Business Start-Up Check List

Starting a business requires hard work and anyone should be very thoughtful before actively pursuing this endeavor. This handbook is designed to aid in starting a business; however, it is only an outline. Undoubtedly, you will run into problems that are not covered. Your other resources could include the Alabama Entrepreneurial Research network (AERN), the Small Business Development Center (SBDC), an attorney, an accountant, friends, and family.

The list below is a checklist when you know you are ready to start your own business. Before you begin doing the things on this checklist, please read the next pages in this handbook, beginning with Ten Steps to Business Success.

With these steps in mind, continue to look at and study the other articles and information in this handbook. Do not underestimate the amount of background work you need to do before you open the doors of your own business.

2. Decide whether you wish to operate as a sole proprietorship, partnership, corporation, or LLC. See Choosing a Legal Structure.
3. Establish a source of adequate and reliable financing.
4. Check zoning ordinances. Contact city hall.
5. Select a suitable location.
6. Retain an attorney and a CPA, if appropriate.
7. Acquire necessary licenses and permits. Contact the Revenue Department.
8. Get tax ID number and forms; follow other tax requirements. See Key Tax Numbers.
9. Choose a record keeping system and method of inventory control. Consult your accountant. See Accounting Primer.
10. Open bank accounts in the name of the business for business use only.
11. Arrange for utilities, telephone, and other services.
12. See an insurance agent. There are ranges of coverage you might not have thought about. See Insurance.