

Online Store Legal Setup Worksheet

Fillable Worksheet — ClearLegalTips.com (2026)

Work through each step in order to launch your online store legally. Check items off as you complete them, and fill in the blanks with your own details.

1. Business Structure

- ☐ Decided: sole proprietor or LLC (LLC recommended once revenue and risk are real)

If LLC — state of formation / registered

agent: _____

2. Registration & IDs

- ☐ Formed the entity (Articles of Organization, if LLC)
- ☐ Obtained EIN from the IRS directly (free — never pay a filing service)
- ☐ Opened a separate business bank account
- ☐ Checked local business license / home occupation permit

3. Sales Tax

- ☐ Registered for a sales-tax permit (seller's permit) in your home state

States where you have economic nexus (commonly ~\$100,000 in annual sales): _____

- ☐ Configured the platform to calculate and collect tax where registered
- ☐ Confirmed marketplaces (Amazon, Etsy) collect for marketplace orders

4. Store Policies

- ☐ Terms of Service
- ☐ Privacy Policy (required by processors, ad networks, and state privacy laws)
- ☐ Refund / Return Policy
- ☐ Shipping Policy
- ☐ Cookie consent banner (if analytics or ad pixels run)

5. Build & Launch

- ☐ Secure checkout + SSL
- ☐ Policy pages linked in the footer and at checkout
- ☐ Ran one real end-to-end test order (payment, tax line, confirmation, refund)

6. Bookkeeping

- ☐ Separated business income and expenses from the first sale
- ☐ Set up expense tracking / write-off capture (fees, shipping, inventory, software, home office)

Quarterly estimated-tax reminder date: _____

Two Federal Rules Not to Miss

FTC fake-review rule (in force since October 21, 2024): no buying, selling, or gating reviews; incentivized reviews need clear disclosure. Civil penalties currently run over \$50,000 per violation.

INFORM Consumers Act: high-volume marketplace sellers (200+ transactions and \$5,000+ in a year) must have their bank, tax ID, and contact details verified and seller identity disclosed to buyers.

INSTRUCTIONS FOR USE

Complete the bracketed fields and check off each item as you finish it. Delete anything that does not apply and keep this worksheet with your launch records. This is a process worksheet, not a signable legal instrument. Provided for informational purposes only — it does not constitute legal advice. Laws vary by state and change over time. ClearLegalTips.com is not a law firm.