

Startup Compliance Checklist

Stage	Task	Why It Matters	■ Done
Before Launch	Register your business (HMRC or CH)	Legal requirement to trade, file taxes	
Before Launch	Choose business structure (sole trader, Ltd, CIC)	Impacts tax, liability, funding options	
Before Launch	Get business insurance quotes	Protects from claims, may be legally required	
Before Launch	Check industry-specific regulations	Some sectors need licences or approvals	
Before Launch	Set up secure data storage (for emails, orders)	GDPR-compliant from day one	
Before Launch	Add privacy notice to your website	Required under GDPR if collecting personal data	
Before Launch	Search for existing trademarks	Avoid brand name conflicts and legal issues	
First 3 Months	Take out essential insurance policies	Covers liability for products, advice, or public interaction	
First 3 Months	Register with ICO (if applicable)	Complies with data protection laws	
First 3 Months	Conduct a basic health & safety risk assessment	Protects customers and staff, builds trust	
First 3 Months	Draft contracts or service agreements	Reduces misunderstandings, legal clarity	
First 3 Months	Create a customer complaints procedure	Builds professionalism, required in some sectors	
First 3 Months	Keep expense and income records	For tax, funding, and financial planning	
First 3 Months	Start building your compliance file	Keeps all compliance docs in one place	
6–12 Months	Register as an employer with HMRC (if hiring)	Required by law if you pay anyone	
6–12 Months	Provide contracts and payslips to staff	Legal obligation, ensures proper records	
6–12 Months	Get Employers' Liability Insurance	Mandatory once you hire anyone	
6–12 Months	Build written policies (GDPR, H&S, safeguarding)	Professional and required in many sectors	
6–12 Months	Schedule annual compliance review	Ensure all registrations and policies stay current	
6–12 Months	Audit how personal data is collected and stored	Maintain GDPR compliance as you grow	
6–12 Months	Consider trademark or IP registration	Protect brand identity and prevent misuse	