Gutter Cleaning Business Startup Checklist

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Key takeaways

- Price per linear foot, with more for upper stories and heavy debris
- Ladder safety and liability insurance are non-negotiable
- Sell spring + fall plans so customers book twice a year
- Gutter guard installs are a high-value add-on

1. Plan

- [ ] Choose your niche and the services you'll offer first
- [ ] Define your service area (keep it tight to cut drive time)
- [ ] Write a one-page plan: who, where, what you charge, how you'll get 10 clients
- [ ] Check local competitors' services and prices

2. Register & insure

- [ ] Pick a business name and check your state registry, trademarks and the .com domain
- [ ] Choose a structure (sole proprietor or LLC)
- [ ] Get a free EIN from the IRS (irs.gov)
- [ ] Check city/county business license requirements
- [ ] Open a separate business bank account
- [ ] Get general liability insurance before your first paid job
- [ ] Ladder falls are the biggest risk, so carry general liability insurance and follow ladder safety rules (stable footing, stabilizers, three points of contact). Check whether your state requires a contractor license for gutter installation or repairs above a certain job value. Plain cleaning usually only needs a general business license.

3. Equipment

- [ ] Extension ladder with a stabilizer (standoff)
- [ ] Gutter scoop and buckets or tarps
- [ ] Leaf blower with a gutter attachment kit
- [ ] Garden hose with a gutter wand to flush downspouts
- [ ] Gloves, safety glasses and non-slip shoes
- [ ] Plumber's snake for stubborn downspout clogs

4. Pricing

- [ ] Track your real job times on your first jobs
- [ ] Set a target hourly rate that covers pay, taxes, insurance, fuel and admin time

- [ ] Create a simple price menu and a minimum charge
- [ ] Use estimate and invoice templates for every quote
- [ ] Check your numbers with the free calculator on ServiceStartKit.com

5. Get online

- [ ] Register a short domain and set up a professional email
- [ ] Launch a 4-page website: home, services & prices, reviews/photos, contact
- [ ] Create a Google Business Profile with photos and your service area

6. First clients

- [ ] Door hangers on streets with mature trees in early fall
- [ ] Offer a spring + fall plan to every customer at the first visit
- [ ] Partner with roofers, window cleaners and handymen for referrals
- [ ] Google Business Profile with before/after photos of gutters
- [ ] Post in neighborhood Facebook groups and Nextdoor after storms
- [ ] Ask every happy client for a review and a referral

7. Money

- [ ] Invoice every job and log every expense
- [ ] Keep a mileage log for business driving
- [ ] Set money aside for taxes each month
- [ ] Review prices at least once a year

General information, not legal, tax or insurance advice. Rules vary by state and city.