



Create it. Protect it.

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BUSINESS CHECKLIST

	TRADEMARK PROCESS	NOTES
<input type="checkbox"/>	Decide on a word mark, logo, and/or tagline to function as trademark(s) for your business.	Stay flexible until you complete a trademark search clearance.
<input type="checkbox"/>	Conduct a trademark clearance search.	Consider consulting an attorney to assist with the clearance process to avoid a possible rejection from the USPTO office and/or infringement claim. A USPTO examiner compares an applicant's mark against any marks that may be deemed confusingly similar in sight, sound, appearance, or commercial impression in the same or coordinated classifications, or related trade channels.
<input type="checkbox"/>	Once you have cleared the trademark(s), consider buying the domain name and creating social media pages that correspond to the word mark, if desired.	A trademark application becomes public record within a few days and someone else could buy the domain name before you.
<input type="checkbox"/>	File a state and/or federal trademark registration.	Consider consulting an attorney to assist with the legal process. If it is not done correctly and the application is rejected, you will have to start from scratch and pay the USPTO filing fees again.
	ENTITY FORMATION	NOTES
<input type="checkbox"/>	Determine the best entity formation for your business (i.e., LLC, corporation, sole proprietor).	Consider consulting an accountant and/or attorney to advise you on the best entity for your business and to assist with the legal documentation.
<input type="checkbox"/>	File a Fictitious Business Name (FBN) Statement (if needed) and register it with the County.	

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<input type="checkbox"/>	If you have filed a FBN, submit the FBN for publication.	
<input type="checkbox"/>	File for an Employee Identification Number (EIN), if needed.	
<input type="checkbox"/>	Register your business with the city (if needed).	
	FINANCES	NOTES
<input type="checkbox"/>	Determine how to fund your business.	Check to see if you can apply for a grant.
<input type="checkbox"/>	Prepare a budget.	
<input type="checkbox"/>	Open a business bank account.	
<input type="checkbox"/>	Determine the best software to manage your income and expenses.	
<input type="checkbox"/>	Fill out an IRS W-9 form.	
	MARKETING	NOTES
<input type="checkbox"/>	Create a website, or hire a website developer, if needed.	Consider hiring someone to assist with SEO.
<input type="checkbox"/>	Determine the social media platforms that are best to market your products/services (i.e. Facebook, Instagram, LinkedIn, TikTok, Twitter, Pinterest, etc.).	Stay consistent with branding throughout media platforms.
<input type="checkbox"/>	Create a Google Business Page.	
<input type="checkbox"/>	Create a Yelp page.	

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<input type="checkbox"/>	If you have a physical location, create a site map.	
<input type="checkbox"/>	Request reviews when appropriate.	
<input type="checkbox"/>	Join relevant organizations for networking and support.	
<input type="checkbox"/>	Create an email that corresponds to your domain name.	
<input type="checkbox"/>	Draft a business plan.	You can utilize the free Business Plan Template available at askiplaw.com .
<input type="checkbox"/>	Establish a business phone line.	
<input type="checkbox"/>	If you are an active member of your alumni association, consider reaching out to the group to update them on your new business venture.	
<input type="checkbox"/>	Order business cards, if desired.	
<input type="checkbox"/>	Get headshots and/or professional photos of your products for your website and social media platforms.	

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