

# STARTING A BUSINESS

There are a number of steps to undertake before you can work for yourself. A good place to start is by referring to [www.business.gov.au](http://www.business.gov.au) which outlines essential tasks you should follow up, as well as providing a wealth of information and advice.

## Where to start?

### Apply for an Australian Business Number (ABN)

This is the first step, and can be done simply and immediately online at <https://abr.gov.au/>

### Seek advice from an accountant

Issues such as registering for GST, the tax benefits of different business structures and how to keep track of your expenses are all questions that an accountant can assist with.

### Will you use a Trading Name?

If you want to use a business name then it needs to be registered, and it needs to be unique. Search online at the **ASIC Identical Names Check** to see what's already been registered.

### Do you need a permit or license?

Depending on the type of business you operate, you might need to apply for permits or licenses from your local council, state or federal governments. The **Australian Government's Australian Business Licence and Information Service (ABLIS)** is a step by step tool that asks you a series of questions about your business and supplies you with a list of permits and licenses to follow up at the end.

### Do you need a professional registration?

Many industries require a registration in order to trade in that profession. Some may not require it, though it could still be highly recommended in order for your business to have credibility and to be included in the member directory as one of your marketing strategies. Your professional association may be able to match you with a mentor who could advise you on setting yourself up in your profession.

### Do you need insurance?

In order to operate your business you may need

insurance. Some professional associations offer professional indemnity insurance as part of their membership. In other cases you might need to take out your own insurance policy. For advice on your insurance needs, and other items see the **Starting Your Business Checklist** below.

### Are you going to have a website?

If you decide a website is for you, you will need a domain name (web address) and an online database for your website to sit in (*hosting*). Services like Wix, Weebly or Squarespace offer a one stop shop including easy to use drag-and-drop website templates and additional features such as appointment booking or online shop facilities.

**Peer Support.** Starting and running a business can be a stressful and alienating experience. Network with like-minded people using [www.meetup.com](http://www.meetup.com), Facebook groups, [Innovation North Queensland](#) in Townsville or [TheSpace](#) in Cairns.

- Starting Your Business checklist <https://www.business.gov.au/Planning/Business-plans/Starting-a-business-Checklist>
- ASIC Identical Names Check [https://connectonline.asic.gov.au/RegistrySearch/faces/landing/bn/SearchBnRegisters.jspx?\\_adf.ctrl-state=14toq1nab\\_18](https://connectonline.asic.gov.au/RegistrySearch/faces/landing/bn/SearchBnRegisters.jspx?_adf.ctrl-state=14toq1nab_18)
- Australian Business Licence and Information Service (ABLIS) <https://ablis.business.gov.au/>
- Townsville Business Development Centre <https://www.tbdc.com.au/>
- Website templates and hosting: [www.wix.com](http://www.wix.com)  
[www.weebly.com/au](http://www.weebly.com/au)  
[www.squarespace.com](http://www.squarespace.com)
- Looking after yourself <https://www.headsup.org.au/your-mental-health/mental-health-and-small-business-owners/looking-after-yourself-as-a-small-business-owner>