

# How Very Pinteresting!



## A Pinterest Guide for the Beginner and Advanced User



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### What is Pinterest?

Think of Pinterest as an online inspiration corkboard, a place where you can discover and save all of the amazing images you see every day on the internet. You can create “boards” with a theme to help organize your images (“pins”), and add pins that other users have found onto your own boards if you like.

### Why use it?

#### 1) Inspiration

Just because you **can** design in a bubble, doesn't mean you **should**. If you don't pick your head up from your work and take in what others are creating and coming up with, you may miss some really great stuff.

#### 2) Trend Research

Pinterest shows you what people are drooling over Right. This. Second. Use it as a tool to see what indie projects people are into, what themes are popular (what's the next bacon or moustache?), and translate that information into new saleable ideas for yourself.

#### 3) Site Traffic Generator

All pins on Pinterest link back to the site they came from. So think of it like a chain letter. You pin an image from your site onto Pinterest. One of your board's followers likes that image and repins it on their board, essentially putting another link to your site out there. One of *their* followers repins, one of **their** followers repins, and you get the idea.

### Getting started is as easy as 1, 2, 3!

#### 1) Set up the “Pin It” button.

Go to [www.pinterest.com/about/goodies/](http://www.pinterest.com/about/goodies/) & follow the steps to add the Pin It button to your browser. This allows you to pin from all over the web.

#### 2) Download the app to your phone for pinning on the go.

#### 3) Set up some boards!



## The Basics

- The stream of images you see when you log in to Pinterest is what people you follow are pinning. The more people you follow, the more you'll see there. Also, the "Everything" button at the top of the page is what every single person on Pinterest is pinning. It's a great way to find new cool images your circle of pinners hasn't seen before.
- All about balance: It's fine to promote your own work and blog posts (in fact it's completely normal to do that), just make sure you are also pinning other awesome things from around the web, unrelated to you. You won't get very far with Pinterest as a social media tool if you only promote yourself/ your products / your blog posts.
- Videos are often forgotten about on Pinterest, but they're totally fair game. Experiment with pinning videos (instructional, funny, inspirational, etc) you've found around the web that your audience might like. Pinterest also now accepts animated gifs!
- Consider adding an eye catching banner to a corner of an image telling the Pinterest user how much that item is if you're selling something
- If you're on an external website getting ready to pin a great image, you can highlight descriptive text on that page before clicking "Pin It" and the highlighted text will automatically show up in the description box.
- When pinning an image, don't overlook that description box. It's a great place for keywords that will help your pins come up in a search. If you're pinning an image of your product, absolutely include your company name in the description.
- Engage with your followers - keep an eye on the updates box along the left side of the screen and try to reply to all comments left on your pins!
- Variety is the spice of life. Pin images from all over the internet, not just from one site, to keep your boards interesting and fresh.
- Don't be afraid to "like" and "repin"! It's another way to get one more link to your pins on someone else's boards.
- Use images on **ALL** your blog posts. If there's no image, there's no pin. Stuck on imagery? Doodle something, snap a pic with your phone, or do a google image search for your blog topic (**including** the phrase "public domain") to scrounge up a pic.
- Pin some of your favorite blog posts to your boards!
- Create a pin board with fliers for upcoming shows and events, and pin pictures of those events afterwards!



## Beyond the Basics

- Spotting up and coming trends. Make notes about the types of things that you're seeing a lot of on Pinterest, and compare that with what you're seeing in stores or at events. Any similar themes? Any themes that look like they may be a hot new trend to put your own personal spin on? Don't miss the "Popular" button at the top of the page!
- Secret Boards: Use secret boards to gather inspiration for blog posts or an upcoming collection or project you're working on. Share secret boards with clients that you're working with or friends that you are working on (not yet public) collaborations with.
- Collaborate. Add contributors to boards as a way to team up with fellow creatives and get exposure to contributors' followings. You can add people to your secret boards as well.
- Stay true to your brand: Like any other form of social media, what you pin on Pinterest is extension of you and your brand. Capture the attention of your target market by thinking like they do. What types of things are they interested in? What might they do for a living? Create boards that fall in line with your target market's interests.
- Take a look at this link: [www.pinterest.com/source/yoursite.com](http://www.pinterest.com/source/yoursite.com) and replace "yoursite.com" with your own website (leave off the www.). This shows you all of the images that have been pinned that came from that website, and who pinned em. This is a great way to see what people are pinning from your shop, site, or blog, and will help you determine what products and posts are the most popular. Then you can give the customer more of what they want!
- Verify your site! It does a couple of great things for you - number 1 it makes your site's url visible in the header of your profile page. Number 2, it gives you access to analytics that tell you which pins are driving the most traffic to your site. You can use this info to give the pinners what they want - (i.e. more of that sort of content)
- Set up rich pins to get a short preview of your blog posts to appear automatically on pins from your site at <http://business.pinterest.com/en/rich-pins>



## Getting more followers:

- Leverage what you already have. Do you have a big following on Facebook, twitter, or Instagram already? Be sure to link to your Pinterest boards on other social media outlets so your fans can follow you on Pinterest as well.
- Along those lines, always let people know where they can find you. Add your social media links everywhere people would be looking for more info about you (your email signature, your blog sidebar, your profile page, etc).
- Have a Pinterest contest. It's become popular for websites to have contests where the only thing you have to do to enter is pin an image from their website. This is great for the company because it's another link to their site, and obviously great for the contestant that wins. But keep an eye on the Pinterest Terms of Service - all social media sites have rules that change almost constantly, and not playing ball could result in your account getting suspended!
- Include Pinterest content on your blog. Creating blog content that highlights things you've found on Pinterest (kind of a 'Here's what I'm pinning this week' type of a vibe), along with a link to your Pinterest account is a great way to remind people that you're active in the community and they should follow you there
- Consider joining the Ahalogy network at:  
<http://www.ahalogy.com/publishers/>  
Their Pinterest scheduling tools have really helped build my following!

## Recommended Reading

<http://www.copyblogger.com/pinterest-marketing>

<http://www.pinterest.com/about/help>





## About Hearts and Laserbeams

Steph Calvert is the work at home mom, graphic and web designer, and illustrator behind Hearts and Laserbeams. She has been working nonstop since graduating from Georgia's Savannah College of Art and Design in 1999, and her work has been seen worldwide on apparel, in print, and online.

Steph has been a self employed designer since 2010, working for large corporations, small businesses and individuals alike to create something special. She has been a blogger for over 10 years, and has been a contributor to OC Weekly and Moonfrye. She speaks at conferences on small business topics, co-produces the [Work. Life. Branding.](#) web series, and is poised to self-publish a children's book in 2014.

- Website:** <http://www.heartsandlaserbeams.com>
- Pinterest:** <http://pinterest.com/hrtsnlaserbeams>
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