01 / UNDERSTAND THE BUSINESS

How to Start a Cleaning Business

A residential cleaning service helps households keep their homes usable and comfortable. A good starting offer is a clearly defined maintenance clean, rather than every possible cleaning task.

Is this a good fit for you?

- You are comfortable with physical, repetitive work and careful attention to detail.
- You can work respectfully in people's homes and follow an agreed scope.
- You can manage travel and appointments, including repeat visits.

Start with one clear service

Begin with a defined set of rooms and tasks. Separate routine cleaning from deep cleaning, move-out work, and specialist jobs. Confirm the home's condition before promising a fixed scope or price.

What to prepare before spending

Plan for suitable cleaning products, labeled containers, cloths, a mop, a vacuum, protective supplies, and transport. Check surface compatibility and product instructions. Avoid mixing products or taking on work you are not trained to perform.

02 / CHOOSE YOUR FIRST STEPS

Think about pricing before you quote

Home size alone does not tell you how long a job will take. Consider condition, scope, bathrooms, frequency, access, travel, and supplies. Record actual hours after each job and refine future quotes.

Three useful first actions

- Choose one customer type and a small service area.
- Write a maintenance-clean scope with clear exclusions.
- Ask potential customers what they expect from a reliable cleaner.

Common mistakes to avoid

Quoting a deep clean as a routine visit, forgetting travel time, and promising tasks that require different skills or equipment.

This is a starting overview. Verify local business requirements and develop the skills needed for your chosen service before accepting paid work.

Continue with the practical decision guide and worksheet on the next pages.

Test a small, clearly defined offer

Work through the decision

A maintenance visit, a deep clean, and a move-out clean are different offers. Describe tasks and exclusions before selecting a package. Assess condition and access instead of assuming every home with the same room count requires the same effort.

Ask about rooms, bathrooms, surfaces, current condition, frequency, access, and any agreed preparation. Identify tasks outside your training, tools, or starting scope. A walkthrough or permitted photos can help assess the work, but they do not replace judgement on arrival. Complete a practice or pilot process with permission, record the time and supplies, and check whether the offer matches your skills and capacity before advertising widely.

A situation to learn from

Illustrative pilot: a routine visit was planned for two hours but required three because the condition differed from the enquiry. Record the tasks and time, then improve the condition questions. Do not simply promise to work faster or remove an essential task without agreeing on scope.

How to respond

Write a first-customer process: enquiry, scope assessment, quote, agreement, preparation, service, and follow-up. For each stage, name the information required and what must be confirmed. Verify the business requirements for your location and actual service with appropriate sources; the pilot itself does not establish that you are ready for every kind of work.

Your starter offer and pilot log

Use this page with your own service and circumstances. Record assumptions separately from confirmed facts, and update the plan using actual work.

Rooms / bathrooms / routine or first visit

Included tasks / excluded tasks / condition assessed

Travel / setup / actual service time / supplies

Customer expectation / scope change process

Review before taking the next step

Pilot review: What took longer than expected? Which scope question would have prevented a surprise? What equipment is essential now? What work should remain excluded until you have the skill and process to deliver it?

- [ ] Starting service described in concrete tasks.
- [ ] Condition and access questions prepared.
- [ ] Pilot time and costs recorded.
- [ ] Scope and local requirements verified before paid work.

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