

# 50-Point Ecommerce Launch Checklist

Everything you need to check before opening  
your online store to the world.

**From niche validation to your first sale.**

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## How to Use This Checklist

This checklist covers every step between "I want to start an online store" and "my store is live and ready for customers." Work through it in order. Some items take five minutes, others might take a few days. Check off each one as you go. If an item does not apply to your business model, skip it and move on.

Pair this checklist with our full guide at [esellsphere.com/start/](https://esellsphere.com/start/) for detailed walkthroughs of every step.

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### Phase 1: Validate Your Idea (Items 1 to 10)

- **1.** Research your niche using Google Trends, Amazon Best Sellers, and keyword tools  
*Confirm search volume exists for your product category over the past 12 months.*
  - **2.** Identify 3 to 5 direct competitors and analyze their strengths and weaknesses  
*Study their pricing, reviews, product range, and website quality.*
  - **3.** Check competitor reviews on Amazon for recurring complaints you can solve  
*Negative reviews reveal product improvement opportunities.*
  - **4.** Validate demand with at least 50 potential customers (surveys, Reddit, Facebook groups)  
*Ask if they would buy your product and what they would pay.*
  - **5.** Confirm your product can be sourced at a cost that allows 40%+ gross margins  
*Use our profit margin calculator at [esellsphere.com/tools/profit-margin-calculator/](https://esellsphere.com/tools/profit-margin-calculator/)*
  - **6.** Define your ideal customer avatar (age, income, interests, pain points)  
*Write this down. Every marketing decision flows from this.*
  - **7.** Research legal requirements for your product category (FDA, CPSC, labeling laws)  
*Some categories like food, supplements, and children's products have strict regulations.*
  - **8.** Choose your business model: dropshipping, private label, print on demand, or digital  
*Read [esellsphere.com/start/dropshipping-vs-private-label/](https://esellsphere.com/start/dropshipping-vs-private-label/) for a detailed comparison.*
  - **9.** Set a realistic startup budget and timeline  
*Dropshipping: \$100 to \$500. Private label: \$2,000 to \$5,000. Digital products: \$0 to \$200.*
  - **10.** Write a one-page business plan covering product, audience, revenue model, and marketing  
*Template available at [esellsphere.com/start/ecommerce-business-plan/](https://esellsphere.com/start/ecommerce-business-plan/)*
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### Phase 2: Legal and Business Setup (Items 11 to 18)

- **11.** Choose a business name and verify it is available (state records, USPTO, domain)  
*Check [esellsphere.com/start/domain-and-branding/](https://esellsphere.com/start/domain-and-branding/) for naming strategies.*
- **12.** Register your business structure (LLC recommended for liability protection)  
*Filing cost: \$50 to \$500 depending on state. Can do it yourself online.*

■ **13.** Get an EIN (Employer Identification Number) from the IRS

*Free at [irs.gov](https://irs.gov). Takes about 5 minutes. You need this for your bank account.*

■ **14.** Open a dedicated business bank account (keep personal and business finances separate)

*Most banks offer free business checking for small businesses.*

■ **15.** Apply for a sales tax permit in your state (if selling taxable goods)

*Required before you can legally collect sales tax from customers.*

■ **16.** Set up basic business accounting (QuickBooks, Wave, or a spreadsheet to start)

*Track every expense from day one. You will thank yourself at tax time.*

■ **17.** Get business insurance if carrying inventory or shipping physical products

*Guide at [esellsphere.com/start/ecommerce-insurance/](https://esellsphere.com/start/ecommerce-insurance/)*

■ **18.** Create a simple operating agreement if forming an LLC with partners

*Defines ownership, roles, and what happens if someone wants out.*

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### Phase 3: Product Sourcing (Items 19 to 26)

■ **19.** Identify 3 to 5 potential suppliers for your product

*Use Alibaba, ThomasNet, Faire, or local trade shows depending on your model.*

■ **20.** Contact each supplier and request product samples

*Never commit to a bulk order without physically inspecting samples first.*

■ **21.** Compare sample quality, pricing, minimum order quantities, and lead times

*Create a supplier comparison spreadsheet to evaluate objectively.*

■ **22.** Negotiate pricing, payment terms, and shipping arrangements

*Most suppliers expect negotiation. Ask for better terms on larger orders.*

■ **23.** Verify supplier legitimacy (business license, factory photos, references)

*Red flags: no physical address, unwilling to do video calls, demands full payment upfront.*

■ **24.** Order your first production run or set up your dropshipping/POD supplier integration

*Start with the minimum order quantity to reduce risk.*

■ **25.** Plan your packaging and unboxing experience

*Branded packaging builds loyalty. Even a branded sticker on a plain box helps.*

■ **26.** Set up inventory tracking (even a simple spreadsheet if you are just starting)

*Know what you have, what is selling, and when to reorder.*

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### Phase 4: Build Your Store (Items 27 to 38)

■ **27.** Choose your ecommerce platform (Shopify, WooCommerce, or BigCommerce)

Comparison guide at [esellsphere.com/platforms/](https://esellsphere.com/platforms/)

■ **28.** Register your domain name (.com preferred)

*Keep it short, memorable, and easy to spell. Avoid hyphens and numbers.*

■ **29.** Select and install a professional theme

*Free themes are fine to start. Focus on speed and mobile responsiveness.*

■ **30.** Set up your homepage with clear value proposition and navigation

*A visitor should understand what you sell within 3 seconds of landing.*

■ **31.** Create all product listings with optimized titles, descriptions, and pricing

*Include benefits (not just features), dimensions, materials, and care instructions.*

■ **32.** Take or source high-quality product photos (minimum 4 to 6 per product)

*Guide at [esellsphere.com/start/product-photography/](https://esellsphere.com/start/product-photography/)*

■ **33.** Configure shipping zones, rates, and delivery time estimates

*Free shipping converts better. Build shipping cost into product price if possible.*

■ **34.** Set up payment processing (Stripe, PayPal, Apple Pay, Google Pay)

*Offer at least 2 payment options. More options means fewer abandoned carts.*

■ **35.** Create essential pages: About, Contact, FAQ, Shipping Policy, Returns Policy

*These build trust and reduce customer service inquiries.*

■ **36.** Add Privacy Policy and Terms of Service pages (legally required)

*Free generators exist online, but consider legal review for compliance.*

■ **37.** Install Google Analytics 4 and Google Search Console

*Setup guide at [esellsphere.com](https://esellsphere.com) (see [Technical Setup Guide](#)).*

■ **38.** Test the entire checkout flow yourself (desktop and mobile)

*Place a real test order. Check every step from product page to confirmation email.*

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## Phase 5: Pre-Launch Marketing (Items 39 to 45)

■ **39.** Set up email marketing tool (Kit, Klaviyo, or Mailchimp)

*Start collecting emails before you launch. Offer early access or a discount.*

■ **40.** Create a simple email welcome sequence (3 to 5 emails)

*Welcome, brand story, bestseller highlight, social proof, limited offer.*

■ **41.** Set up social media profiles on 2 to 3 platforms your audience uses

*Do not try to be everywhere. Pick where your customers actually spend time.*

■ **42.** Create a pre-launch landing page or "coming soon" page to collect emails

*Even 50 emails before launch gives you a head start on day one.*

- **43.** Write 2 to 3 blog posts targeting keywords your customers search for

*This seeds your SEO before launch. Target long-tail, low-competition keywords.*

- **44.** Set up basic SEO: meta titles, descriptions, alt text on all images

*Install Rank Math or Yoast if on WordPress. Shopify has built-in SEO fields.*

- **45.** Prepare launch-day social media posts, stories, and email announcement

*Have everything written and scheduled in advance so launch day is smooth.*

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## Phase 6: Launch Day and First 30 Days (Items 46 to 50)

- **46.** Announce your launch on all channels: email list, social media, personal network

*Do not be shy. Tell everyone. Your friends and family are your first customers.*

- **47.** Run a small paid ad test (\$100 to \$200 budget on Facebook or Instagram)

*Goal is not profit. Goal is data. Learn which products and messages get clicks.*

- **48.** Monitor your store daily: check orders, respond to questions within 24 hours

*Fast customer service in the early days builds loyalty and generates reviews.*

- **49.** Ask your first 10 customers for reviews and feedback

*Send a personal follow-up email 7 days after delivery. Be genuine, not pushy.*

- **50.** Review your first 30 days: what sold, what did not, where traffic came from

*Double down on what works. Cut what does not. Rinse and repeat.*

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## You Made It. Now Go Sell Something.

If you have checked off all 50 items, your store is ready. Not perfect (it never will be), but ready. The sellers who succeed are not the ones with the prettiest stores. They are the ones who launch, learn from real customers, and improve every week.

Come back to [esellsphere.com/start/](https://esellsphere.com/start/) anytime you need deeper guidance on any step. And when you are ready to grow, our marketing playbook at [esellsphere.com/marketing/](https://esellsphere.com/marketing/) picks up where this checklist leaves off.

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for ecommerce entrepreneurs.