

TL;DR

Shorts are great top-of-funnel, but YouTube explicitly says URLs in Shorts descriptions/comments aren't clickable. Build a link funnel that uses native clickable surfaces: end screens, info cards (if eligible), related-video links, and channel profile links.

1 Know what's clickable (official)

YouTube Help explicitly notes:

- **URLs placed in Shorts comments and Shorts descriptions are non-clickable** (anti-spam measure).
- In the "clickable links overview", YouTube marks **end screens** as clickable, and **related videos in Shorts** as a clickable link surface.
- YouTube also notes: to add clickable external links, you must enable your channel's access to **advanced features**.

2 End screens: your default "bottom CTA"

Per YouTube Help:

- End screens are added to the **last 5–20 seconds** of a video.
- The video must be **at least 25 seconds** long.
- You can add **up to four elements** for standard **16:9** (other aspect ratios may have a lower limit).

Instavar tactic: Write your CTA into the script so the end screen isn't a surprise. Viewers should already know what to click.

3 Info cards: your "mid-video CTA" (and external links)

Per YouTube Help:

- Info cards can feature a **video, playlist, channel, or link**.
- YouTube notes you can add **up to 5 cards** to one video.

- For **external website links**, YouTube states the “Link” card requires being in the **YouTube Partner Program**, and your linked site must comply with policies (Community Guidelines and Terms).

Instavar tactic: Use one card early (set expectation), and one card late (capture intent).

4 A simple Shorts Long-form Lead funnel

Step 1: Shorts as the “hook”

- Publish Shorts that earn attention and qualify intent.
- Don’t rely on raw URLs in the Short’s description/comments (non-clickable).

Step 2: Use a clickable bridge

Pick one (based on your channel setup):

- **Related video link in Shorts** send viewers to a long-form “explainer” video.
- **Channel profile link** send viewers to the canonical landing page.

Step 3: Close with end screens and/or cards

- End screen: “watch next” + “subscribe” is a clean baseline.
- If eligible, add an external link info card to the offer page.

5 Official references

- YouTube Help - Sharing links with your audiences (clickable vs non-clickable): <https://support.google.com/youtube/answer/13748639?hl=en>
- YouTube Help - Add end screens to videos (timing + requirements): <https://support.google.com/youtube/answer/6388789?hl=en>
- YouTube Help - Add info cards to videos (card types + limits): <https://support.google.com/youtube/answer/6140493?hl=en&co=GENIE.Platform%3DDesktop>