

The background of the entire page is a collage of US dollar bills, including \$100 and \$20 bills, with a blue color overlay. The bills are slightly out of focus, creating a sense of depth and abundance.

*The Be a Freelance Blogger*

# RATE GUIDE

Find out what other freelance bloggers  
earn and how to set your rates

Sophie Lizard

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# Welcome to The *Be a Freelance Blogger* Rate Guide!

When you choose to become a freelance blogger, you're faced with two constant questions:

1. How do I find good clients?
2. How much should I charge?

The second question is answered here in these pages. [If you need help with the first question, [follow this link](#).]

When you search online for freelance blogging rate advice, you get a big confusing pile of results that cover a million other types of freelance writing without specifically helping you to set your blogging rates. That sucks for us bloggers, so I decided to do something about it.

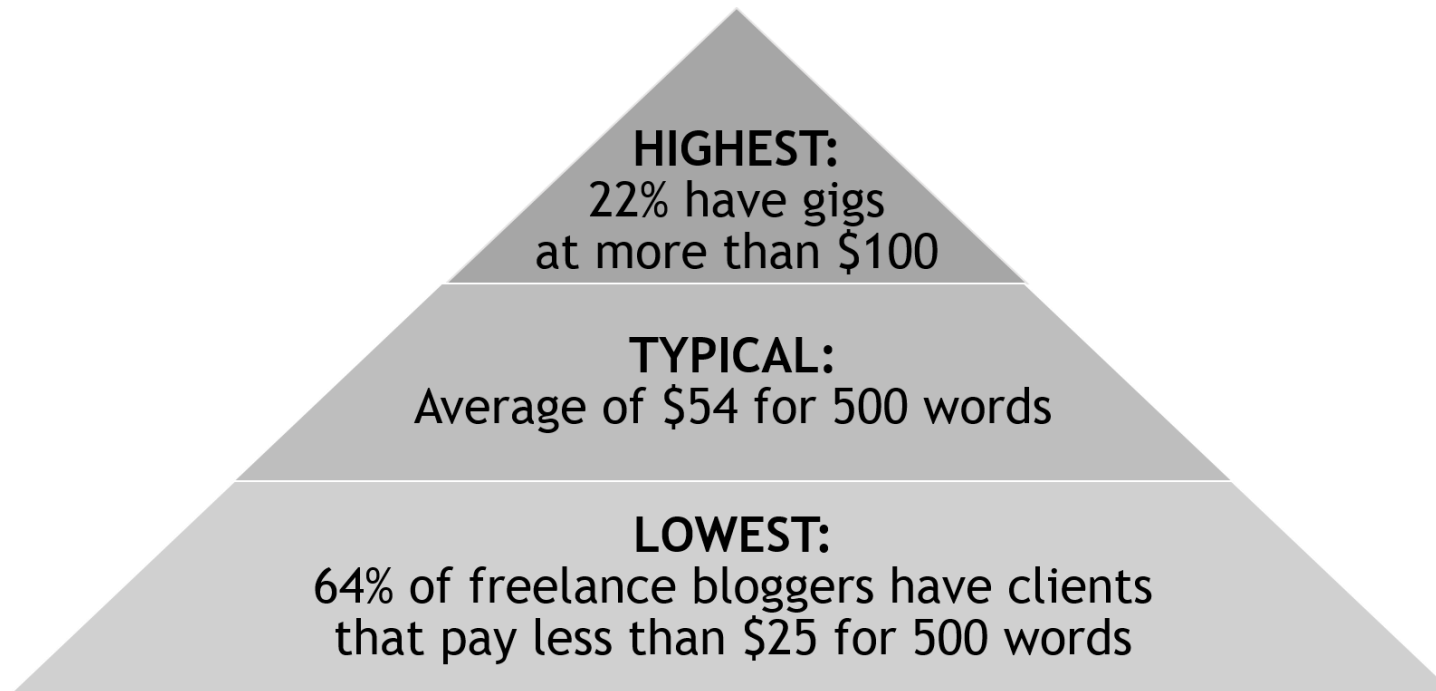
Be a Freelance Blogger readers generously answered my questions about their freelance blogging rates in 2013 so that I could put together this report based on exclusive data that *only* talks about freelance blogging, at every level from newbie to expert.

Dive in, earn more and stress less. You're welcome.

~ *Sophie Lizard*

## Freelance Blogging Rates: An Overview

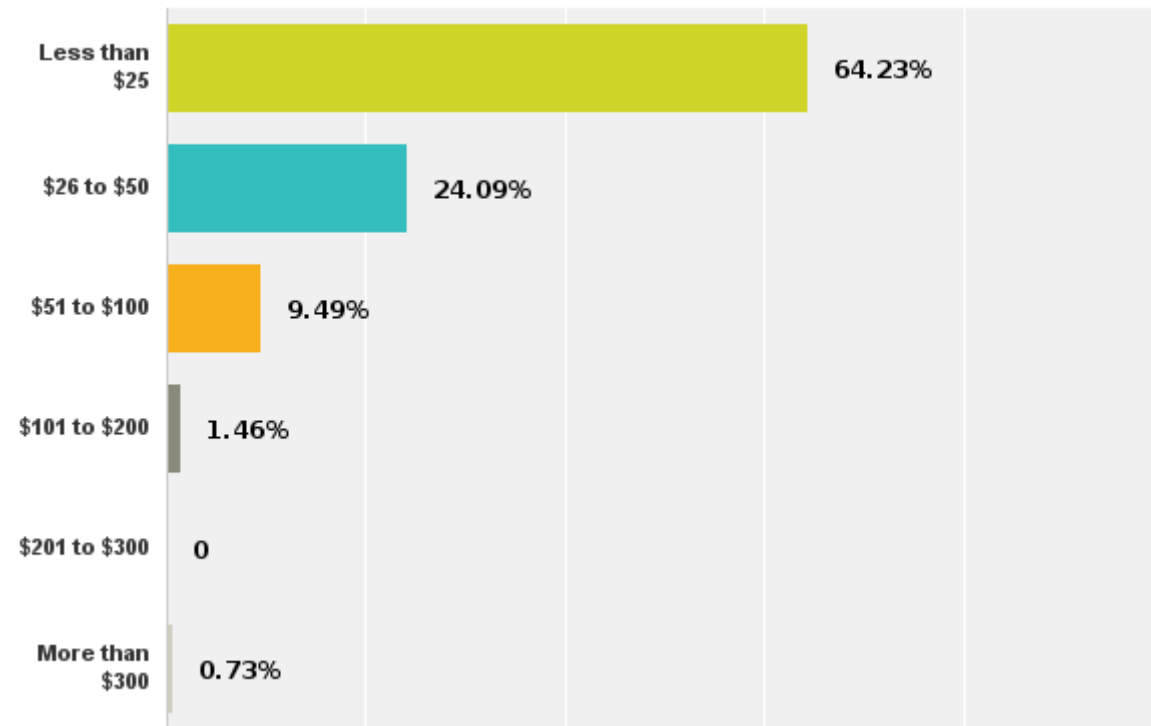
Here's a summary of the highest, lowest and typical rates reported by freelance bloggers at all career levels.



Encouragingly, more than 1 in 5 freelance bloggers (22%) had at least one gig in 2013 that paid more than \$100 for 500 words. On a per word rate, that's anything above 20 cents a word.

## The Low End of the Market

I asked, “What’s the *lowest* rate you’ve been paid for 500 words of freelance blogging in 2013?” and this is how the answers break down:



Lowest \$US rate per 500 words versus percentage of freelance bloggers

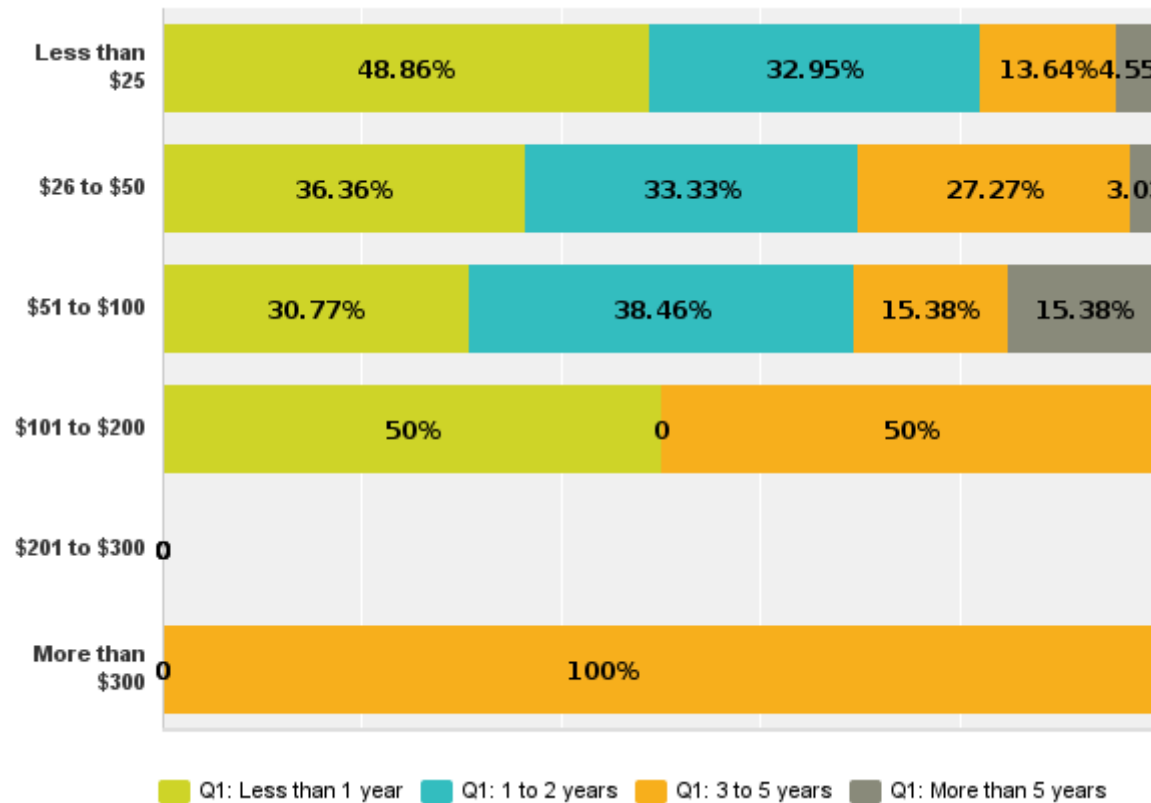
If you hate charts, don't worry—I'll translate.

- Almost two-thirds of us (64%) had at least one gig that paid less than \$25 for 500 words, equivalent to less than 5 cents per word. For some, that's a choice, and for others it's because they don't know [how to get higher-paying gigs](#).
- Close to a quarter of freelance bloggers (24%) earned \$26 to \$50 for their lowest-paid 500 words. That means earning up to \$50 per hour if you can write 500 words in an hour.
- More than 1 in 10 of you (11%) always earn at least \$51 per 500 words, which is over 10 cents per word.

To encourage you to step up your freelance blogging business, check out what the low end of the pay scale looks like when you're at the *top* of the career ladder...

- More than 2% of freelance bloggers **didn't write for less than \$100 per 500 words** in 2013.
- A commendable 0.7% got **paid over \$300 for every single 500-word post** they wrote!

Of course, your rate is partly influenced by your experience, so let's take a look at it from that perspective. I also asked everyone who completed the survey how many years they'd spent as a [paid freelance blogger](#), and if you compare those answers with the answers about lowest rates, this is what you get:

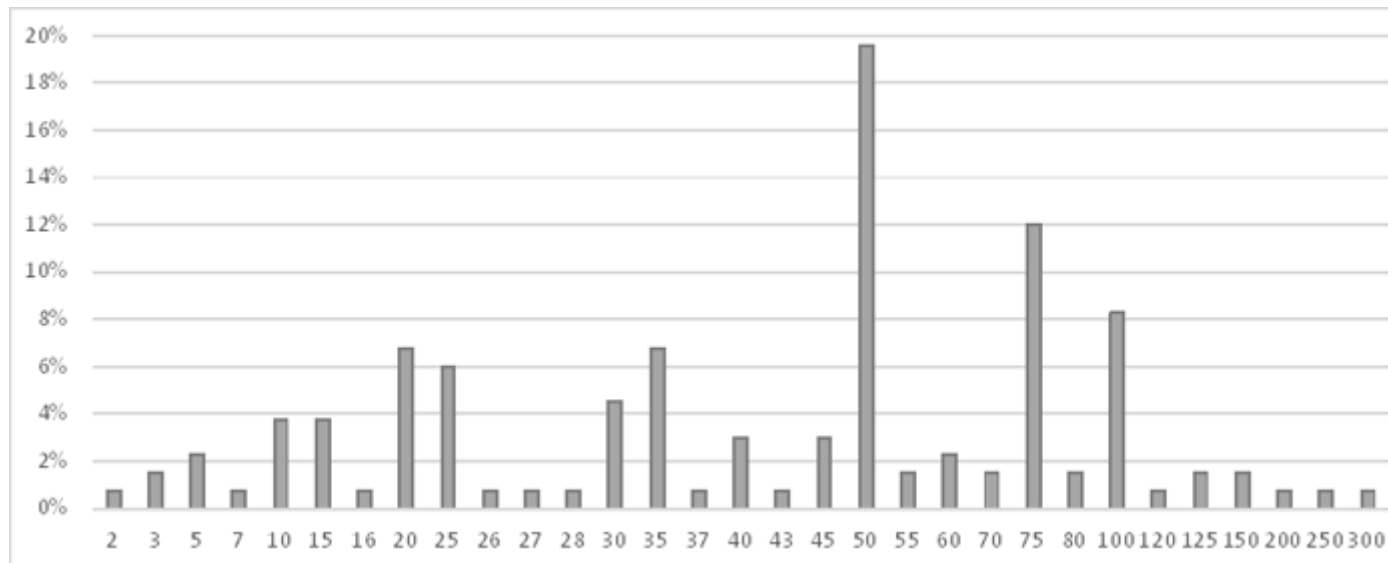


**Lowest \$US rate per 500 words versus length of freelance blogging experience**

Some freelance bloggers with less than a year’s experience earn a minimum of \$101 for 500 words—I hope this gives you confidence that you don’t have to keep your rates low just because you feel inexperienced.

## Typical Market Rates

When I asked about your typical rate for a 500-word post, the answers spanned an enormous range:

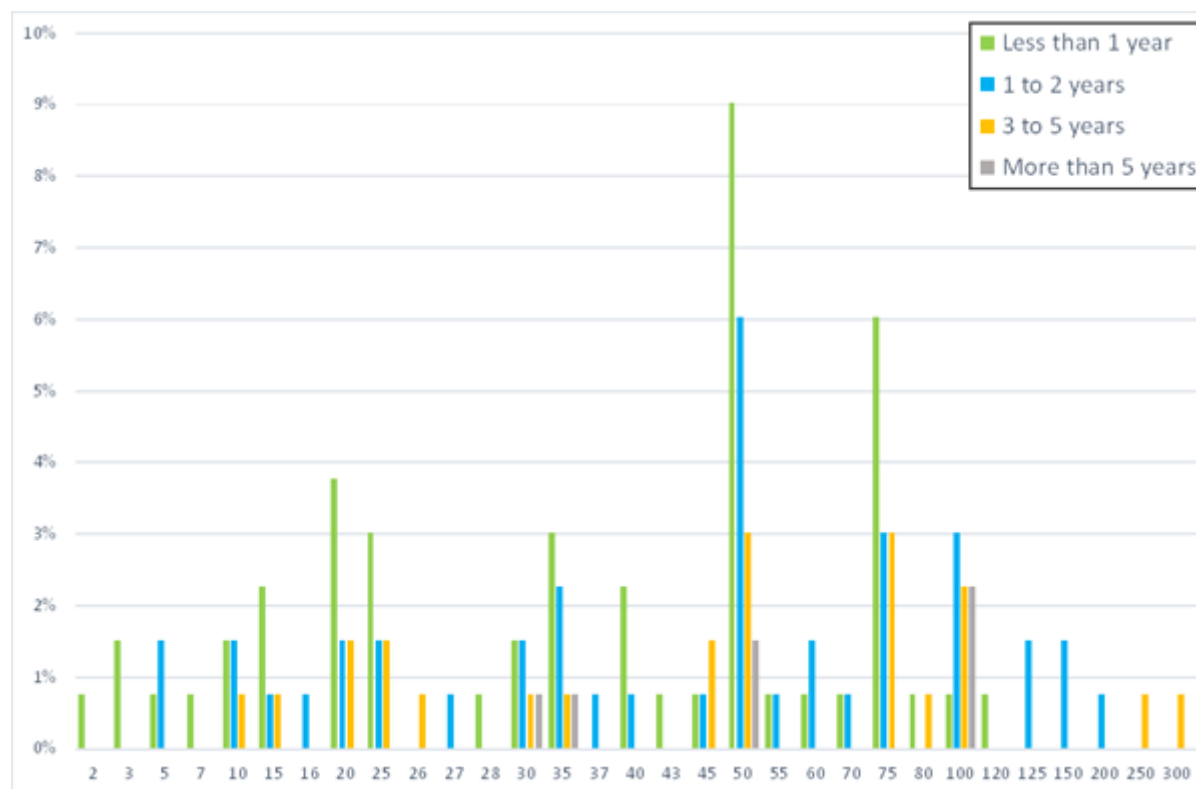


Typical \$US rate per 500 words versus percentage of freelance bloggers

- Typical rates range from the alarmingly low (\$2 per post) to the impressive (\$300 per post).
- There's a wide scattering of freelance bloggers at different pay levels, with peaks at the obvious round figures like \$50, \$75 and \$100.
- The average of all the answers is \$54, which means **the typical rate is just over 10 cents per word.**



That's averaged across all experience levels, though. I wanted to see what difference your experience has on your typical rate, so I split out the answers into experience bands based on "time served".



Typical \$US rate per 500 words versus percentage of bloggers, split by experience

That chart's a bit harder to read than the others, but the key takeaways are:

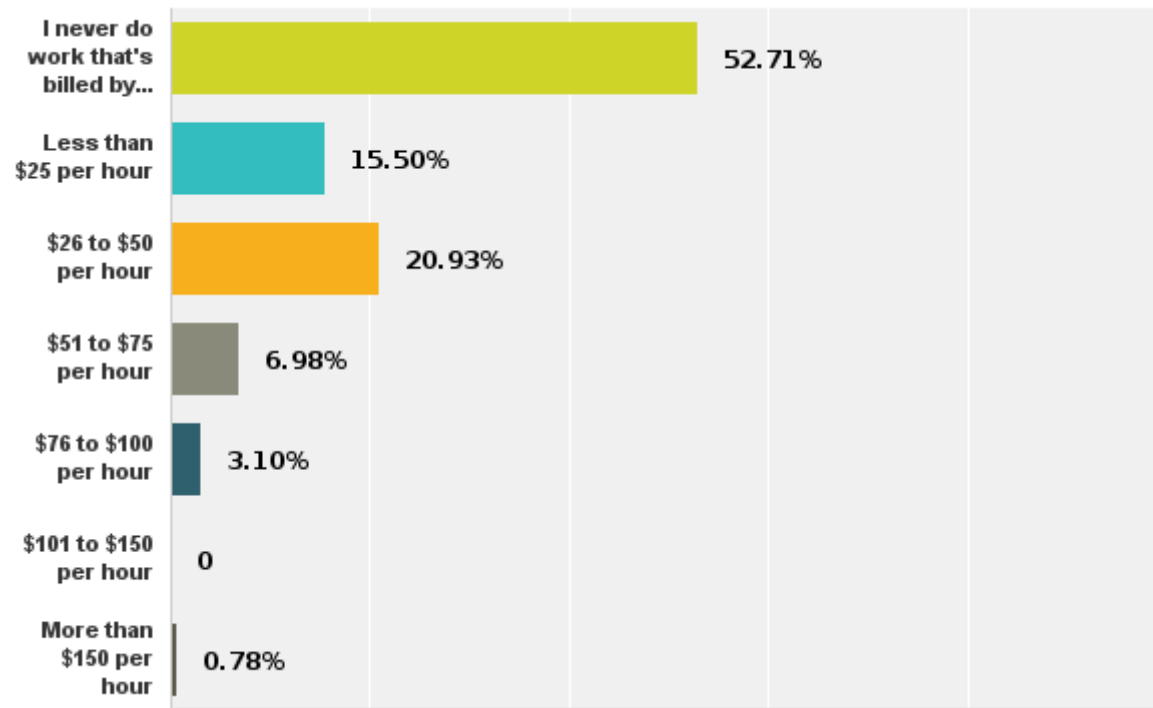
- [You're not charging enough.](#)

- Less experienced bloggers are particularly prone to not charging enough. Only bloggers with less than 3 years' experience report typical rates lower than \$10 per 500 words.
- Other new freelance bloggers report a typical rate of **up to \$120 per 500 words despite having less than 1 year's experience**, so again: lack of experience doesn't mean you can't make money blogging.
- Worryingly, some bloggers with more than 3 years' experience still haven't figured out that they're not charging enough, with typical rates starting from \$10 and going all the way up to \$300.
- Nobody with 5+ years of experience has a typical rate of less than \$30 per 500 words. That's still surprisingly low. If you've got the blogging know-how, [use it to step up and charge more!](#)

[Side lecture: Experience isn't truly measured in straight time, because some bloggers have a year's experience writing 10 posts a week, giving them 520 posts under their belt, while others have 5 years' experience writing one post per month, giving them only 60 posts' worth of experience. Ultimately, the number of years and even the number of posts are irrelevant. What counts is *how much you've learned.*]

As well as your typical rate for a 500-word post, I wanted to find out freelance bloggers' typical hourly rate (on gigs that actually pay by the hour, rather than the hourly equivalent rate you make on gigs that pay by some other unit). There's a big debate about whether freelancers should ever work on an hourly rate project. I'm going to ignore that debate for now, other than to say I'll take a good gig no matter what units it pays in.

Moving on, here are the answers to my question, "What's your typical rate on gigs that pay by the hour?"



**Typical \$US rate paid by the hour versus percentage of freelance bloggers**

OK, let's break this down in English as well as pictures:

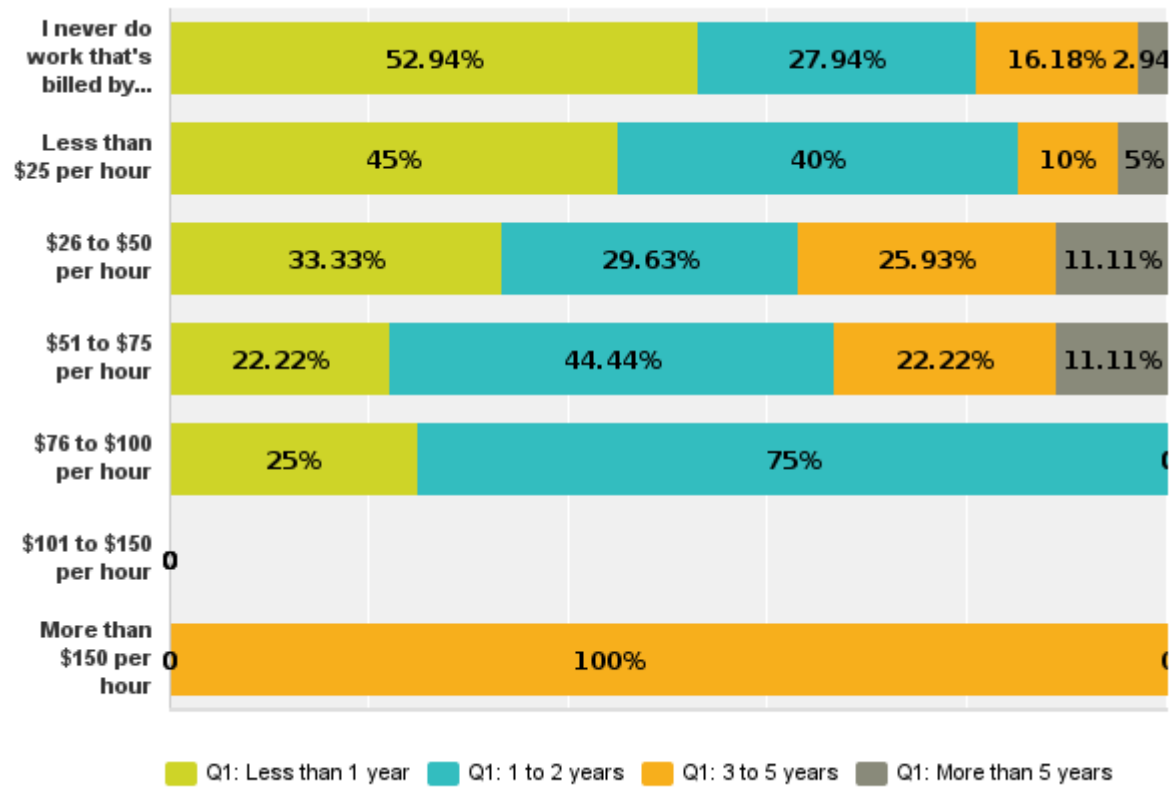
- More than half of freelance bloggers (53%) simply don't work on projects that pay by the hour.
- Of those who *do* work on hourly rate projects, almost two-thirds charge more than \$25 per hour.
- Roughly 1 in 5 freelance bloggers working for an hourly rate charge higher than \$50 per hour.

As usual, I was curious to find out whether your typical hourly rate is related to your freelance blogging experience or not, so I created another chart that compares typical hourly rates with years of experience. You can check it out on the next page.

The first thing I noticed on this chart is that less experienced bloggers are more likely to say they *never* work for an hourly rate. I don't know if that's because they've been told it's a bad idea, or because they work for clients that would never trust a freelance blogger to track her own time accurately and honestly.

Here are the other two main points you can draw from comparing hourly rate to experience:

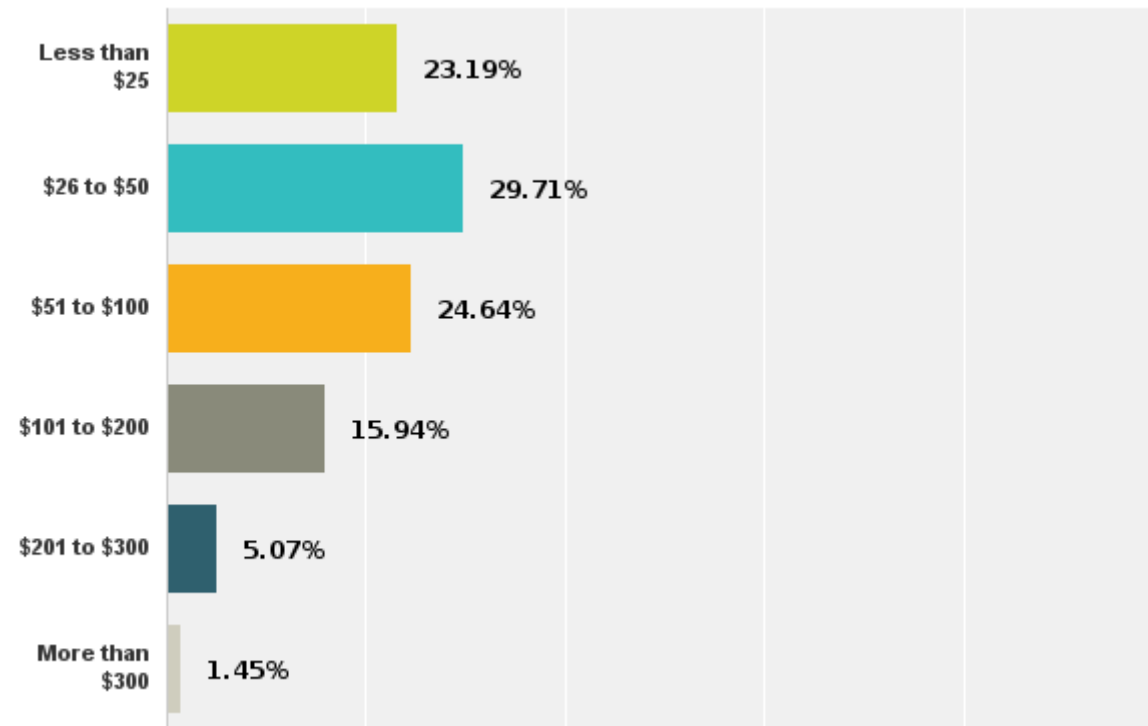
- Bloggers with less than a year's experience are the most likely to charge an hourly rate of \$50 or less, though some report typical hourly rates of up to \$100.
- Only bloggers with more than 3 years of experience report typically charging more than \$100 per hour.



Typical \$US rate paid by the hour versus length of freelance blogging experience

## The High End of the Market

Here's where this all gets interesting. I asked, "What's the *most* you've earned for 500 words in 2013?" and this is what you told me:



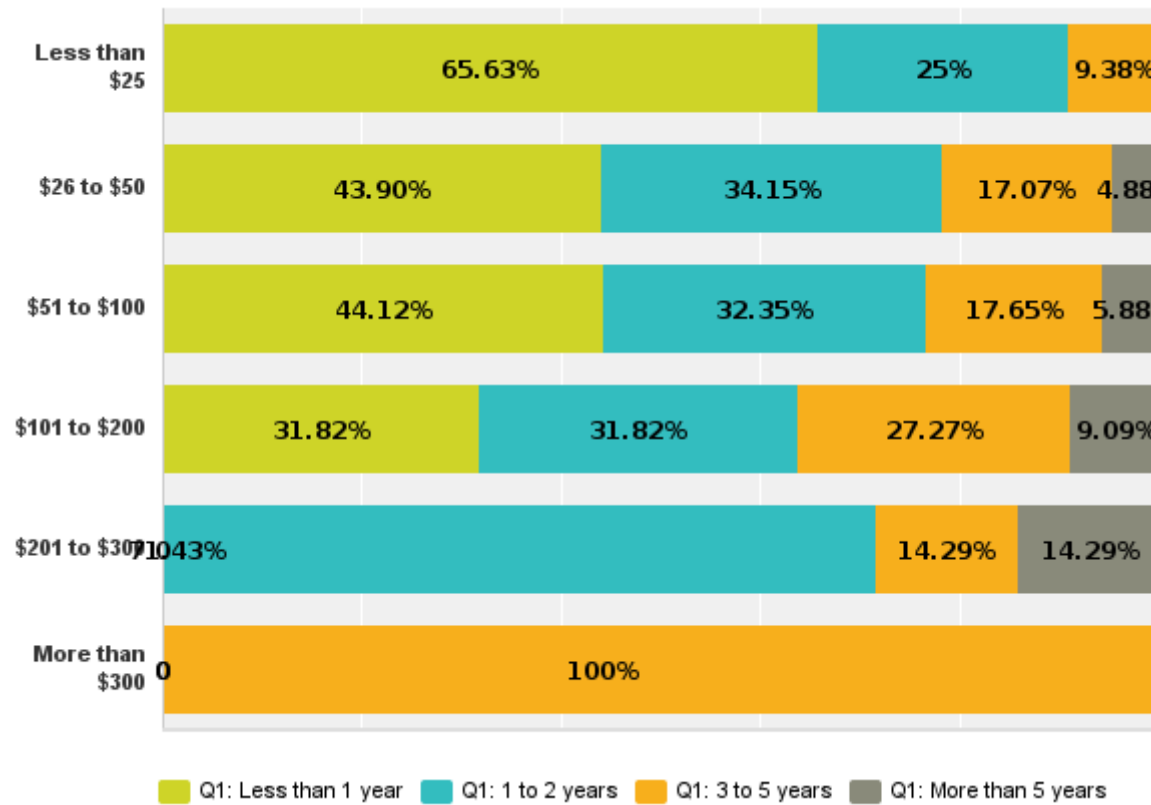
Highest \$US rate per 500 words versus percentage of freelance bloggers

Comparing this to the lowest rates per 500 words that we looked at earlier lets us see the full range of pay rates an individual blogger might work with. I won't stuff all the comparison charts in here, so if you really want to see the full set just email me and ask!

Here's how the different ranges of highest and lowest blogging rates break down:

- It's reassuring to see that **most freelance bloggers can exceed \$25 per post**, because two thirds of the bloggers whose lowest rate was below \$25 for 500 words also have higher paying gigs.
- More than a quarter of these "low minimum rate" bloggers have gigs paying over \$51.
- More than one in ten bloggers with a lowest rate below \$25 also have gigs paying over \$100 per post!
- For those who feel they can't get past the \$50 mark, the outlook's even better: three quarters of bloggers with minimum rates between \$25 and \$50 per post report earning higher rates on other gigs.
- **One in three bloggers whose lowest rate is \$26 to \$50 also has gigs at over \$100 per post.**
- Two thirds of freelance bloggers with a minimum rate between \$50 and \$100 per 500-word post have other blogging gigs that pay \$101 or higher.
- **A quarter of bloggers whose minimum rate is \$50 to \$100 also get gigs at more than \$200.**

As always, I wanted to know what difference your level of freelance blogging experience makes to the top rates you can earn, so I also compared the answers for the highest rates to the answers for length of experience.



**Highest \$US rate per 500 words versus length of freelance blogging experience**

OK, let's take a look at this in more detail. This is the data that tells you what your future looks like in terms of top rates as your experience increases.



- The first thing you can see here is that two thirds (66%) of the freelance bloggers who never made more than \$25 per post in 2012 or 2013 are still in their first year of business.
- They could probably demand higher rates much sooner than they think, because other freelance bloggers with less than a year's experience earn as much as \$200 for a 500 word post!
- But 1 in 10 of the lowest-paid bloggers has 3 or more years of paid blogging experience. People, I'm deeply concerned that you're not reaching your earning potential. It's time to [give yourself a raise](#).
- **Freelance bloggers with more than one year's experience earn up to \$300 per post.**
- Only bloggers with 3 or more years of experience report earning more than \$300 per 500 words.

This is all very encouraging to me. I hope it is to you, too.

Even as an inexperienced blogger, there's no need for you to skulk at the bottom of the career ladder working for low pay—start charging an amount that will support your overhead costs and still pay you a reasonable wage after tax and insurance.

## The Ultimate Rate-Setting Table for Freelance Bloggers

This is the part you've been waiting for: where I tell you what you should charge and instantly make the whole rate-setting question easier for you.

Oh, but there are so many variables, so many [extras you can charge for](#), so many things I don't know about your precise situation... and because of that, **most people will take the wise path of refusing to lay down price guidelines for you.**

**Screw that.** If you want me to tell you what I think is a fair price, then I'll tell you.

Behold my Ultimate Rate-Setting Table for freelance bloggers of all levels.

	RATE PER 500 WORDS		RATE PER WORD	
	Generalist topic	Specialist topic	Generalist topic	Specialist topic
<b>Inexperienced</b>	\$50	\$100	10 cents	20 cents
<b>Some experience</b>	\$100	\$200	20 cents	40 cents
<b>Experienced</b>	\$150	\$300	30 cents	60 cents

Here's how to use the table:

1. These are your *minimum* rates if you're already at roughly the pay rate the table indicates.
2. If you haven't reached the rate shown for your experience level, then let these be your *target* rates.
3. Once you get your target rate most of the time, make your target the next row down the table instead.
4. Repeat until you reach \$300+ per post, or until you're happy with your income.

If you struggle to find work at these rates, there are only 2 possibilities: either you don't know where and how to [get high-paying clients](#), or you need to [raise your blogging standard](#).

One last thing: **if you found this useful, share it**. There are so many bloggers with no idea how much money they're missing — pass this on and help them out. [Tweet it by clicking here](#).



Thank you. Now don't be a stranger. I'm excited to watch your rates keep on rising.

*Sophie Lizard*

*BeAFreelanceBlogger.com*