



CHECKLIST: Start Your Acting/Creative Sole Proprietorship



PHASE 1: Foundation

1. Decide on Your Business Name

- Use your own name (e.g., *Jane Smith*)
- Or choose a brand name (e.g., *Smith Creative*, *The Actor's Toolbox*)

2. File a DBA ("Doing Business As") if needed

- Only needed if using a name **other than your own**
- File with your county clerk or state business office
- Cost: ~\$25–\$75 depending on location

3. Get an EIN from the IRS (*recommended*)

- Apply free online: [irs.gov](https://www.irs.gov)
- Use for taxes, business bank account, and privacy

4. Open a Business Bank Account

- Use your EIN and DBA (if applicable)
- Keeps finances separate and clean
- Optional: Get a business debit/credit card

5. Set Up a Way to Get Paid

- Options: Stripe, PayPal Business, Venmo Business, Bonsai, Calendly

- Adds professionalism to coaching, classes, or selling digital products
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PHASE 2: Money & Taxes

6. Start Tracking Income & Expenses

Options:

- Spreadsheet (ask for a template)
- Free tools: Wave, Bonsai, Notion

7. Estimate Quarterly Taxes (Optional for Now)

- Required if earning \$1,000+ in profit per year
- Talk to a tax pro when income rises

8. Save for Taxes (20–30%)

- Use a tool like Qapital or a separate savings account
 - Helps avoid surprise tax bills
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PHASE 3: Presence & Prep

9. Create a Simple Website or Landing Page

- Tools: Linktree, Carrd, Notion
- Include services, bio, and contact/booking info

10. Define Your Offer(s)

- What can you monetize now or soon?

- 1-on-1 coaching
- Self-tape reviews
- Digital products (eBooks, prompt packs)
- Workshops or classes

11. Brand Your Socials (Optional)

- Claim usernames across IG, YouTube, TikTok
- Use consistent branding

12. Monthly Review Habit

- Track income & expenses
- Set 1–2 goals for growth each month



BONUS: Selling Products or Services

Sales Tax Permit (if needed)

- Required for selling taxable goods/services (varies by state)

Write a Basic Client Agreement

- Especially for coaching/workshops
- Ask for help drafting if needed