01 / UNDERSTAND THE BUSINESS

How to Start a Pressure Washing Business

A pressure washing service cleans selected outdoor surfaces. The first decision is which surfaces and jobs you can handle safely; equipment power alone does not make a service ready to sell.

Is this a good fit for you?

- You are comfortable with outdoor work and assessing a job before starting.
- You can learn surface-specific techniques and recognize work beyond your skill.
- You can plan for access, water, nearby property, and cleanup.

Start with one clear service

Choose a narrow starting service, such as suitable ground-level hard surfaces after training and practice. Do not assume one pressure setting or method works everywhere. Leave roofs, heights, delicate surfaces, and specialist treatment to qualified work.

What to prepare before spending

Plan for equipment suited to your service, hoses, appropriate accessories, protective supplies, and transport. Before quoting, consider water access, surface condition, nearby objects, and how runoff will be managed. Learn the relevant operating procedures.

02 / CHOOSE YOUR FIRST STEPS

Think about pricing before you quote

Consider surface type and condition, area, access, preparation, travel, operating costs, and cleanup. A small area can still require substantial setup. Build a minimum job charge from your costs and time.

Three useful first actions

- Choose one surface and service you will learn to handle.
- Practice with permission and record preparation, work, and cleanup time.
- Write an inspection checklist before offering quotes.

Common mistakes to avoid

Using the wrong method for a surface, pricing only by area, and overlooking preparation, property protection, or runoff.

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

Select a narrow service and surfaces you are trained to handle. Method suitability and property protection matter more than equipment power alone. Separate inspection, preparation, washing, and cleanup so each is included in both scheduling and pricing.

Assess surface type and condition, water access, obstacles, nearby property, access limits, and how runoff will be handled. Decline or refer unsuitable work instead of treating every job as the same area-rate calculation. Learn the relevant operating procedures before accepting paid work. 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 small surface took 45 minutes to wash but another 75 minutes for travel, setup, preparation, and cleanup. Pricing only the washing time missed most labor. Record all stages and use a minimum charge based on the actual visit cost.

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.

Surface / suitability / condition

Access / water / nearby property / runoff approach

Preparation / washing / cleanup / travel

Scope exclusions / inspection questions / minimum charge

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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