

Business Start-up Checklist

- Choose a business based on your skills and interests
- Research the business idea
 - What will you sell
 - Is it legal
 - Who will buy it and how often
 - Are you willing to do what it takes to sell the product
 - What will it cost to produce, advertise, sell & deliver
 - With what laws will you have to comply
 - Can you make a profit
 - How long will it take to make a profit
- Write a business plan and marketing plan
- Choose a business name
- Verify right to use the name
- See if the business name is available as a domain name (check at Register.com)
- Register the business name and get a business certificate
- Register your domain name even if you aren't ready to use it yet
- Choose a location for the business or make space in the house for it
- Check zoning laws
- File partnership or corporate papers
- Get any required business licenses or permits
- Reserve your corporate name if you will be incorporating
- Register or reserve state or federal trademark
- Register copyrights
- Apply for patent if you will be marketing an invention
- Order any required notices (advertisements you have to place) of your intent to do business in the community
- Have business phone or extra residential phone lines installed
- Check into business insurance needs
- Find out about health insurance if you will not have coverage under a spouse
- Get adequate business insurance or a business rider to a homeowner's policy Send out publicity releases
- Apply for sales tax number if needed
- Get tax information such as record keeping requirements, information on withholding taxes if you will have employees, information on hiring independent contractors, facts about estimating taxes, forms of organization, etc.
- Call Department of Labor to determine labor laws if you have employees.
- Apply for employee identification number if you will have employees
- Find out about workers' compensation if you will have employees
- Open a bank account for the business
- Have business cards and stationery printed
- Purchase equipment or supplies
- Order inventory

- Order signage
- Order fixtures
- Get an email address
- Find a web hosting company
- Get your web site set up
- Have sales literature prepared
- Call for information about Yellow Pages advertising.
- Place advertising in newspapers or other media if yours is the type of business that will benefit from paid advertising