

# Business Startup Checklist

A step-by-step checklist to start a business from idea validation through launch.

## Validate your idea

- Write a one-sentence description of the problem your business solves.
- Define your target customer and where they currently look for solutions.
- Interview at least 10 potential customers about their pain points.  
*Ask about current behavior, not hypothetical interest.*
- Research direct and indirect competitors and note their pricing.
- Test demand with a landing page, pre-orders or a small pilot offer.
- Confirm customers are willing to pay your intended price.
- Decide whether the idea is worth pursuing based on the evidence.

## Plan the business

- Set a clear goal and timeline for your first year.
- Choose a business model and how you will make money.
- Estimate startup costs and ongoing monthly expenses.
- Forecast realistic revenue for your first 6 to 12 months.
- Calculate how much funding you need before you break even.
- Decide how you will fund the business — savings, loan or investment.
- Write a short business plan capturing the above decisions.

## Handle legal and registration

- Choose a legal structure such as sole trader, partnership or company.  
*Requirements and tax treatment vary by country and state — check your official government authority.*
- Pick a business name and confirm it is available to use.
- Register the business with the relevant government authority.
- Apply for a tax identification number such as an EIN.  
*Names differ by jurisdiction; confirm the correct registration locally.*
- Identify and apply for any required licenses and permits.
- Put key agreements in writing, including any co-founder terms.
- Arrange appropriate business insurance for your activity.

## Set up operations and finances

- Open a dedicated business bank account.
- Set up bookkeeping or accounting software from day one.
- Choose how you will accept payments from customers.
- Secure your domain name and core social media handles.
- Build a simple website or landing page that explains your offer.
- Set up a business email and basic communication tools.
- Source any suppliers, tools or equipment you need to operate.

## Build your brand and offer

- Design a simple logo and choose your brand colors.
- Write clear messaging that explains who you help and how.

- Finalize your product or service and set your prices.
- Create the materials customers need to buy, such as a menu or catalog.
- Prepare onboarding or delivery steps for your first customers.
- Set up a way to collect customer feedback and reviews.

### **Launch and grow**

- Choose a launch date and prepare an announcement.
- Tell your existing network and ask them to spread the word.
- Run an opening offer or promotion to attract first customers.
- Make your first sale and confirm the full process works smoothly.
- Track key numbers such as sales, costs and customer feedback.
- Review what worked, fix what didn't, and plan your next month.