

FREE WORKSHEET

The Business Idea Readiness Check

A practical 15-minute diagnostic for testing whether your idea is ready for a business plan - or needs more proof first.

Use this before you spend money on the wrong version of an idea.

Most early business ideas do not need a polished plan first. They need clear answers: who pays, why they buy, what it costs, what could break, and what must be proven before money is committed.

Founders	Small businesses & trades	Local organisations
New ideas, early ventures, side projects	New services, premises, expansion decisions	Community projects, funding and launch decisions

Structure → Story → Soul

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START HERE

Before you write the plan

A business plan should come after the idea is clear, not before. This check helps you see what is ready, what is missing, and what should be tested next.

How to score each question

- 0 = unclear, guessed, or not yet answered
- 1 = partly clear, but still weak or unproven
- 2 = clear enough to act on or test properly

What this gives you

- A plain-English view of the idea, buyer, problem, money and risk.
- A score that shows whether the idea is ready to plan, assess, prove, or pause.
- A cleaner set of notes to bring into a 20-minute Fit Call or Pre-Build Business Assessment.

Use it honestly

Do not mark an answer as clear because you hope it is true. If you cannot explain it simply, score it low. That is not failure. That is useful information.

Important boundary

This worksheet is not financial, legal, tax, planning, or funding advice. It is a thinking tool to help you decide what needs clarified before you commit time, money, or reputation.

Name	_____
Business / project idea	_____
Date completed	_____

CHECKPOINT 1

Idea clarity

If the idea cannot be explained plainly, the rest of the plan will only hide the confusion.

1. What are you actually offering? Write it in one plain sentence. No slogans.

Score this answer: 0 = unclear / guessed 1 = partly clear 2 = clear enough to act

2. Who is the first real buyer, user, client, customer, funder, or decision-maker?

Score this answer: 0 = unclear / guessed 1 = partly clear 2 = clear enough to act

3. What problem does this solve that is serious enough for someone to pay, back, attend, book, or support?

Score this answer: 0 = unclear / guessed 1 = partly clear 2 = clear enough to act

Strong answer test

A stranger should understand what you do, who it is for, and why it matters within 30 seconds.

CHECKPOINT 2

Demand and difference

An idea is not ready just because it sounds useful. You need a reason people would choose it instead of the obvious alternative.

4. What would they use, do, buy, or choose if your idea did not exist?

Score this answer: 0 = unclear / guessed 1 = partly clear 2 = clear enough to act

5. Why would they choose your version over that alternative?

Score this answer: 0 = unclear / guessed 1 = partly clear 2 = clear enough to act

6. What proof of demand do you already have? Tick what applies.

- Someone has asked for this.
- Someone has already paid for something similar.
- You have quotes, messages, enquiries, or letters of support.
- You have tested a small version.
- You have competitor evidence that people already spend money here.
- You have no real proof yet.

Your strongest proof:

CHECKPOINT 3

Money logic

You do not need perfect numbers yet. You do need rough numbers that expose whether the idea is even worth building.

7. How does money come in?

- Customers pay directly
- A funder pays
- A partner or organisation pays
- Membership / subscription
- Mixed income
- Not sure yet

8. What are the main start-up costs and monthly costs?

Score this answer: 0 = unclear / guessed 1 = partly clear 2 = clear enough to act

9. What is the minimum sales, bookings, grant amount, or monthly income needed for this to make sense?

Score this answer: 0 = unclear / guessed 1 = partly clear 2 = clear enough to act

Weak number warning

If the idea only works when every assumption goes perfectly, it is not ready for a business plan. It needs a smaller proof step first.

CHECKPOINT 4

Risk and delivery

The question is not "Could this work?" The better question is "What would make this fail, and can that be tested before major spend?"

10. What could break the idea? List the risks you are most tempted to avoid.

Score this answer: 0 = unclear / guessed 1 = partly clear 2 = clear enough to act

11. What does this require from you each week in time, skill, energy, delivery, admin, and sales?

Score this answer: 0 = unclear / guessed 1 = partly clear 2 = clear enough to act

12. What must be proven before you commit proper money, sign a lease, buy equipment, apply for funding, or launch publicly?

Score this answer: 0 = unclear / guessed 1 = partly clear 2 = clear enough to act

Mástoras rule

A clear "not yet" is better than an expensive false start.

SCORECARD

What your answers show

Add your score. Do not average it in your head. The low scores are the useful part.



No.	Question	0	1	2
1	Offer is clear	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2	Buyer / user is specific	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
3	Problem is serious enough	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
4	Alternative is understood	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
5	Difference is believable	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
6	Demand proof exists	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
7	Income route is clear	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
8	Costs are roughly known	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
9	Minimum target is known	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
10	Risks are named	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
11	Capacity is realistic	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
12	Proof step is defined	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Total score: _____ / 24

0-8	Not ready yet. Do not buy a business plan. Define the idea first.
9-15	Needs evidence. Test demand, costs, capacity or risk before planning.
16-20	Ready for assessment. A Pre-Build Business Assessment would expose what holds and what does not.
21-24	Ready to build. The idea has enough structure for a Business Build Pack after review.

NEXT STEP

Turn the score into a decision

The point is not to get a perfect score. The point is to know what the idea needs next.



<p>1</p> <p>20-minute Fit Call</p> <p>A short call to understand the idea, constraints, and whether assessment is the right next step.</p>	<p>2</p> <p>Pre-Build Business Assessment</p> <p>A structured stress-test before major spend, funding work, premises, or public launch.</p>	<p>3</p> <p>Business Build Pack</p> <p>A practical plan, basic financial model, and 90-day route for ideas that survive assessment.</p>
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Bring this worksheet to the call

The most useful notes are your total score, your three weakest answers, and the one assumption that worries you most.

Book a 20-minute Fit Call

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Mástoras works with founders, small businesses, trades and local organisations who need clarity before committing money, time, reputation or funding effort.

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