

Joslynn's Salon & Cafe

Salon Startup Checklist

Every box between the dream and opening day. Check them off in roughly this order — some can overlap. Items marked (Ohio) are specific to Ohio rules; always confirm current requirements with the official state boards.

1. Licensing & Education (Ohio)

- Research Ohio cosmetology programs (hours, cost, schedule)
- Confirm current required training hours with the Ohio State Cosmetology and Barber Board (cos.ohio.gov)
- Enroll in a cosmetology program
- Complete required training hours
- Pass the written licensing exam
- Pass the practical licensing exam
- Receive individual cosmetology license
- Apply for the salon (shop) license for the physical location (Ohio)
- Research food-service license requirements for the cafe side (county health department)

2. Business Formation

- Choose and search availability of the business name
- Register the LLC with the Ohio Secretary of State
- Get an EIN from the IRS (free, irs.gov)
- Open a business bank account (separate from personal savings)
- Set up simple bookkeeping (spreadsheet or starter software)
- Meet with an accountant about taxes (sales tax, income tax)
- Get business insurance quotes (general liability, professional liability, property)

3. Money

- Finish the business plan (use the Business Plan Template)
- Hit the startup savings goal (use the Savings Tracker)

- Build a 3-month emergency cushion on top of startup costs
- Decide on any additional funding (family loan? small-business grant? youth entrepreneur programs?)
— avoid high-interest debt

4. Location & Build-Out

- Define the ideal neighborhood (foot traffic, parking, rent range)
- Tour at least 5 possible spaces
- Check zoning allows both salon and food service
- Have a trusted adult / attorney review the lease before signing
- Sign the lease
- Plan the layout: salon stations, shampoo area, cafe counter, seating corner
- Get required building permits for any renovation
- Schedule inspections (board of cosmetology + health department)

5. Equipment & Supplies

- Salon: styling chairs, stations, mirrors, shampoo bowls, dryers
- Salon: color bar, towels, capes, sanitation supplies
- Cafe: espresso machine, grinder, blender, refrigeration, ice
- Cafe: cups, lids, smallwares, pastry case
- Booking + point-of-sale system
- Music, plants, lighting — the atmosphere is a product too

6. Brand & Marketing

- Finalize logo, colors, and signage
- Launch website with online booking
- Set up Instagram / TikTok with 10 posts ready before opening
- Print menus and service lists
- Plan the grand opening event
- Line up 20 friends & family appointments for the soft-open week

7. Opening Week

- Final walkthrough and deep clean
- Stock check: color, product, coffee, milk, pastries
- Test-run every service and every drink on the menu
- Soft open (friends & family) — collect honest feedback
- GRAND OPENING
- Send a thank-you to every single first-week guest

Joslynn's Salon & Cafe · Don't just become a stylist. Build a company.