



## **How to Start a Gardening Business (Checklist)**

### **1. Is gardening right for you?**

- Understand the business and the dangers involved.
- Start your own garden and see if you have the necessary skills.
- Volunteer to work on the gardens of friends and family.
- Volunteer or intern with a professional gardener or landscaper.

### **2. Write a business plan.**

- Outline the main structure for your business, goals, objectives, mission statement, and keys to success.
- Summarize your start-up costs and equipment needs.
- Determine the products and services you will offer and how much you will charge.
- Research the market and your target clients.
- Plan your financial strategy with outlines of your start-up costs and projected profits and losses.
- Outline your marketing strategy.

### **3. Take care of the legal requirements.**

- Get a business account and credit card.
- Choose a legal structure.
- Register for taxes and receive your EIN.
- Check and apply for any town, county, and state licensing and insurance requirements.
- Check and apply for the pesticide charter, if appropriate.

#### **4. Outline your finances.**

- Do you want to get additional training or qualifications?
- Budget for tools and travel needs.
- Research top suppliers and budget for inventory.
- Look for office and/or storage space.
- Budget for business licenses and insurance costs.
- Set aside funds for marketing needs.

#### **5. Buy business insurance (not all of the following are necessary).**

- Business insurance.
- Vehicle insurance.
- General liability insurance.
- Public liability insurance.
- Workers' compensation.
- Equipment insurance.
- Income protection insurance.
- Critical illness insurance.
- Business life insurance.

#### **6. Create a website and business portfolio.**

- Build a great website.
- Build a gardening portfolio.

#### **7. Market your business.**

- Determine your target audience.
- Design a creative logo.
- Advertise on social media with links to your website.
- Create a mailing list.
- Use promotional activities.
- Use word-of-mouth and door-to-door advertising.

## 8. Set your rates.

- Consider hourly versus set rates.
- Consider implementing a minimum call-out charge.
- Research your competitors' rates.
- Build in labor costs.
- Implement invoicing and payment software.