

Checklist to Starting a Restaurant

Item to Complete	Completed
Start business plan, Marketing Plan, Financial projections, Break-Even analysis	
Get requirements from ABC Board and Department of Health for restaurant	
Determine possible locations – use for estimating costs	
Determine estimated start-up costs and necessary funding, including working capital	
Locate possible funding sources – can you get the money you need	
Select Accountant & Attorney to help in business plan development	
Determine business location and negotiate lease – (do not sign), check on zoning, parking, sign zoning, days of operation or other restrictions.	
Determine Business Name – see if available (no conflicts, trademark issues, etc.)	
Check to see if URL is available for the business name or something close	
Reserve name at SCC, purchase URL (you can wait on this step for financing)	
Complete business plan and financial projections	
Complete Marketing Plan and develop Marketing Calendar	
Submit business plan to potential lenders and investors	
Receive confirmation of business loan, or have access to necessary capital	
Determine business legal entity	
Set-up legal structure of business-(<i>file with SCC</i>)	
Purchase URL if you have not done so	
Apply for FEIN & submit any necessary tax information to IRS (S-corp. selection)	
Submit for any special licenses, permits, requirements, etc. This would include Dept. of Health and ABC Board.	
Setup bank account in name of business	
If taking credit cards, select credit card processor	
Setup accounting system to include POS if needed	
Finalize lease with landlord – setup phone, utilities, start leasehold improvements (lease needs to be contingent on you getting the Dept of health and ABC license)	
Obtain funds from financing - deposit in business account	

Obtain necessary insurance to include workman's compensation	
Purchase necessary equipment	
Obtain Business License and register for any local taxes (meals, entertainment, etc.)	
File fictitious name registration with courthouse	
Register with Department of Taxation for all Virginia Taxes and VEC registration	
Hire employees – complete all necessary hire paperwork, setup payroll system	
Obtain all necessary employment posters and display	
Design logo, print business cards, letterhead, brochures, etc. (can be done earlier)	
Design and get live business Web site.	
Register any trademarks, service marks, patents or copyrights (can be done earlier in the process if needed)	
Develop marketing plan for pre-opening and implement	
Open for business	
Schedule Grand opening	
Send out Press Release about opening	

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Note: Not all items are needed for every business. Place an NA in the completed column if the item is “Not Applicable” to your business. This checklist is just a guide and some items for some businesses will need to be completed in different sequences. Adjust to meet your particular schedule.



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