**Mechanical Turk**  
  
Ever wondered how you could make some extra dollars in your spare hours? Mechanical Turk offers you just that.

This website is owned by Amazon, the online marketing giant. Mturk.com displays thousands of HITs (Human Intelligence Tasks) on its pages. These tasks range from simple to complex and the payment for doing them also ranges from a few cents up to even tens of dollars. The simpler tasks can involve taking a survey or writing a few paragraphs on a given subject or commenting on a particular forum. The more complex ones can require some web design or writing entire reports or doing some market research. There are also audio transcription jobs that can fetch you a few dollars for transcribing 5-10 minutes long audio clips into text.

Mturk is a great way to train up for more specialized online jobs. If you start writing a few 100 or 200 word articles here, you can gain the skills and confidence to take up larger freelance writing assignments on sites like ODesk, Elance and GetAFreelancer, which we will discuss in the next chapters.

If you get the hang of audio transcription and become reasonably accurate and fast enough, you can eventually move on to fulltime medical or legal transcription which is high paying fields. You have to train up for these specialized areas, but Mechanical Turk gives you a good start with simple tasks.

Within a few hours or days, your work is checked and payment is credited to your Mturk account. The trick is to be on the lookout for high paying tasks, where for example you earn a couple of dollars for a survey which takes only a few minutes. Or writing a 400 word article on Tourism in Iceland which earns you 3 dollars! Even if you are not familiar with the topic, you can quickly read up on the Net and make a fairly decent and factual presentation. After all that’s what many journalists and media writers are doing today!

Payments are made by checks in local currency (for certain countries) or transferred to your bank account, or you can use the money in your account to purchase goods from Amazon.com.

A good way to get started on thousands of easy tasks and train up for bigger things to come! Don’t let a spare hour go to waste. Become a Turker today. And don’t forget to browse a good Turker forum for the latest buzz and loads of good and useful advice.