

Checklist for Starting a Bookkeeping Business

Use this checklist as a guide to assist you with starting your own bookkeeping business. Follow along with the article for more specific information and to help you brainstorm. Use the space below to respond to each question and check the box as you complete each step.

Create a Business Plan

What geographic location are you targeting?

What size companies are you targeting?

What niche industries are you targeting?

What types of services will you sell?

Who is your competition?

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- Why are you qualified to pursue this business?

- What do you anticipate your startup costs to be?

Earn Your Certifications

- Do you have a formal education in accounting and bookkeeping? If not, is it important for you to have one?

- What accounting software are you currently proficient in?

- What types of accounting software certifications appeal to you?

- What are the costs and time commitments involved with each of these certifications?

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- Have you thought about tax certification as an Enrolled Agent? If so, is that a service you want to offer?

- What about online bookkeeping classes? Is that an option for you?

Register and Organize Your Bookkeeping Business

- What is the name of your business?

- Do you plan to hire employees?

- What is the best business structure for you and why?

- Have you registered your business with the city and/or county where you live?

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- Have you filed for a federal tax identification number (if needed)?

Set Up Business Operations for Your Bookkeeping Business

- What are your options for small business insurance?

- Have you opened a small business checking account?

- Will you have a separate business telephone number?

- Do you need to hire an answering service?

- Have you established a business mailing address?

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- Which bookkeeper insurance is best for you?

Get the Right Accounting Software

- Which software do you want your clients to use?

- What bookkeeping/accounting software are you going to use for your own business?

- Which payroll provider will you use, or do you need to purchase payroll software?

- Do you need practice management software? If so, which one is best for you?

- What will you use for electronic file sharing?

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Fund Your Bookkeeping Business

- Which business credit cards are most appealing to you and why?

- Have you checked your credit score?

- Is startup business financing an option for you?

- What types of large business expenses do you anticipate, if any?

Set Up a Home Office for Your Bookkeeping Business

- What types of home office expenses do you expect to have?

- Where do you intend to work on your bookkeeping?

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- Will you meet with clients at your home or arrange to meet them somewhere else?

Market Your Bookkeeping Business

- Do you need to set up a website for your business? If yes, who will you use to set it up?

- Have you thought about becoming a business advisor with the Small Business Development Center (SBDC)?

- Is becoming an adjunct instructor an option for you?

- What sort of bookkeeper freelancing websites are a good fit for your business?

- Are there any meetup groups of bookkeepers and accountants in your area?

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How would you establish a client referral program?

Have you set up professional social media accounts?

Does your city have a chamber of commerce that you could join?

Which industry associations best suit your niches?

Stay on Top of Industry Trends for Bookkeepers

Have you signed up for any blogs and newsletters relevant to your industry?

Have you joined any professional bookkeeper associations?

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What other methods do you use for staying on top of industry trends?
