

# NYC Starter Guide to Opening Your AUTO SHOP/GAS STATION



## CREATE YOUR BUSINESS

- **Plan your business.** NYC Business Solutions offers free support to help you comply with requirements and save money with incentives ([nyc.gov/bizsolutions](https://on.nyc.gov/bizsolutions)). The United Auto Merchants Association, based in the Bronx, offers advice and assistance ([unitedautomerchants.org](https://unitedautomerchants.org)).
- **Register your business.** LLCs, Corporations, and LPs register with NY State (visit [on.nyc.gov/state](https://on.nyc.gov/state)). General Partnerships and Sole Proprietorships register with the County Clerk (visit [on.nyc.gov/clerk](https://on.nyc.gov/clerk)).
- **Apply for an Employer ID Number (EIN)**, also known as a Federal Tax ID Number. This tracks your business for taxes. If you are a sole proprietor, you may be able to use your Social Security Number instead. Visit [on.nyc.gov/ein](https://on.nyc.gov/ein).
- **Apply for a Certificate of Authority**, or Sales Tax ID, from NY State Department of Taxation and Finance in order to sell products and services. Apply early to avoid delays receiving other permits. Learn more at [on.nyc.gov/taxid](https://on.nyc.gov/taxid).
- **Research required insurance**, such as workers' compensation insurance. Some are needed for permits and licenses. Learn more at [on.nyc.gov/bizinsurance](https://on.nyc.gov/bizinsurance).

**More information about permits and licenses** is online at NYC Business Express, at [on.nyc.gov/wizard](https://on.nyc.gov/wizard).

**A Certificate of Occupancy** from NYC Department of Buildings (DOB) permitting an auto shop in your space is required before you can obtain licenses. Contact the DOB to discuss the site you have in mind and then work to obtain the certificate early to avoid delays receiving other licenses. Learn more at [on.nyc.gov/CofO](https://on.nyc.gov/CofO).

**Comply with wage laws** to avoid costly fines. Learn more at [on.nyc.gov/wages](https://on.nyc.gov/wages).



## FIND AND PLAN YOUR SPACE

- **Find a location** zoned for your business. Learn more at [on.nyc.gov/zoning](https://on.nyc.gov/zoning).
- **Consult a design professional** to make sure the space complies with building and operating codes and to plan any changes. Make sure your architect or contractor is licensed at [on.nyc.gov/hireDOBpro](https://on.nyc.gov/hireDOBpro).
- **Sign your lease.** Before signing, talk to a lawyer to make sure the agreement is good for you. Some government benefits require you to apply before signing a lease. Get free legal advice at [on.nyc.gov/bizlegaladvice](https://on.nyc.gov/bizlegaladvice).

**Save money** by taking advantage of government incentives based on where you locate. Learn more at [on.nyc.gov/incentives](https://on.nyc.gov/incentives).

**Cheap space may end up being expensive**, as codes for buildings, fire prevention, and workplace operations may require changes. Check with a peer business and a design professional before locating.

**Basements often cannot be used as workspace** or for other uses beyond storage.

Use this guide to help you plan your way to success. Get started today at [nyc.gov/BusinessExpress](https://nyc.gov/BusinessExpress).



## IMPROVE YOUR SPACE AS NEEDED

- **Have your licensed professional draw plans for proposed changes.** The space proposed must comply with regulations from the NYC Department of Buildings, NYC Department of Health, and Fire Department. Find a professional at [on.nyc.gov/hireDOBpro](https://on.nyc.gov/hireDOBpro).
- **Submit plans and required documents.** Only a registered architect or professional engineer may submit plans to the NYC Department of Buildings.
- **Monitor the status of your job's approval** on NYC Department of Buildings BISWeb at [on.nyc.gov/bis](https://on.nyc.gov/bis).
- **Post approved permits and safety information on your work site** as instructed by agencies issuing permits.
- **Begin construction.** Monitor progress with your licensed professional and prepare for mid-construction inspections.
- **Obtain a Certificate of Occupancy**, Temporary Certificate of Occupancy, or Letter of Completion from the NYC Department of Buildings before inhabiting the building. Learn more at [on.nyc.gov/CofO](https://on.nyc.gov/CofO).

**Digital plan submissions and review saves time.** Have your professional use the NYC Development Hub, including for Pro-Cert. Learn more at [on.nyc.gov/hub](https://on.nyc.gov/hub).

**Professional Certification or "Pro-Cert" could save you weeks** in receiving permits. Pro-Cert allows a professional to self-certify projects without initial review from NYC Department of Buildings. Learn more at [on.nyc.gov/ProCert](https://on.nyc.gov/ProCert).

**Install equipment to protect public water.** At their water connection, auto shops must install a **backflow prevention device** ([on.nyc.gov/backflow](https://on.nyc.gov/backflow)). And at their sewer connection, auto shops must install an **oil-water separator** ([on.nyc.gov/oilwater](https://on.nyc.gov/oilwater)). Plans for both must be submitted to the NYC Department of Environmental Protection.



## GET EQUIPMENT AND HIRE EMPLOYEES

- **Buy, register, and equip delivery and tow trucks.** Vehicles must be registered with NY State Department of Motor Vehicles ([on.nyc.gov/cvregister](https://on.nyc.gov/cvregister)), identified by owner and address with lettering on either side ([on.nyc.gov/cvlettering](https://on.nyc.gov/cvlettering)), and equipped as NY State ([on.nyc.gov/DMVcvreqs](https://on.nyc.gov/DMVcvreqs)) and NYC Department of Transportation require ([on.nyc.gov/DOTcvreqs](https://on.nyc.gov/DOTcvreqs)). Tow trucks need a permit ([on.nyc.gov/towtrucklicenses](https://on.nyc.gov/towtrucklicenses)).
- **Install equipment to recover air conditioner refrigerant**, required by the US EPA and NY State in order to get your business license ([on.nyc.gov/refrigerant](https://on.nyc.gov/refrigerant)).
- **Get common tools and permits to use them**, including **air compressors** ([on.nyc.gov/aircompressor](https://on.nyc.gov/aircompressor)) and **blow torches** (for use, [on.nyc.gov/blowtorch](https://on.nyc.gov/blowtorch), and storage, [on.nyc.gov/storeliquidgas](https://on.nyc.gov/storeliquidgas)).
- **Get tanks for storing gas and used oil and register them** with NY State Department of Environmental Conservation. Learn more at [on.nyc.gov/bulkpetrol](https://on.nyc.gov/bulkpetrol).
- **Get and certify your fuel pumps.** Schedule an inspection with NY State Bureau of Weights and Measures. Learn more at [on.nyc.gov/gaspumpmeasure](https://on.nyc.gov/gaspumpmeasure).
- **Ensure your workers have needed licenses**, such as commercial driver ([on.nyc.gov/cvdriver](https://on.nyc.gov/cvdriver)), tow truck driver ([on.nyc.gov/towtruck](https://on.nyc.gov/towtruck)), welder ([on.nyc.gov/FDNYwelder](https://on.nyc.gov/FDNYwelder)), and spray painter ([on.nyc.gov/spraypainter](https://on.nyc.gov/spraypainter)). To find licenses for your workers, use the search tool at [nyc.gov/BusinessExpress](https://nyc.gov/BusinessExpress).



**Mechanically-assisted tailpipe exhaust systems** require a Certificate of Operation from NYC Department of Environmental Protection, unless used exclusively for the NYS Vehicle Inspection System. Learn more at [on.nyc.gov/exhaust](https://on.nyc.gov/exhaust).



**Hazardous materials** must be registered with NYC Department of Environmental Protection, labeled, and disposed specially. Many common materials, like spray paint, are hazardous at large quantity and regulated ([on.nyc.gov/righttoknow](https://on.nyc.gov/righttoknow)). If you dispose large amounts, you must register with NY and US governments ([on.nyc.gov/nyautoshopguide](https://on.nyc.gov/nyautoshopguide)).



## GET LICENSED TO OPERATE

- **Get a repair shop license** from NY State Department of Motor Vehicles if you will offer more than basic services like tire rotation and oil changes ([on.nyc.gov/nyautoshop](https://on.nyc.gov/nyautoshop)).
  - **Register as a repair garage** with the NYC Fire Department. Learn more at [on.nyc.gov/repairgarage](https://on.nyc.gov/repairgarage).
  - **Register to conduct NY State vehicle inspections.** The state limits the number of certified shops, so you may have to wait. Learn more at [on.nyc.gov/nydmvinspection](https://on.nyc.gov/nydmvinspection).
  - **Register to offer towing.** Besides truck and driver licenses for towing, you will need a bond and a permit from NYC Department of Consumer Affairs ([on.nyc.gov/towtruck](https://on.nyc.gov/towtruck)).
  - **Register to be a gas station** with NYC Department of Environmental Protection ([on.nyc.gov/deppumpgas](https://on.nyc.gov/deppumpgas)) and NYC Fire Department ([on.nyc.gov/fdnypumpgas](https://on.nyc.gov/fdnypumpgas)).
  - **Register to resell or sell cars.** You will need a surety bond and a permit from NYC Department of Consumer Affairs, ([on.nyc.gov/2ndhand](https://on.nyc.gov/2ndhand)), and a second bond and license from NY State ([on.nyc.gov/nycardealer](https://on.nyc.gov/nycardealer)).
  - **Register to store tires**, whether for sale or for scrap. Learn more at [on.nyc.gov/tireshop](https://on.nyc.gov/tireshop).
  - **Tax new tires and recycle old ones.** You must tax every tire you sell, accept used tires for recycling, and post information about the law. Learn more at [on.nyc.gov/tires](https://on.nyc.gov/tires).
  - **Obey car battery law.** You must charge a NY State fee to any customer who buys a battery without returning one, and recycle old ones. Learn more at [on.nyc.gov/batteries](https://on.nyc.gov/batteries).
  - **Limit air pollution and get permits.** If you release fumes into the air, as when spray coating, you must get a permit from NY State Department of Environmental Conservation. Learn more at [on.nyc.gov/nyautoshopguide](https://on.nyc.gov/nyautoshopguide).
  - **Hire a carter and post sorting instructions** at your site. Learn more at [on.nyc.gov/wasterecycling](https://on.nyc.gov/wasterecycling).
- Convenience stores** are regulated by NYC Department of Health. Review our NYC Starter Guide for Convenience Stores at [on.nyc.gov/strtConvenience](https://on.nyc.gov/strtConvenience).



## OPEN YOUR DOORS

**Congratulations!** You've opened your doors. Plan ahead to keep things running smoothly.



## STAYING OPEN

**Avoid violations and be ready for inspections.** Violations put employees at risk, and cost you time and money.

**Submit Environmental Report Forms** when requested to NY State Department of Environmental Conservation. Learn more at [on.nyc.gov/nyautobodyguide](https://on.nyc.gov/nyautobodyguide).

**Display licenses and required posters.** Check federal ([on.nyc.gov/fedposters](https://on.nyc.gov/fedposters)), state ([on.nyc.gov/nyposters](https://on.nyc.gov/nyposters)), and local ([nyc.gov/BusinessExpress](https://nyc.gov/BusinessExpress)) sign requirements.

**Show prices and print your business name and address on receipts.** Learn more tips at [on.nyc.gov/10things](https://on.nyc.gov/10things).

**Renew your business permits and licenses.** Note on your calendar when you must begin each renewal.

**Prepare your taxes.** Learn more at [on.nyc.gov/biztax](https://on.nyc.gov/biztax).

For comprehensive information, visit **NYC Business Express** at [nyc.gov/BusinessExpress](https://nyc.gov/BusinessExpress).

**NYC Business Solutions**, a set of services offered by the NYC Department of Small Business Services, can help resolve questions and move your business forward through permit and license approvals. Visit [on.nyc.gov/navigate](https://on.nyc.gov/navigate) or call **311** and ask for "NYC Business Solutions Navigating Government."



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[on.nyc.gov/guidesurvey1](https://on.nyc.gov/guidesurvey1)