Window Cleaning Business Startup Checklist

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Key takeaways

- Storefront routes are the fastest way to recurring income
- Use squeegees, strip washers and a water-fed pole for exteriors
- Follow ladder safety and avoid high-rise work without training
- Price per window or per visit with a minimum charge

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
- [ ] General liability insurance is essential, since you work around glass and on ladders. Follow ladder safety rules, and avoid high-rise work until you have proper training and equipment. Check whether your city requires a general business license.

3. Equipment

- [ ] Squeegees and channels in a few sizes
- [ ] Strip washers (scrubbers) and a belt bucket
- [ ] Extension poles
- [ ] Water-fed pole with a purification system (for exterior work)
- [ ] Sturdy ladders and ladder stabilizers
- [ ] Microfiber towels, scrapers and safety gear

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

- [ ] Walk into storefronts on one street and offer a free first clean
- [ ] Google Business Profile with sparkling before/after photos
- [ ] Door hangers in neighborhoods with large windows
- [ ] Offer spring and fall seasonal packages
- [ ] Ask happy clients to refer neighbors
- [ ] 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.