Handyman Business Startup Checklist

A free one-page launch checklist from The Black Leaf Studio. Work top to bottom - each step unlocks the next.

1. Decide Your Scope

- [ ] Small repairs and "honey-do" lists (no permit needed)
- [ ] Installations: shelves, doors, faucets, TVs, furniture
- [ ] Punch lists for realtors and property managers
- [ ] Know your line: anything needing a licensed trade (electrical panel, gas, structural) is a referral, not a job

Write your "I do / I don't" list before your first quote. It protects you legally and keeps jobs profitable.

2. Name, Register, Bank

- [ ] Choose a business name and check it is available
- [ ] Register the business
- [ ] Open a separate business bank account
- [ ] Set aside 25-30% of revenue for taxes from day one

3. Licensing and Insurance

- [ ] Check your province/state handyman licence threshold (many regions cap job value or hours for unlicensed handymen)
- [ ] General liability insurance - get quoted before your first job
- [ ] Service agreement signed before work starts (scope, materials, payment terms)
- [ ] Written work order for every job, signed by the client

4. Tools and Vehicle

- [ ] Core kit: drill/driver, impact driver, level, stud finder, oscillating multi-tool, hand tools, ladder
- [ ] Consumables: screws, anchors, blades, tape - restock from a tracked inventory sheet
- [ ] Vehicle that carries the kit without a second trip

5. Pricing

- [ ] Hourly rate vs flat-rate menu (flat rates win for common jobs: TV mount, door install, faucet swap)
- [ ] Materials markup policy decided in advance (common: cost + 15-20%)
- [ ] Minimum job charge so short jobs still pay for the drive
- [ ] Pricing worksheet filled in before your first quote

6. First Clients

- [ ] Tell everyone you know - first jobs come from your circle

- [ ] Post in local community groups with before/after photos
- [ ] Introduce yourself to 5 realtors and 3 property managers (punch lists are recurring work)
- [ ] Ask every happy client for one referral

7. Run It Like a Business

- [ ] Work order signed before every job, invoice same day
- [ ] Photograph before and after every job (protects you and feeds your marketing)
- [ ] Log every client and follow up for rebookings
- [ ] Review your pricing every 90 days

Want the full kit? The Handyman Business Starter Kit includes all 13 templates: service agreement, job intake, work order, invoice, daily schedule, supply inventory, cancellation policy, safety incident log, client job review, rebook tracker, launch checklist, pricing worksheet and social planner.

Template by The Black Leaf Studio. Not legal advice.