

How to Start a Landscaping Business (Checklist)

- **1. Decide if starting a landscaping business is for you.**
 - a. Evaluate your landscaping skills.
 - b. Consider your design expertise and experience.
 - c. Learn about the responsibilities of a landscaper.

- **2. Do market research of the landscaping industry.**
 - a. Study local landscaping businesses.
 - b. Analyze the demographics of your target market.
 - c. Analyze marketing strategies.
 - e. Determine growth potential.
 - f. Get educated.
 - g. Read books.

- **3. Decide what type of landscaping business you want to open.**
 - a. Evaluate the different types of landscaping businesses.
 - i. Landscaping architecture.
 - ii. Lawn maintenance.
 - iii. Groundskeeping.

- **4. Create a Business Plan.**
 - a. Executive summary.
 - b. Business description.
 - c. Market analysis.
 - d. Organization management.
 - e. Sales strategy.
 - f. Funding needs.
 - g. Financial projections.

- **5. Choose a business name.**
 - a. Research local landscaping business names.
 - b. Register business name with the Secretary of State.
 - c. Conduct a trademark search.
 - d. Trademark business name.

- **6. Choose a legal structure.**
 - a. Research the different business structures.
 - i. Sole Proprietorships.
 - ii. Partnership.
 - iii. Limited Liability Company (LLC).
 - iv. Corporation.

- **7. Obtain applicable licenses and permits.**
 - a. Research the applicable licenses or permits your business needs.
 - i. Contractor license.
 - ii. Commercial and private applicator license.
 - iii. Landscaper license.
 - iv. Employer Identification Number.
 - b. Register for permits with local and state government offices.

- **8. Open a bank account.**
 - a. Evaluate small business bank accounts.
 - b. Meet with different bank consultants and discuss your options.

- **9. Get insurance.**
 - a. Research the different insurances applicable to your specific business.

- **10. Comply with tax regulation.**
 - a. Research the different tax regulations that affect your specific industry.
 - b. Research the tax regulations that affect your business structure.

- **11. Establish an accounting system.**
 - a. Research accounting software.
 - b. Hire an accountant.

- **12. Obtain funding.**
 - a. Attract investors.
 - i. Sell equity in your business.
 - ii. Secure a private loan from friends or family.
 - b. Apply for a loan.
 - i. Meet with a lender.
 - ii. Fill out the application form.
 - iii. Provide collateral and your credit history.
 - iv. Sign a loan agreement after approval.
 - c. Start small.
 - i. Start a small landscaping service and build up capital.

- **13. Find location.**
 - a. Determine if you really need a space.
 - b. Calculate costs.
 - i. Find out what's in your budget.
 - ii. Total utilities.
 - iii. Total technology costs.
 - iv. Total rent and maintenance.
 - c. Shop around.

- **14. Get equipment and supplies.**
 - a. Create a budget for equipment.

- b. Research the costs of equipment and supplies you'll need.
- 15. Hire Employees.**
 - a. Write a job description.
 - b. Post on a job board.
 - c. Review applications and resumes.
 - d. Interview candidates.
 - e. Check references.
 - f. Send a job offer.
 - g. Fill out the mandatory IRS forms.
- 16. Set pricing.**
 - a. Determine going rate.
 - b. Consider traveling expenses.
 - c. Research competitor prices.
- 17. Market your business.**
 - a. Craft your brand.
 - i. Write an elevator pitch.
 - ii. Find out who your customers are.
 - iii. Decide what kind of brand personality you want to have.
 - iv. Determine what you want people to associate your brand with.
 - b. Connect with customers through advertising.
 - i. Set up email marketing software.
 - ii. Set up SMS marketing software.
 - iii. Create social media accounts for your business.
- 18. Set a daily schedule.**
 - a. Work out the time estimations for each service and job.
 - b. Manage employee schedules.