

FREE STEP-BY-STEP GUIDE

Email List Quick Start Guide

From zero subscribers to a working email system —
set up in a single afternoon using free tools.

A free resource from yourdigitalbreakthrough.com

Why your email list is your most valuable business asset: Social media followers are borrowed. Algorithm changes can eliminate your reach overnight. Your email list belongs to you — permanently. The people on it have chosen to hear from you. That trust converts into income at a rate no social platform can match. Start building it today. Not next month. Today.

1

Create Your Free Systeme.io Account

- **Go to systeme.io**
Click the "Get Started For Free" button. No credit card required. The free plan supports up to 2,000 contacts with unlimited emails — everything you need to start.
- **Enter your name and email address**
Use the email address you want associated with your business. Check your inbox for the confirmation email and verify your account.
- **Complete your profile setup**
Add your name, time zone, and any other basic details requested. This takes less than two minutes.
- **Explore the dashboard**
Take five minutes to click through the main menu items — Emails, Funnels, Contacts, and Automations. Familiarity with the layout makes the following steps faster.

■ **Note:** Systeme.io is the recommended free tool for this guide. If you already use another email platform such as GetResponse the steps are similar — adapt them to your specific platform.

2

Create Your Email List

→ **Navigate to Contacts then Tags**

In Systeme.io subscribers are organised using tags. Create your first tag — name it something clear like "Main List" or "Blog Subscribers."

→ **Set up your sender email address**

Go to Settings then Email. Enter the email address you want your subscribers to receive emails from. Use a professional address connected to your domain where possible.

→ **Write your sender name**

This is the name subscribers see in their inbox. Use your real name or your blog name — something they will recognise and trust immediately.

→ **Save your settings**

Confirm everything looks correct. Your list infrastructure is now ready to receive subscribers.

3

Create Your Lead Magnet

→ **Choose your lead magnet format**

The simplest formats for beginners: a PDF checklist, a short resource list, or a one-page guide. It should solve one specific problem for your specific audience quickly and clearly.

→ **Create it using Canva**

Go to canva.com — free account. Search for "A4 document" or "PDF" templates. Choose a clean, professional template and customise it with your content, name, and blog URL.

→ **Download as PDF**

Once complete click Share then Download and select PDF Standard. Save it to your desktop with a clear file name like "your-lead-magnet-title.pdf."

→ **Upload to Systeme.io**

In Systeme.io go to Files and upload your PDF. Copy the file URL — you will need this when setting up your welcome email delivery.

■ **Note:** Your lead magnet does not need to be long or elaborate. One page of genuinely useful, specific content outperforms a twenty page generic guide every single time.

4

Build Your Opt-In Form

- **Go to Funnels and create a new funnel**
Name it "Lead Magnet Funnel" or similar. Choose the "Grow your audience" goal. This creates a simple two-step funnel — opt-in page and thank you page.
- **Design your opt-in page**
Use the drag-and-drop builder. Keep it simple — a compelling headline, two to three bullet points describing what they get, an email capture form, and a submit button.
- **Write a compelling opt-in headline**
Be specific about what they receive and who it is for. Example: "Free PDF: The Beginner's Guide to Affiliate Marketing — Download Instantly." Specific always beats clever.
- **Set the form to tag new subscribers**
In the form settings connect it to the tag you created in Step 2. Every new subscriber gets tagged automatically — no manual work required.
- **Create your thank you page**
A simple page confirming their subscription and telling them to check their email for the download. Keep it warm and personal.

5

Write and Automate Your Welcome Email

- **Go to Emails then Campaigns**
Create a new campaign. Select the "Automation" type. This email will send automatically to every new subscriber the moment they opt in — no manual sending required.
- **Write your welcome email**
Subject line: "Here is your free [lead magnet name] — welcome!" Body: warm greeting, brief introduction of who you are and why you created this resource, the download link to your PDF, and one sentence about what they can expect from your future emails.

→ **Add your lead magnet download link**

Insert the file URL you copied in Step 3 as a hyperlinked button or text link. Test it yourself to confirm the download works before going live.

→ **Set the trigger**

Set the automation to trigger when a contact receives the tag you created in Step 2. Now every new opt-in automatically receives this email immediately.

→ **Send yourself a test email**

Use Systeme.io's test email function to send the welcome email to your own address. Check that it arrives correctly, the download link works, and it displays well on both desktop and mobile.

■ **Note:** Your welcome email is the most important email you will ever send. It sets the tone for the entire relationship. Be warm, be genuine, and deliver exactly what you promised.

6

Embed Your Opt-In on Your Blog

→ **Copy your funnel opt-in page URL**

In Systeme.io copy the URL of your opt-in page. This is the link you will share everywhere — in your blog sidebar, after posts, on social media, and in your email signature.

→ **Add a call to action to your blog sidebar**

In WordPress go to Appearance then Widgets. Add a text or HTML widget to your sidebar. Include a brief description of your lead magnet and a button or link pointing to your opt-in page URL.

→ **Add a call to action after each blog post**

At the bottom of every blog post add a section inviting readers to download your free resource. Keep it brief — two sentences and a link.

→ **Consider a welcome popup**

A simple popup appearing after thirty seconds or on exit intent can significantly increase opt-in rates. Many free WordPress popup plugins are available — keep it clean and non-intrusive.

→ **Test the entire flow**

Visit your blog, click your opt-in link, submit a test email address, confirm you receive the welcome email, and confirm the download works. Every step of the journey should work flawlessly.

7

Send Your First Broadcast Email

→ Go to Emails then Broadcasts

A broadcast is a one-time email sent to your entire list or a segment of it. Use broadcasts for your regular email communication — weekly value emails, content updates, and promotions.

→ Write your first broadcast

Introduce yourself properly to your list. Share your story in a little more detail. Tell them what to expect from your emails going forward — how often, what kind of content, and how you plan to help them.

→ Send to your full list

Select all contacts or the tag for your main list. Schedule or send immediately. Even if you only have a handful of subscribers — send it. The habit of emailing your list regularly starts on day one.

→ Review your open rate

After 24 hours check your campaign stats in Systeme.io. Open rate, click rate, and any unsubscribes. These numbers guide you in improving future emails over time.

■ **Note:** Consistency is the secret to email marketing success. One email per week sent every week builds a far stronger relationship than sporadic emails whenever inspiration strikes. Set a schedule and keep it.

Your Email List Setup — Quick Summary

Step 1	Systeme.io account created and verified	■
Step 2	Email list tag created and sender details configured	■
Step 3	Lead magnet created and uploaded	■
Step 4	Opt-in funnel built with thank you page	■
Step 5	Welcome email written, automated, and tested	■
Step 6	Opt-in embedded on blog — sidebar and after posts	■
Step 7	First broadcast email sent to list	■

Want a ready-made 20-email welcome and nurturing sequence
written specifically for retirees and MMO beginners?

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tools and guides
to help you build your online business from scratch.