

Business Plan Checklist

A section-by-section checklist of everything a complete business plan should include.

Executive summary

- State what the business does in one or two sentences.
- Summarize the problem you solve and for whom.
- Highlight your offer and what makes it different.
- Note key milestones, traction or progress so far.
- Include headline financials and any funding you seek.
- Keep it to one or two pages and write it last.

Company overview

- Describe your mission and the problem behind the business.
- State your legal structure and ownership.
Structure and tax treatment vary by jurisdiction — confirm with your official authority.
- Note your location and how you operate.
- Summarize the history and current stage of the business.
- List short and long-term goals with timelines.

Market analysis

- Define your target customers and their key needs.
- Estimate the size and growth of your market.
- Profile your main competitors and their strengths.
- Explain your competitive advantage and positioning.
- Identify relevant trends, risks and barriers to entry.
- Back up claims with credible data and sources.

Product or service

- Describe what you sell and the value it delivers.
- Explain how it works and the customer experience.
- State your pricing and the reasoning behind it.
- Note your stage of development or readiness.
- Outline future products or features on your roadmap.
- Mention any intellectual property or protection.

Marketing and sales

- Define your brand positioning and core message.
- List the channels you will use to reach customers.
- Describe your sales process from lead to purchase.
- Estimate your cost to acquire a customer.
- Set a marketing budget and expected results.
- Explain how you will retain and grow customers.

Operations and team

- Describe your day-to-day operations and workflow.

- List key suppliers, partners and facilities.
- Outline the technology and systems you rely on.
- Introduce the founding team and key roles.
- Identify skill gaps and your plan to fill them.
- Note any advisors or board members.

Financial plan

- Provide a sales forecast for the next one to three years.
- Detail startup costs and ongoing expenses.
- Include a profit and loss projection.
- Include a cash flow projection.
- State funding needs and how you will use the money.
- List the assumptions behind your numbers.

Have a professional review projections; reporting rules vary by jurisdiction.