certificates are accepted everywhere. Some countries or regions prefer one type of certificate over another, so do your homework carefully before deciding which school is right for you.

SIT

SIT stands for School for International Training, which offers masters degree programs in teacher education and intercultural management. It's located in gorgeous Brattleboro, VT, but doesn't offer the English teacher training there. Instead, it partners with other schools: [Global TEFL](#) holds classes in locations like Chicago and California and [TESOL Training Worldwide](#) offers courses in Oaxaca and Veracruz, Mexico. They also require 6 hours of teacher training in adult ESOL. According to their [website](#),

“The SIT Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages (TESOL) Certificate is an internationally-recognized and accredited teaching certificate guaranteed to give you an edge in your pursuit of a successful and rewarding career in English language teaching.”

TRINITY

Trinity refers to another English school, [Trinity College](#), which issues the certificates. This is not a terribly practical choice for a US-based student, as the only courses offered in North America are in Canada. However, if you want to take the course in Malta, Uruguay, New Zealand or Iran, you're in good shape.

OTHERS

All three programs above feature at least **120 hours** of course work combined with at least **6 hours** of practice teaching. There are other schools which offer courses that meet these standards, but without the prestigious certificates.

One of these is the [ITTO](#) (International Teacher Training Organization), which offers a similar program, albeit with slightly larger class sizes, in the US, Mexico, Costa Rica, and Peru, as well as Prague.

CHAPTER THREE: PHOTOGRAPHY

Photography falls somewhere squarely in the middle between an art and a craft, but either way it could help you earn your living in your new international location.

For most of us, "photography" means grabbing the point-and-shoot camera and clicking away at kids, pets, grandkids and special events. That's not what I'm talking about. Frankly, you may have the cutest grandkids in the world (and I don't think you do because I know mine have that honor!), but nobody's going to pay you for taking snapshots.



9 PHOTO BY MIKEBAIRD ON FLICKR

However, the distance between snapshot and saleable stock photo is not that great, and it's a distinction you can learn.

Photographers can make a good living taking pictures and selling them through online microstock sites like iStockphoto.com, Shutterpoint.com and Fotolia.com. Stock photos are used by ad agencies, publishers and all sorts of businesses and need to be generic in nature (no logos on the t-shirts or baseball caps, please!).

A microstock agency generally sells the image more than once, and the photographer earns a royalty each time it sells. Unlike fine art photos which can sell for hundreds or thousands of dollars, royalties for microstock might be under a dollar for some images so they're affordable by almost anyone. As your photograph collection increases, those royalties can add up quickly.

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squarely in the middle
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If you think photography might float your boat or pay your rent, do some research.

Shutterpoint offers a free e-book guide for its members called *Marketable Photography*. It discusses finding a subject for your photos, taking the pictures post processing and uploading them to Shutterpoint.

Many community colleges offer photography courses. Online classes are also available through a variety of individuals and institutions.

American Writers and Artists Inc. in Delray Beach, FL offers a course called "[Turn Your Pictures Into Cash](#)." They also offer photography workshops all over the world. So far this year they've been to Ecuador and Morocco, and they have expeditions planned to Paris, Rome and Thailand as well. (I've not taken any of their photography classes, but I have taken advantage of some of their other offerings including their [Ultimate Travel Writers Program](#).)

MatadorU also offers a [photography course](#), this one aimed specifically at the travel photography niche.

A good eye, a decent camera, a laptop and an internet connection might just be your ticket to financing your new life overseas.

CHAPTER FOUR: SET UP A MONEY-MAKING WEBSITE OR BLOG

Another location-independent avenue for creating income is by establishing an online business using your website or blog as its face to the world. The good news is, you no longer have to be a tech-savvy coder or programmer to set it up yourself!

As long as you have an internet connection, you're in business.

The quickest and easiest way to get a website up and running is to use a CMS (content management system) like WordPress. You can click [here](#) for more information about CMS and [here](#) for information about WordPress.

For a series of tutorials – written for non-technical people – visit my [WordPress Building Blocks](#) site.

There are three basic ways to earn money through a website:

1. Sell a service
2. Sell a product
3. Earn commissions and fees by selling someone else's product or service, known as Affiliate Marketing



10 PHOTO BY DANIELBROCHE ON FLICKR

SELL A SERVICE

If you want to develop an untethered life, you probably don't want to promote your services as a plumber, dog walker or anything else that ties you to one spot.

If you want to develop an untethered life, you probably don't want to promote your services as a plumber, dog walker or anything else that ties you to one spot.

However, there are many services you can offer “in the cloud.” Anything internet related falls into this category – programming, writing, video editing, creating Power Point presentations and recording voiceovers are just a few examples.

With the ease and inexpensive cost of communication services like Skype, Google Voice, webinars and podcasting, your choice of service offerings is greatly expanded.

Some examples of non-internet services might include:

- Consulting (as long as you don't have to do it in person!)
- Teaching
- Life Coaching
- Putting together guided tours

SELL A PRODUCT

The first product-based business I think of for an expat is import/export. If you live in a country that's known for its textiles, pottery, or silver jewelry, buying and selling those items is a relatively easy business to start. You can set up a website to display your wares and take orders for them.

If you're a photographer, you can market your fine-art prints through a website.

E-books and courses are also popular to sell online. You can create your own, or sell someone else's.

SELL SOMEONE ELSE'S PRODUCT OR SERVICE

If you don't already have retail experience or if you don't want to deal with physical inventory, packing and shipping, you can set up a website and collect commissions for selling someone else's stuff.



11 PHOTO BY ROB LEE ON FLICKR

AFFILIATE PROGRAMS

Most companies with any significant internet presence today offer affiliate programs, where you receive a commission when a visitor to your website clicks on a link to that company's product.

For example, at the end of every book and movie review on [Future Expats Forum](#), I include a link to buy that book or that DVD from [Amazon](#). If you purchase the item from one of those links, I receive a few cents. It's not much, but if hundreds of you do so, it adds up. (You can click [here](#) and scroll to the end of the review to see an example.) Some of the links in this e-book are affiliate links as well.

Some people receive a nice income each month by creating websites that sell hundreds of products through affiliate links.

If you want to go this route, you should be aware that some companies insist their affiliates be US residents, so watch for this as you investigate becoming an affiliate.

ADVERTISING

Once you've developed a website with a reasonable amount of traffic, you can sell advertising. You can do this indirectly, by allowing Google to display its ads on your pages, for example, or by selling space directly to individual advertisers.

THE HYBRID APPROACH

There's no reason you can't combine the different methods. On [Future Expats Forum](#) I use affiliate links, and I sometimes run a couple of ads in the right-hand sidebar. I also [promote my own services](#) as a writer and [WordPress guru](#). On my WordPress Building Blocks site, I include affiliate links and I offer my services setting up WordPress sites.

OK, I'M INTERESTED. WHERE DO I LEARN HOW?

There are plenty of resources available to help you learn everything from the mechanics of putting together a website or blog to how to monetize it. Here's a partial list:

- [How to Write Your Own Money-Making Websites](#). This program teaches you how to start from scratch, decide on a profitable niche, and build a site very quickly. Author Nick Usborne makes an extra \$4,000/month or so from just one of his sites.
- [ProBlogger: 31 Days to Build a Better Blog](#). Darren Rowse, author of ProBlogger.net, has designed a 31-day program for blog improvement that really works.

Some people receive a nice income each month by creating websites that sell hundreds of products through affiliate links.



- [Blog Marketing Academy](#). David Risley is known as a problogger. He's created several successful online businesses from blogs. I got a great education in developing a blog as a business platform from David several years back. He knows the technical aspects of blogging, and he also knows marketing. He's a pull-no-punches, take-no-prisoners sort of teacher, so if you can roll with that style the Blog Marketing Academy will help you develop a portable career with a blog.
- [Wealthy Web Writer: The Writer's Roadmap to Making Money Online](#). This is another site with enormous amounts of content, some free and some behind a membership wall. You can learn the basics of putting together a website, and from these folks by writing for them as well.
- [AWAI](#). American Writers and Artists, Inc. publishes multiple programs that can help you learn how to set up a site and how to make money from it as a writer, photographer or graphic artist.
- [SBI](#) (Site Build-It) is an all-in-one package that "enables *anyone* to create Web sites that build profitable businesses ." SBI provides a step-by-step process, software and support to develop a profitable website business.

CHAPTER FIVE: EXPAT LIFE COACHING

Since most coaches conduct their sessions over the phone (which could include Skype, Google Voice or other internet-based media), Life Coaching is a portable profession. Many coaches specialize in coaching expats and their families.



12 PHOTO BY UNOGUY ON FLICKR

Recently I interviewed six expat coaches. (You can find out more about them [here](#).) Here's a little bit about what it takes to be an expat life coach.

There are no formal requirements. Anyone can call himself a coach. However, there are certification programs, and if you're considering coaching as a career you should go through a recognized program.

In the US, the [ICF \(International Coach Federation\)](#) is the top dog. You can learn about their credentialing program [here](#).

Louise belongs to the UK-based [Association for Coaching](#).

Margarita pointed out that there are many accredited coaching schools to choose from, so you need to find one with the best fit for you.

If you can't access a coaching school nearby, some offer classes by phone teleconference.

[CTI](#), Coaches Training Institute was recommended by Margarita and Emmanuelle, and [Coach U](#) by Evelyn. Another contender is [International Coach Academy](#).

HOW DID YOU BECOME INTERESTED IN COACHING?

I asked each of the coaches how they became interested in coaching as a career.

After ten years in the corporate world, Emmanuelle was tired of office politics and wanted to go into business for herself. She wanted to contribute to her clients' lives and successes. Since she travels and moves frequently, "coaching seemed a perfect fit for a portable career."

Anne also came out of the corporate world – over 20 years worth. She, too, wanted a portable career, and she likes "helping others thrive no matter what they do or where they live."

Heather "fell entirely in love with the positive growth coaching has for both clients and coaches."

Throughout her adult life in investment banking and then as an expat accompanying partner, Evelyn found herself drawn to helping others in similar situations. "Eventually, as I learned more about coaching, the realisation that this was the profession for me dawned and I really haven't looked back."

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Margarita had to find a portable career when she started traveling with her husband with the US Foreign Service. Along the way, she met a life coach. She began training "and I was hooked."

Each of them found they had a strong connection with other expats, so the expat coaching niche was a natural evolution.

WHERE DO YOU FIND CLIENTS?

Anne, Heather and Emmanuelle have found clients through word of mouth and in-person meetings at conferences and workshops, as well as online.

The internet is a great source of clients for all six coaches. Margarita states that most of her clients find her through her blog or social media – Facebook, LinkedIn and Twitter.

Since Anne moved to Brussels, most of her clients come from LinkedIn.

Louise finds clients exclusively through the internet, although she plans to develop a local presence when she moves to mainland Portugal in the fall.

HOW DO YOU GET PAID

Since many of their clients are in different countries, I was curious about how the coaches get paid!

PayPal is the venue of choice – it's cost effective and anyone can use it. Emmanuelle also takes checks (actually, since she's in Canada she takes *cheques*) and credit cards.

WHAT ADVICE WOULD YOU GIVE SOMEONE WHO'S INTERESTED IN BECOMING A COACH?

Heather told me:

"Make sure that it's really what you want to do as it's hard to coach people on finding their inner truth if you're not living your own. Coach U offers a short course called Becoming a Coach if you think it might be for you."

"It's a gift, but also a lot of hard work -- both getting certified and hard personally as you get to know parts of yourself you may not like! And getting clients -- if you have the love for coaching, and the ambition to be aggressive about handling various aspects of a business, this is for you! Also, make sure to attend different intro sessions for the programs out there – understand what you want out of the coaching (certification, accreditation, just fun ...). And I'd recommend a program that offers in person and telephone coaching."

Louise pointed out a sobering statistic:

"Talk to coaches about their careers. Investigate whether you want to work in a company as a coach or start your own business.

If you want to start your own business consider all the issues involved in starting a business – cost, investment and think carefully about the coaching niche you will position yourself in. Don't think you can become a coach and then people will just come to you. It is reported by Dan Bradbury in the UK that 95% of UK coaches don't

make an adequate living from coaching. Now he is marketing to exactly these people so perhaps take this figure with a pinch of salt but even if it were only 70% - it still is a lot of people struggling to make a living!"

Evelyn pointed out:



13 PHOTO BY ELIZABETH BUIE ON FLICKR

"You're going to need two types of skills: coaching skills, and business skills. You can be the most gifted, most dedicated coach in the world - but if you don't know how to market your services and sell yourself, you won't stay in business for very long. So take the time to craft a solid business plan and a well thought-out marketing strategy, to ensure that your coaching business thrives."

Emmanuelle stated:

"Make sure that it's really what you want to do as it's hard to coach people on finding their inner truth if you're not living your own. Coach U offers a short course called Becoming a Coach if you think it might be for you."

Margarita emphasized the need for business savvy:

"Know how to run a business. Marketing and being out there for clients to find you takes a lot of effort, time, and energy and, as a coach, you must be prepared to spend a significant amount of hours on that."

Anne made an interesting suggestion:

"Get a mentor coach to figure out what are your motives, understand what it takes to run a small business, marketing strategies, what is best cost effective training for you (it can be quite expensive, around \$3,000-5,000)"

CHAPTER SIX: CONCLUSION

Unless you're financially independent or work for a multinational company that can send you on assignment overseas, you'll have to rely on business or self-employment income to support yourself overseas.

If you get your business cranked up before you go, you'll have more time and money to enjoy your new life after you get there.

I hope this brief look at untethered careers was helpful to you.

I write regularly about supporting yourself in your new country at [Future Expats Forum](#). I hope you'll check back often for more ideas, tips and information about living the untethered expat life.

