Pressure Washing Business Startup Checklist

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Key takeaways

- Start with driveways and sidewalks, then add soft washing for houses
- Never use high pressure on siding: house washing uses low-pressure soft washing
- Check local wastewater runoff rules, especially for commercial jobs
- Price by square foot with a minimum charge and bundle services

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
- [ ] Many cities and states regulate wastewater runoff into storm drains, especially for commercial jobs. Check local rules and use water reclamation where required. Liability insurance is essential, since high pressure can damage siding, windows and paint.

3. Equipment

- [ ] Gas pressure washer (look at GPM and PSI ratings)
- [ ] Surface cleaner for flat concrete
- [ ] Soft wash system or downstream injector
- [ ] Hoses, quick connects and assorted nozzle tips
- [ ] Water tank if sites lack water access
- [ ] Eye protection, gloves and non-slip boots

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

- [ ] Post before/after photos and short videos on Facebook, Instagram and Nextdoor
- [ ] Google Business Profile with photos of every job
- [ ] Offer a free driveway strip demo to neighbors of current clients
- [ ] Partner with realtors (pre-listing cleanups) and property managers
- [ ] Seasonal promotions in spring before outdoor season
- [ ] 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.