Legal Startup Checklist (Ireland)

Start Legally. Trade Confidently. Build for Growth.

Ireland is a popular destination for both local and international entrepreneurs thanks to its strong EU access, business-friendly tax environment, and growing tech ecosystem. This checklist walks you through the **key legal steps** to register and run a business in Ireland — whether you're a solo founder, freelancer, or startup.

⚠ *This is a practical guide, not legal advice. Always consult a professional for legal or tax-specific questions.*

Legal Startup Checklist (Ireland)

1. Choose a Legal Structure

Most common options:

- **Sole Trader** – easy to set up, ideal for freelancers or local service providers
- **Private Company Limited by Shares (LTD)** – the most common startup structure, offering liability protection and growth potential

More info: Irish Business Structure Guide

2. Register Your Business

- **Sole Trader:**
    - Register with the **Revenue Commissioners** for income tax using a TR1 form
    - Optional: Register your business name with the **CRO** (Companies Registration Office)
- **LTD Company:**
    - Register online via the **CRO** at core.cro.ie
    - File Form A1 and Constitution documents
    - You'll receive a Company Number and Certificate of Incorporation

3. Register for Tax (Revenue.ie)

- Get a **Tax Registration Number** from Revenue
- Register for:
  - **Income Tax** (Sole Trader)
  - **Corporation Tax** (LTD)
  - **VAT** (if turnover exceeds €37,500 for services or €75,000 for goods)
  - **Employer PAYE** if you'll be hiring staff

Start here: Register for Taxes

4. Set Up a Business Bank Account

- Required for LTD companies and strongly recommended for Sole Traders
- Popular options: AIB, Bank of Ireland, Revolut Business, Fire Financial

You'll need proof of registration, a tax number, and ID

5. Create Founders Agreement or Shareholder Agreements

Important if you have co-founders or investors:

- Define roles, responsibilities, equity splits, decision-making rights, and vesting
- Protects all parties and avoids disputes down the line

6. Draft Legal Documents

- Client Contracts
- Terms & Conditions for your website
- Privacy Policy (for GDPR compliance)
- NDAs for contractors or co-founders
- Employment contracts (if hiring)

Tip: Use templates from Irish legal portals or platforms like Contractbook or consult a solicitor

7. Comply with GDPR (General Data Protection Regulation)

Required if collecting or storing personal data (e.g. emails, payment info, names):

- Create a Privacy Policy
- Have a clear cookie consent mechanism
- Appoint a Data Controller if needed
- Allow data access and deletion requests

More info: Data Protection Commission Ireland

8. Register a Trademark (Optional)

To protect your brand, name, or logo, register a trademark:

- Apply via the Irish Patents Office
- Or apply for an **EU trademark** via EUIPO for broader protection

9. Check Business Licenses (If Applicable)

Depending on your industry, you may need additional permissions:

- Food handling, childcare, healthcare, construction, etc.
- Check via gov.ie or your local authority

Quick Summary Table

Task	**Required?**	**Link / Notes**
Choose Legal Structure	☑	Sole Trader or LTD
Register with CRO	☑	core.cro.ie
Register for Tax	☑	Revenue.ie
Open Business Bank Account	☑	AIB, Revolut, Bank of Ireland
Founders / Shareholder Agreements	Optional	Important with co-founders or investors
Legal Docs (T&Cs, Privacy, Contracts)	☑	Required for compliance
GDPR Compliance	☑	DataProtection.ie

Task	Required?	Link / Notes
Industry-Specific Licenses	Varies	Check local rules via gov.ie
Trademark Registration	Optional	IPOI or EUIPO