

FOUNDER LAUNCH KIT

# Start a Cleaning Business Checklist

Everything you need to go from idea to your first paying client, in order. Work through each phase top to bottom and check off every box. Most people complete this in two to four weeks.

YOUR BUSINESS NAME

TARGET LAUNCH DATE

SERVICE AREA

## 1 Plan

WEEK 1

- Decide residential vs commercial (or which to start with)
- Pick your niche: standard, deep clean, move-out, office, Airbnb turnover, eco-friendly
- Research 5 to 10 local competitors: services, pricing, reviews
- Identify one service gap you can fill
- Write a one-page business plan
- Set a startup budget (\$300 to \$2,000 for solo residential)
- Set a target monthly income and clients needed to hit it

## 2 Make it legal

WEEK 2

- Choose and check availability of your business name
- Pick a structure: sole proprietor to start, LLC for liability protection
- Register your business with your state
- File a DBA if using a trade name
- Get a free EIN from the IRS (irs.gov, never pay a third party)
- Open a separate business bank account
- Get your city or county business license
- Confirm specialty rules in your state (chemicals, janitorial registration)
- Buy general liability insurance (\$500K to \$2M, ~\$400 to \$1,200/yr)
- Get bonded if pursuing commercial contracts
- Set reminders 30 and 7 days before license/insurance renewals

## 3 Get equipped

WEEK 2-3

- Vacuum cleaner
- Mop, bucket, and a stack of microfiber cloths
- All-purpose cleaner, disinfectant, glass and bathroom cleaner
- Scrub brushes and sponges
- Gloves and protective gear (masks for heavy-duty jobs)
- Caddy or cart to carry supplies
- Decide on eco-friendly products if your market wants them
- Sort out storage and transport for supplies

## 4 Set your prices

WEEK 3

- Choose a pricing model: hourly, per sq ft, flat per job, or monthly contract
- Research local rates so you price in the right range
- Calculate your cost per job (supplies, travel, time)
- Add a real profit margin (aim for 20%+ as a lean solo operator)
- Write down standard rates so you quote consistently
- Build at least one recurring (weekly or biweekly) package

## 5 Get your first clients

WEEK 3-4

- Choose a clear business name and order business cards
- Set up a free Google Business Profile with photos
- Build a simple one-page website
- Tell friends, family, neighbors, and former coworkers you are open
- Post in local Facebook groups and Nextdoor
- Hand out flyers or door hangers in target neighborhoods
- Complete first jobs and take before-and-after photos
- Ask every client for a Google review
- Set up a referral offer (refer a friend, get a discount)

## 6 Run and grow

ONGOING

- Set up simple accounting and track every expense for deductions
- Send professional invoices and accept card or online payments
- Use software to schedule jobs, store addresses and notes, track each job
- Keep a client history with preferences and recurring dates
- Review your numbers monthly (revenue, costs, margin)
- Hire your first cleaner when booked weeks out and turning down work
- Train new hires on your standards and checklists

**Start before you feel ready.** The fastest way to learn this business is to do your first job. Get licensed and insured, line up one client, and go. You can refine everything else as paying work comes in.

OWNER SIGNATURE

DATE LAUNCHED

### Skip the admin headaches as you grow.

Tofu lets you schedule jobs, attach job photos, keep client history, and get paid, all from your phone.

[tofu.com](https://tofu.com) →