Sample Policy

How we decide who gets a TikTok Shop sample, follow up with the creators who have one and review what each sample returned.

A sample that gets no post usually went wrong in one of three places. It was approved against rules nobody had written down, nobody followed up once it landed, or nobody looked at what the samples returned. This policy sets one job, one owner and one rhythm for each of those, so a quiet creator is a decision and not a surprise.

Three jobs

Approve

One criteria card per product, versioned, with an approver and a backup. Every request is decided with a reason.

Follow up

A brief on delivery, a personal nudge at day 7 and day 14, and a stop at day 21.

Review

Each month, orders per sample, creators with no sale and wasted sample cost, then one change to the card.

Six checks

If one of these is open, fix it before the next batch of samples.

- [ ] **Criteria card**
  One written card per product with a version, a date, an approver and a backup. Criteria never live only in chat.
- [ ] **Queue**
  Decided every day, expiring soonest first. The backup clears it at over 50 pending or any request 4 days old.
- [ ] **Follow-up**
  A personal nudge at day 7 and day 14 with the winning format attached, and a stop at day 21.
- [ ] **Stock**
  The product has stock and is not faulty or expiring. A weekly cap keeps hero and test products in balance.
- [ ] **Delivery**
  Community invite sent, the brief sent automatically on delivery and the Spark authorisation requested with the sample.
- [ ] **Payback review**
  Monthly, with one logged change to the card.

The criteria card

One card per product, agreed with the client approver before the first outreach and updated after each monthly review. Every criterion must pass. We never approve on a creator score from a tool alone.

#	Criterion	The rule on the card
1	GMV, last 30 days	Over the floor set for this product.
2	Niche and brand fit	Niches that fit are listed, and niches that do not.
3	Content quality	The product shown in use. No hauls, unboxing-only or two-second videos.
4	Post rate on past samples	75% or more.
5	One SKU per creator	More only for proven sellers, with account-owner sign-off.
6	Lists	Not on the do-not-sample list, not retained by a competitor, not AI-generated content.
7	Stock	Stock check passed. Product not faulty or expiring.
8	Restricted category	Whitelisting on file before any sample.
9	Selection	On audience data (country, age, gender), never on ethnicity or health condition.

Limits and decline codes

Limit or code	What it means
Daily approval quota and weekly cap	Set per product, with hero and test products balanced.
Backup approver	Clears the queue the same day if pending requests pass 50 or any request is 4 days old.
Outreach pause	New outreach pauses when pending passes a level set on the card.
D1 to D6	D1 GMV under the floor. D2 off-niche or poor content. D3 low post rate. D4 multi-SKU request. D5 do-not-sample list or competitor-retained. D6 no stock to sample.

Every request is decided with a reason code, expiring soonest first, and nothing expires unreviewed. The Lab's request scorer applies the card to one request.

> **In one client shop, requests per 1,000 invites fell from 16.8 in April to 1.7 in June 2026.** Approvals had dropped to 7 to 12% and pending requests had reached 300 to 580. We read it as outreach running ahead of approvals, so the card sets a pause level. In another account the GMV floor changed 8 times in 4 weeks because it was set in chat.

After approval

A fixed rhythm, so every creator holding a sample gets the same follow-up and a quiet creator reaches a decision.

When	What happens
Approved	Community invite sent. The brief goes out automatically on delivery. Spark authorisation is requested with the sample.
Day 7	A personal message to every creator who has the product and has not posted, with the winning format attached.
Day 14	A second nudge. A creator with a sample for 14 days and no post is in the "dropping off" group.
Day 21	Stop chasing and log it. The miss counts against their post rate on any future request.

Creator groups we act on weekly

Group	Rule	Action
Dropping off	Sample delivered, no post after 14 days	Second nudge at day 14, stop at day 21
Stop	Mostly hauls, or under 1% click-through across two posts	No more samples, added to the do-not-sample list

Worked chase

The Lab's chase planner on six example creators.

Creator	Days since delivery	What the planner says
@creator_one, no post	3	Waiting. Nudge 1 on day 7.
@creator_two, no post	9	Send nudge 1 now if it has not gone.
@creator_three, no post	16	Send nudge 2 now. Stop on day 21.
@creator_four, no post	24	Stop and log as not posted.
@creator_five and @creator_six, posted	24 and 30	No chase.

Of the three samples delivered 21 or more days ago, two posted, which is 66.7% against a target of 75% or more.

Targets. 75% or more of sampled creators posting within 21 days, and a median of under 7 days from delivery to first post.

> **Samples first does not suit every shop.** A new shop that creators do not yet trust, and good creators who will not take a sample, may need paying upfront. Who gets a sample and who gets paid are separate decisions.

The monthly payback review

Once a month, for each product, we read what the samples returned and change one criterion on the card. The new version is logged with the date and the reason, so the next review shows whether the change worked.

Measure	Worked example	How it is worked out
Sample spend	£600.00	80 samples at £7.50 each, product and postage
Sample-to-post rate	65%	52 sampled creators posted within 21 days, against a target of 75% or more
Orders per sample	2.4	190 orders from sampled creators divided by 80 samples
GMV per sample	£53.75	£4,300 divided by 80
Sampled creators with no sale	70%	56 of the 80 samples went to creators with no sale (24 had one)
Wasted sample cost	£420.00	56 samples at £7.50
Cost per creator with a sale	£25.00	£600 divided by 24
Margin back per £1 of samples	£2.15	£4,300 at a 30% margin is £1,290, divided by £600
Top 3 creators' share of GMV	60.5%	£2,600 of £4,300. We watch that it does not rise

The Lab's example values, not a client's. The 30% margin is an example, so use your own after product cost, fees and fulfilment. The sum counts the month's sales from sampled creators only, so it leaves out later sales from the same creators and any ad boosts.

> **More samples did not mean more sales.** In another client shop's data over 51 weeks, samples shipped, invites sent and videos posted barely tracked sales from week to week (a correlation of 0.04 to 0.10). GMV per sample stayed at about £20 whether sampling was high volume or selective.

Reading the review

- Sample-to-post under 75% points to criterion 4 on the card and the nudges at day 7 and day 14.
- A high share of sampled creators with no sale points to the GMV floor, niche fit and content quality criteria.
- A rising top-creator share points to a few creators carrying the programme. Look at ongoing deals for those creators, and at what the rest need.

Templates

All 8 templates, with fill-in fields, are in the Lab.

Sample criteria card

Sample criteria card, [product]
Version v1, [version date]. Approver [approver].
Backup [backup].
Every criterion must pass.
1. GMV in the last 30 days over £[floor]
2. Niche and brand fit
3. Content quality
4. Post rate on samples 75% or more
...
Never approve on a score alone.

Daily shortlist to the client approver

[n] sample requests for [product] are waiting.
Against criteria card v[version], [n] pass and [n] fail.
The ones that pass are below, expiring soonest first.
Please decide within 24 hours, or tell us in writing who decides for you.

Day 7 nudge

Hi [creator name], hope you're enjoying the [product]. This is the video format that's selling best right now, [format link]. Could you post yours by [post by date]? If anything is stopping you, tell me and I'll help.

Day 14 second nudge

Hi [creator name], checking in on the [product]. The brief is here, [brief link]. If you can post by [post by date], I'll look out for it. If it isn't the right fit, tell me and I'll close it off here.

What goes wrong

- Criteria set in chat, so the floor changes week to week.
- Pending requests building up while outreach carries on.
- A sample delivered with no brief and no follow-up until the monthly report.
- No review of what the samples returned, so nothing on the card ever changes.

Want it run for you?

Pear is a UK TikTok Shop agency. We run sample approval, creator follow-up and the monthly payback review for brands, with a named approver and a backup on every account.

Book 30 minutes with Tom, our founder, at calendly.com/tom-peargrowth/30min

General guidance from how Pear runs TikTok Shop for UK brands. Figures are from Pear client shops, anonymised, or are the Lab's own worked examples. Results depend on your products, creators and margin. Pear Growth Ltd, peargrowth.com.