



Restaurant Start-up Checklist

To learn more about any of these requirements, or to find links and contact information, visit gov.bc.ca/startingarestaurant.

Task	Contacts & Resources
Business Planning	
<input type="checkbox"/> Create a business plan <i>Create a realistic plan to ensure your idea is viable.</i>	Visit the Small Business BC website for resources and support.
<input type="checkbox"/> Choose a business structure <i>Will your business be a sole proprietorship, partnership, or corporation?</i>	Visit the Small Business BC website to learn more about business structures.
<input type="checkbox"/> Plan your menu <i>Decide early on the type of food you intend to serve: your menu will impact zoning requirements, your kitchen design, and whether you may serve alcohol.</i>	
<input type="checkbox"/> Find required business permits & licences <i>Knowing which permits and licences you may need can help you plan ahead and avoid delays.</i>	Visit the BizPaL online service to find business permits and licences you may need; or contact your municipal hall.
Location & Zoning	
<input type="checkbox"/> Confirm municipal zoning restrictions <i>Before you commit, ensure your location is zoned for the type of restaurant you intend to open.</i>	Contact your municipal planning department.
<input type="checkbox"/> Consider required renovations <i>Consider costs, timelines (including possible delays), and permits required for construction.</i>	
<input type="checkbox"/> Review your lease <i>Before you sign, have a lease lawyer or legal representative review the conditions of your agreement.</i>	
Register Your Business	
<input type="checkbox"/> Review existing trademarks <i>Ensure your business name does not infringe on existing trademarks.</i>	Visit the BC Registry Services website , and the online Canadian Trademarks Registry .
<input type="checkbox"/> Apply for a business name <i>Submit a name request application to check availability and validity for registration.</i>	Visit the BC Registry Services website , or in person at OneStop and ServiceBC service counters.
<input type="checkbox"/> Register your business <i>You must register with BC Registry Services, WorkSafe BC, the Ministry of Finance, and the Canada Revenue Agency.</i>	Visit the OneStop BC website , or contact BC Registry Services . Visit the Provincial Sales Tax (PST) page for information on how to register, collect, and remit PST.

Permits & Licences - Health Operating Permit

<input type="checkbox"/>	Obtain FOODSAFE Certification <i>All restaurant operators must have this certification</i>	Visit the FOODSAFE website to obtain your certificate.
<input type="checkbox"/>	Submit a Health Operating Permit Application <i>Apply for a permit to operate a food service establishment, and have your kitchen plans reviewed and approved before construction.</i>	Check your regional Health Authority website for instructions on how to apply and the inspection process.
<input type="checkbox"/>	Submit floor plans or construction plans <i>Obtain written approval of your floor plans from an Environmental Health Officer from your health authority.</i>	
<input type="checkbox"/>	Complete health inspections <i>An environmental health officer from your Health Authority will inspect and approve your kitchen.</i>	

Permits & Licences - Municipal Permits & Licences

<input type="checkbox"/>	Apply for a business licence <i>Most municipalities will require that you obtain a business licence before operating a food service establishment.</i>	Contact your municipal hall.
<input type="checkbox"/>	Obtain building permits for renovations <i>Before you start construction work, ensure you have obtained the necessary building permits.</i>	
<input type="checkbox"/>	Obtain required business permits <i>Depending on your municipality, this may include permits for signage, sidewalk patios, heritage alteration, waste disposal, etc.</i>	Visit the BizPaL online service to find business permits and licences you may need; or contact your municipal hall.
<input type="checkbox"/>	Complete inspections <i>Depending on your municipality, these might include a building inspection, an electrical inspection, a plumbing and gas inspection, and a fire safety inspection.</i>	Contact your municipal hall.

Permits & Licences - Liquor Licence

<input type="checkbox"/>	Submit a Liquor Licence Application <i>If you intend to serve alcohol at your food establishment, you must apply for either a Food-Primary or Liquor-Primary liquor licence.</i>	Contact the B.C. Liquor Control and Licensing Branch (LCLB) .
<input type="checkbox"/>	Complete educational interview and establishment inspections <i>As part of the application process, your local liquor inspector will complete an educational interview and a review of your establishment.</i>	If you intend to sell liquor, you must register to collect Provincial Sales Tax (PST). For more information on how it applies to restaurants, see PST Bulletin - Restaurants and Liquor Sellers (PDF) .
<input type="checkbox"/>	Obtain "Serving it Right" Certifications <i>Owners and employees who handle and serve liquor must have a Serving it Right certification.</i>	Visit the Serving it Right website for more information.

Permits & Licences - Music & Entertainment Licences



Obtain SOCAN and Re:Sound Licences

These licenses are required to play recorded music in your establishment.

Visit the [SOCAN website](#) and the [Re:Sound website](#) to learn more and purchase licences.

After You Open

Visit the [Starting a Restaurant in B.C. online guide](#) for more information on opening, operating, and maintaining your restaurant business, including:

- [Employees](#)
- [Taxation](#)
- [Annual Fees and Renewals](#)

For personalized assistance with any of these steps, contact the BC Restaurant and Foodservices Association at: www.bcrfa.com