

Free VENDOR STARTUP CHECKLIST



YOUR STEP-BY-STEP GUIDE TO LAUNCH YOUR FOOD BUSINESS THE RIGHT WAY!



READY TO START YOUR FOOD BUSINESS?

Use this checklist to get clear, stay organized, and build a strong foundation for your food vending journey. One step at a time, you got this!



QUICK TIP

Start legal. Stay safe.
Build your brand.
Grow your business.

1 PLAN YOUR BUSINESS



- Choose your food concept and menu
- Research your target customers
- Define your unique selling point (what makes you stand out?)
- Set your short-term and long-term goals
- Write a simple business plan

2 LEGAL & PERMITS



- Register your business name (LLC, Sole Prop, etc.)
- Get your EIN (free at IRS.gov)
- Apply for your Seller's Permit (CDTFA)
- Check local health department requirements
- Get your Food Handler Card
- Obtain necessary permits for events, pop-ups, or vending
- Keep all documents organized and updated

3 EQUIPMENT & SUPPLIES



- List all equipment you need
- Shop smart (new, used, or lease)
- Invest in quality cooking equipment
- Get essential tools and utensils
- Don't forget storage, coolers, and cleaning supplies
- Always have backup essentials

4 FOOD SAFETY & COMPLIANCE



- Follow all health department guidelines
- Keep your workspace clean and organized
- Store food at proper temperatures
- Label and date all food items
- Have a handwashing station or sanitizer
- Be inspection ready at all times

5 FINANCES & PRICING



- Calculate your startup costs
- Price your menu for profit (not just to cover costs)
- Factor in: ingredients, labor, packaging, fees, and taxes
- Open a separate business bank account
- Track income and expenses from day one

6 BRAND YOUR BUSINESS



- Choose your business name
- Create your logo
- Pick your brand colors and style
- Design your menu
- Create social media pages
- Build a brand people will remember

7 MARKETING & CUSTOMERS



- Tell people what you're cooking and where!
- Use social media consistently
- Take high-quality photos of your food
- Engage with your audience
- Collect reviews and testimonials
- Build an email or text list (over time)

8 EVENT & OPERATION PREP



- Find events, pop-ups, or locations
- Understand event rules and fees
- Plan your prep and cooking schedule
- Pack a day-before checklist
- Arrive early and set up professionally
- Deliver great food and customer service

You Don't Have to Do It Perfect.
JUST START.
Progress over perfection.
Consistency over everything.
YOU'VE GOT THIS!

BEFORE YOU LAUNCH, DOUBLE CHECK:

- All permits are in place
- Menu is finalized and priced for profit
- Equipment is clean and in working order
- You've practiced your menu
- Branding and social pages are ready
- You have a plan for your first event
- You're confident and ready to GLOW!

Let's Build. Brand. Grow.
GLOW!

