# Solar Panel Cleaning Business Startup Checklist

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**Key takeaways**

- Clean the way panel manufacturers allow: soft brushes, pure water, no abrasives
- Never do electrical work; that needs a licensed electrician
- Roof safety and fall protection come first
- Sell yearly plans and bird-proofing as an 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
- [ ] Clean only, never touch the wiring: electrical work on a solar system needs a licensed electrician or solar contractor. Read each panel maker's cleaning instructions, since manufacturers such as First Solar ban abrasive cleaners and warn that cleaning against their guidelines can void the warranty. Many recommend soft brushes and low-mineral or deionized water, and discourage pressure washers unless the manual allows them. On roofs, use fall protection: OSHA requires it for employees from 4 or 6 feet up depending on the type of work, and cleaning from the ground with a water-fed pole avoids most of the risk. Carry general liability insurance. Check your startup rules for your state.

## 3. Equipment

- [ ] Water-fed pole with a soft brush head
- [ ] Water purification system (deionized or reverse osmosis) for spot-free rinsing
- [ ] Soft brushes and squeegees: no abrasive pads or metal tools
- [ ] Roof safety: harness, anchors, rope and non-slip footwear
- [ ] Ladders with stabilizers
- [ ] Bird-proofing mesh and fasteners (for the add-on service)

## 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

- [ ] Offer it to every window cleaning and gutter customer who has panels
- [ ] Door hangers on streets where you can see panels on roofs
- [ ] Partner with solar installers and service companies that don't offer cleaning
- [ ] Google Business Profile listing solar panel cleaning and bird-proofing
- [ ] Before/after photos of dirty and clean panels
- [ ] 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