FREE RESOURCE · UPDATED OCTOBER 2026

The Small Business Website Starter Checklist

Everything you need to plan your website before you build it.

A beginner-friendly guide to figuring out what your website should do, what it should include, and what you can skip.

✓No tech experience needed ✓No email signup required ✓About 15 minutes

HOW TO USE THIS GUIDE

Read the short explanations, think about your business, and complete the prompts. Type right into this PDF, print it and write on it, or keep it open while you plan. There is no single right website setup for every business.

Your guide at a glance

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01

Why Does Your Business Need a Website?

A website gives people a place to learn about your business, understand your services, and take the next step, even when you are busy.

Think of your website as a helpful employee

It can answer common questions, display your work, collect inquiries, or help people book with you. But a website is not automatically useful just because it exists.

> **EXAMPLE**
> A home organizer might use their website to show before-and-after photos, explain their process, and collect project details through a quote form.

What are the top two reasons you want a website?

Check up to two.

- [ ] Help new customers find or trust my business
- [ ] Show examples of my work
- [ ] Answer common customer questions
- [ ] Make it easier to contact, book, or pay me
- [ ] Something else: _____

02

What Should Your Website Actually Do?

Start with the action you want a visitor to take. This helps you choose useful features instead of adding things just because they look impressive.

One primary action is enough to start

Examples: request a quote, schedule a consultation, view a menu, buy a product, or call your business. You can add secondary actions later.

> **EXAMPLE**
> A mobile detailer may want visitors to request a quote. A clear service list, service-area details, and a short quote form support that goal.

My website's main job is to help visitors:

- [ ] Request a quote or estimate
- [ ] Book an appointment
- [ ] Call or message me
- [ ] Buy or pay for something
- [ ] Learn about my services before contacting me

What is one repetitive task a website might help reduce?

03

Who Is Your Website For?

Your website should make sense to the people you want to reach, not just to you.

Picture a real customer

What are they looking for? What questions might they have? What would help them feel confident enough to contact you?

> **EXAMPLE**
> A parent looking for a tutor may want to know which subjects are offered, age groups served, availability, and how to request a session.

My ideal customer is:

Their biggest question or problem is:

What proof or information would help them trust my business?

- [ ] Reviews or testimonials
- [ ] Photos or examples of work
- [ ] Clear pricing or a starting price
- [ ] Qualifications, experience, or a simple process explanation

04

What Pages Does Your Website Need?

You do not need a huge website to start. Choose pages based on the questions your customers need answered.

Common starting pages

Home: what you do, who you help, and what to do next.
About: your story, experience, and what makes your approach different.
Services or Products: what you offer and relevant details.
Contact: how people can reach you or take action.

Add only when useful

A portfolio helps visual businesses. An FAQ helps when customers ask the same questions repeatedly. A separate booking page helps if scheduling is a key action.

Which pages make sense for your business right now?

- [ ] Home
- [ ] About
- [ ] Services / Products
- [ ] Contact
- [ ] Portfolio / Gallery
- [ ] Reviews / Testimonials
- [ ] FAQ
- [ ] Booking / Request a Quote
- [ ] Other: _____

Tip: A single well-organized page may be enough for a business with a simple offer.

05

Essential vs. Optional Features

A feature is useful when it solves a real problem for your customers or your day-to-day operations.

Usually important

Clear navigation, readable text, mobile-friendly layouts, accurate contact information, clear calls to action, and accessible forms. An accessible website can be used by more people, including people who use screen readers or a keyboard, and it helps lower your legal risk.

Optional, depending on your business

Booking tool: helpful if clients choose appointment times.
Payment link: helpful if clients need a simple way to pay.
Quote form: helpful when you need project details before pricing.
Automated confirmation: helpful if you receive many inquiries.
Client portal: helpful only if clients genuinely need to log in and track information.

> **EXAMPLE**
> A local lawn-care business may need a quote form, but not a custom customer dashboard.

What would save your business the most time?

- [ ] Fewer back-and-forth messages
- [ ] Less manual scheduling
- [ ] Faster payment collection
- [ ] More complete inquiry information
- [ ] None of these yet

Note: Third-party tools can have separate subscription or transaction fees.

06

What to Prepare Before Building

Gathering a few basics now will make the design and build process easier, whether you do it yourself or work with someone.

- [ ] Business name and short description
- [ ] Logo (if you have one) and preferred colors
- [ ] Services, products, or offers explained in plain language
- [ ] Contact details and service area / location
- [ ] Photos, work samples, or product images you have permission to use
- [ ] Customer reviews you have permission to display
- [ ] Your main call to action (book, call, request quote, etc.)
- [ ] Any domain name or existing website account information

WHAT'S A DOMAIN?

Your domain is your website's address, like **yourbusiness.com**. You rent it by the year from a company called a registrar (such as Porkbun or GoDaddy), usually for around $10–$25 a year. It's separate from hosting, which is the service that keeps your website online. **Register your domain in your own name**, even if someone else builds your site, so you never lose control of it.

You do not need everything to be perfect

If you do not have professional photos or a logo yet, start with clear written information and a simple design. Avoid publishing placeholder claims or reviews.

What do I already have ready?

What do I still need to gather?

07

Your Website Planning Checklist

Use this page as your quick readiness check. It is okay if some boxes are still empty.

- [ ] I know why I want a website.
- [ ] I can describe my business in one or two sentences.
- [ ] I know who I want to reach.
- [ ] I chose the main action visitors should take.
- [ ] I picked only the pages I need right now.
- [ ] I identified features that solve real business problems.
- [ ] I have gathered or listed the content I need.
- [ ] I know who will update the website after launch.
- [ ] I have considered mobile usability and accessibility.
- [ ] I have considered domain, hosting, and any tool costs.

My top three priorities

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

08

What Comes Next?

You have a starting plan. You do not have to build everything at once.

Choose your next step

If you are building it yourself: sketch a simple page layout, write your content, and test it on a phone.
If you are hiring someone: share your goals, pages, priorities, budget, and who will manage the site afterward.
If you already have a website: compare it with your checklist and improve one thing at a time.

Questions worth asking before you spend money

Who owns the domain and website? What are the ongoing hosting or software fees? Who handles updates? What happens if you stop paying for a service?

REMEMBER

A good website is not defined by how many features it has. It is defined by how clearly it helps the right people take the right next step.

Want a second set of eyes on your plan?

I'm Miguelle, the designer behind MigsFlow. If you'd like help turning your checklist into a website, I offer free quotes and an $80 homepage redesign, with no pressure to move forward.

Request a free quote | See the $80 redesign | miguelle@migsflow.com

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