**How to Start a Business Step-by-Step**

LLC & Nonprofit Basics Made Simple

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**Faith Declaration**

*“God will make us the head and not the tail, above and not beneath. We will be the lenders and not the borrowers — even in business.”  
— Deuteronomy 28:12–13*

**Introduction**

Starting your own business is one of the most powerful steps you can take toward financial freedom, legacy building, and walking in your divine calling. Whether you're forming an LLC or launching a nonprofit, this guide will give you the essential steps to start legally, confidently, and with faith. As a woman of God, I believe that we are not just meant to survive—we are meant to build, create, and lead. Let this eBook be your starting point to operate in excellence and obedience, in both faith and strategy.

**Step-by-Step: How to Start Your LLC**

Starting an LLC (Limited Liability Company) is one of the simplest and most flexible ways to legally structure your business. Here's a step-by-step breakdown:  
  
1. \*\*Choose Your Business Name\*\* – Make sure it’s unique and complies with your state’s naming rules.  
2. \*\*Search for Name Availability\*\* – Go to your state’s official Secretary of State website to make sure the name is not already in use.  
3. \*\*Register Your LLC\*\* – File your Articles of Organization through your Secretary of State website. Fees range from $50 to $500 depending on the state.  
4. \*\*Designate a Registered Agent\*\* – This is a person or business authorized to receive legal documents on your behalf.  
5. \*\*Create an Operating Agreement\*\* – This internal document outlines how your LLC will operate. (Not required in all states but strongly recommended.)  
6. \*\*Get an EIN (Employer Identification Number)\*\* – Go to IRS.gov to get your EIN for free. You’ll need this for taxes, banking, and payroll.  
7. \*\*Open a Business Bank Account\*\* – Never mix personal and business money. Open a dedicated account for your LLC.  
8. \*\*Apply for Necessary Licenses/Permits\*\* – Depending on your business type and location, you may need a city, county, or state license.  
9. \*\*Keep Good Records\*\* – Track all income, expenses, and important documents. Use a tool like QuickBooks, Wave, or a simple spreadsheet.  
10. \*\*Stay Compliant\*\* – Some states require annual reports or small business taxes. Set reminders to stay compliant.  
  
💡 Tip: Always make sure you're working from your \*\*state's official .gov website\*\* when registering your LLC.

**Step-by-Step: How to Start a Nonprofit Organization**

Starting a nonprofit is a powerful way to serve your community, honor your calling, and help others through structure and faith. Here’s a breakdown of the essential steps:  
  
1. \*\*Define Your Mission\*\* – Be clear on who you’re serving, why, and how. Your mission statement will guide every decision.  
  
2. \*\*Choose a Name for Your Organization\*\* – Make sure it’s available in your state and fits your mission.  
  
3. \*\*Incorporate Your Nonprofit\*\* – Go to your state’s official Secretary of State website and file your Articles of Incorporation. Be sure to include specific IRS-required language about your charitable purpose and what happens to your assets if the nonprofit closes.  
  
4. \*\*Appoint a Board of Directors\*\* – Most states require at least three board members. These should not be the same as your family or paid staff.  
  
5. \*\*Create Bylaws\*\* – These rules govern how your nonprofit operates (board structure, meetings, voting, etc.). You’ll need this to apply for 501(c)(3).  
  
6. \*\*Apply for an EIN (Employer Identification Number)\*\* – Visit IRS.gov to get your free EIN. You’ll need it for banking and your IRS application.  
  
7. \*\*File for 501(c)(3) Tax-Exempt Status\*\* – This is the federal step that makes your nonprofit official in the eyes of the IRS.  
 - \*\*Form 1023-EZ (Short Form):\*\* For nonprofits that meet certain requirements (gross receipts under $50,000/year and total assets under $250,000).  
 - \*\*Form 1023 (Long Form):\*\* For larger or more complex organizations.  
  
💡 Tip: The IRS charges $275 for the short form and $600 for the long form (as of 2025).  
  
8. \*\*Open a Nonprofit Bank Account\*\* – Use your EIN, Articles of Incorporation, and bylaws to open a dedicated account.  
  
9. \*\*Maintain Compliance\*\* – File annual reports with your state and Form 990 with the IRS to keep your tax-exempt status.  
  
✨ \*Scripture Reminder:\* “The Lord will make you the head, not the tail… you will lend to many nations but will borrow from none.” (Deut. 28:12-13)  
  
Your nonprofit is not just paperwork — it’s a purpose. Serve with excellence, faith, and strategy.