

How to Start a Yoga Studio

Plan the business, count your startup costs, pick a location and a lease, get insurance and local licences, set a class mix and prices, and hire teachers. A step-by-step list with official sources.

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A yoga studio is a small service business with a lease, staff and a class timetable. This guide gives the order of work. It points to official sources for money and law, because rules differ by place.

Step 1: Write a plan

The U.S. Small Business Administration (SBA) says there is no right or wrong way to write a plan. It describes two types.

- **Traditional plan:** detailed. Lenders and investors often ask for it. It has an executive summary, company description, market analysis, organisation and management, services, marketing and sales, a funding request and financial projections.
- **Lean plan:** about one page. It covers partners, activities, resources, value, customer relationships, segments, channels, costs and revenue.

Write the lean plan first. Write the traditional plan if you need a loan. Add answers to these questions: Who is your student? Which styles will you teach? Why will they pick you over the studios near them? Read our guide on how to choose a yoga studio to see what students compare.

Step 2: Count your startup costs

The SBA method has five steps: list expenses, estimate each, sort them into one-time and monthly costs, add them up, and write a report. Its list of common costs includes:

- Space
- Equipment and supplies
- Utilities and communications
- Licences and permits
- Insurance
- Lawyer and accountant
- Staff pay
- Marketing and a website

The SBA says to count at least one year of monthly costs. We do not give a single total. Rent and build-out change with every city. Ask for written quotes. Mark each number in your plan as a quote or as an estimate.

Equipment for yoga is light: mats, props, a sound system, a front desk and storage. Read our guide on hot yoga safety before you plan a heated room.

Step 3: Choose a business structure

The SBA says a sole proprietor has unlimited personal liability. It says LLC owners are generally not personally liable. Ask a lawyer and an accountant which structure fits you.

Step 4: Pick a location and a lease

Check these before you sign.

- **Zoning:** the SBA says local governments handle zoning. Ask the city if a fitness studio is allowed at the address.
- **Lease terms:** length, renewal, rent rises, and who pays for repairs and the build-out.
- **Floor:** a quiet room with good floor, light and air. A neighbour above or below may hear the music.
- **Access:** showers or toilets, changing space, step-free entry, parking or transit.

Ask a lawyer to read the lease. Do not sign a long lease before you have your permits.

Step 5: Insurance, licences and law

The SBA lists general liability insurance for any business and professional liability insurance for firms that serve customers. Rules for workers' compensation, unemployment and disability insurance differ by state or province and apply when you have employees. Ask your state or provincial labour office what applies to you. Ask an insurer to confirm that the policy covers every class type you sell.

The SBA says most small businesses need federal, state and local licences and permits. You need an EIN in the US to apply for some. Start at your official site:

- United States: [SBA licences and permits](#)
- Canada: [Government of Canada, start a business](#)
- United Kingdom: [GOV.UK, set up a business](#)
- Australia: [business.gov.au](#)

Other countries: search for your government's business registration page. Check tax rules for class sales and memberships there.

Step 6: Plan the class mix

Start with a small timetable. Fill it with a few styles. Add beginner classes. Add a morning, a lunch and an evening class. Watch which classes fill and drop the rest. Our guides on hot yoga and on mat versus reformer Pilates show how styles differ.

Step 7: Hire teachers

Yoga Alliance runs a registry of teachers and schools. Its registered teacher (RYT) credential starts with a 200-hour training at a registered school. A teacher pays Yoga Alliance a one-time \$50 fee and \$65 a year, as of October 2026. Decide your own rule: RYT only, or RYT or equal. Check references, watch a trial class and verify insurance. Read our guide on how to tell a good instructor.

Step 8: Set prices

List drop-in, class pack and monthly prices. Add an intro offer. Read our guide on intro offers, class packs and memberships. Write the cancellation and refund terms in plain words. Rules differ by region.

Step 9: Market the studio

- Make a clear listing on Studiofinder and on a map service.
- Offer a free or low-price first class.
- Partner with a local business that your students already visit.
- Ask each new student how they heard of you, and write it down.

Step 10: Choose software

Pick a booking and payment system before you open. Check that it does these jobs: online booking, class packs and memberships, waitlists, reminders and reports. Compare the fee per student and the card fee. Test the system as a student on a phone.

Last check

- Plan and cost sheet done
- Structure chosen
- Lease reviewed by a lawyer
- Insurance bound
- Licences and zoning confirmed
- Teachers hired and insured
- Prices and terms published

Frequently asked questions

How much does it cost to open a yoga studio?

It depends on the city, the size of the space and the build-out. We do not publish a single figure. List each cost with the SBA method, and get written quotes for rent, build-out and insurance.

Do I need a licence to open a yoga studio?

You need business licences and permits. They vary by place. Check your national, state or province and city sites. Zoning applies too. Few US states license yoga teachers, according to one insurer.

Must my teachers be Yoga Alliance registered?

No source we read says so. You choose your hiring rule. Many students look for teacher training, so state your rule in your job posts.

Sources

[U.S. Small Business Administration: write your business plan](https://www.sba.gov/business-guide/plan-your-business/write-your-business-plan) — <https://www.sba.gov/business-guide/plan-your-business/write-your-business-plan>

[U.S. Small Business Administration: calculate your startup costs](https://www.sba.gov/business-guide/plan-your-business/calculate-your-startup-costs) — <https://www.sba.gov/business-guide/plan-your-business/calculate-your-startup-costs>

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[Government of Canada: start a business](https://www.canada.ca/en/services/business/start.html) — <https://www.canada.ca/en/services/business/start.html>

[GOV.UK: set up a business](https://www.gov.uk/set-up-business) — <https://www.gov.uk/set-up-business>

business.gov.au — <https://business.gov.au/>

[Yoga Alliance: yoga teacher training and certification](https://yogaalliance.org/explore-training-options/) — <https://yogaalliance.org/explore-training-options/>

[Alternative Balance: aerial and yoga instructor insurance](https://alternativebalance.com/aerial-yoga-insurance-guide/) — <https://alternativebalance.com/aerial-yoga-insurance-guide/>