

LLC Formation Checklist

Step 1: Name Your LLC

The name of your LLC should be distinguishable from other business names in your state and must meet the state's naming guidelines.

How to Complete This Step:

Review your state's naming guidelines

[Brainstorm business names](#)

Check if the [domain name](#) is available

Check if the name is already in use in the state

Your Business Name:

Step 2: Choose a Registered Agent

A [registered agent](#) (also known as a statutory agent, resident agent, or agent for service of process) is the person or company you choose to accept official communication on behalf of your LLC.

Your registered agent must be:

- 18 years or older
- A resident of the state in which you register your LLC
- Available at all times during normal business hours (i.e., 9 a.m.–5 p.m. Monday through Friday) at their listed physical address (no P.O. boxes)

Many businesses choose to use [registered agent service](#) for convenience and privacy.

Registered Agent Name and Address:

Step 3: Select Your Management Structure

Decide if your LLC will be [member-managed or manager-managed](#).

A member-managed LLC structure is when the members of the LLC are involved with the management of the LLC. A manager-managed LLC is when a few assigned individuals are responsible for managing the LLC.

Step 4: File Your Formation Documents

The Articles of Organization (also known as a Certificate of Formation or Certificate of Organization) is the paperwork required to register your LLC. These documents are usually filed with the Secretary of State.

While the requirements vary by state, you will usually need to include information about the following:

- Name of the LLC (Step 1)
- Name and address of the registered agent (Step 2)
- Management structure (Step 3)
- Purpose of the business
- Principal business address

Step 5: Create an Operating Agreement

An [operating agreement](#) lays out the rules and management structure of your LLC.

Your operating agreement won't need to be filed with the state. You'll keep it in your LLC records file and return to it as needed to clarify rules and settle disputes.

Step 6: Get an EIN

An Employer Identification Number (EIN) is like a Social Security number for your business. EINs are free and easy to get from the IRS using [Form SS-4](#) or by filling out the [online application](#).