

Small Business Startup Checklist

By following this checklist, you'll cover the key steps needed to get your business off the ground in Alberta. For personalized guidance and expert advice, don't hesitate to **book a free appointment with a Business Link advisor**. We're here to help you every step of the way.

- ☐ Decide on your business idea
- ☐ Assess whether you need additional education, experience, or certifications
- ☐ Conduct basic research to evaluate your business idea
- ☐ Conduct primary and/or secondary market research (Business Link can help you!)
- ☐ Outline your business goals, strategy, target market, operations, and financial projections
- ☐ Seek professional guidance from a business advisor or accountant
- ☐ Develop a budget
- ☐ Determine how much of your own money you'll invest and how much additional funding you may need
- ☐ Explore financing options such as loans, investors, or specialized financing programs
- ☐ Choose your business structure (sole proprietorship, partnership, corporation)
- ☐ Register your business name and structure
- ☐ Obtain a Federal Business Number (BN) and other necessary accounts with the CRA (GST/HST, payroll, corporate tax, etc.)
- ☐ Decide on your business location (home-based, retail/commercial, industrial)
- ☐ Ensure location compliance with zoning, bylaw, and permit requirements
- ☐ Apply for business licenses and permits (municipal, provincial, federal, industry-specific)
- ☐ Ensure compliance with all applicable bylaws and regulations
- ☐ Learn about tax obligations and eligible expenses
- ☐ Consult with an accountant and choose bookkeeping/accounting software
- ☐ Meet with a lawyer to address legal risks, incorporation, leases, contracts, etc.
- ☐ Set up a business bank account
- ☐ Look into business insurance
- ☐ Consider intellectual property protection (patents, trademarks, copyrights, trade secrets)
- ☐ Start building your brand with a logo, website, business cards, and signage
- ☐ Understand Alberta's employment standards if hiring employees
- ☐ Set up payroll and WCB accounts as needed
- ☐ Decide on payment methods and systems for your business
- ☐ Purchase necessary equipment, inventory, and office supplies
- ☐ Develop internal systems for record-keeping and day-to-day operations
- ☐ Consider software tools to streamline processes (e.g., CRM tools)