

How to Start SaaS Business with No Money | Checklist

This checklist will guide you through the essential steps to start your SaaS business with minimal to zero initial investment. Focus on completing each task thoroughly.

Phase 1: Idea Validation & Foundational Work

- ☐ Clearly define the specific, urgent problem your SaaS will solve.
- ☐ Identify and deeply understand your target niche audience.
- ☐ Conduct at least 10-15 problem-focused interviews with potential users.
- ☐ Formulate a clear hypothesis for your SaaS solution.
- ☐ Conduct 5-10 solution-focused interviews presenting your proposed solution.
- ☐ Create a simple landing page using a free tool (e.g., Carrd, GitHub Pages).
- ☐ Implement a way to capture emails for an early access or beta interest list on your landing page.
- ☐ List your skills that can be offered as a service to your target market.
- ☐ Define a service offering that aligns with or informs your future SaaS product.
- ☐ Secure your first one or two clients for your service-based offering.
- ☐ Diligently document all pain points, workflows, and desired outcomes from your service clients.

Phase 2: MVP Development & Lean Infrastructure Setup

- ☐ Define the single core feature of your Minimum Viable Product (MVP) that solves the primary validated problem.

- ☐ Decide on your MVP development path: self-coding, no-code/low-code platforms, or finding a technical co-founder.
- ☐ If using no-code, select platforms with robust free tiers (e.g., Bubble, Airtable, Softr, n8n).
- ☐ Create basic UI/UX mockups or wireframes for your MVP (e.g., using Figma's free tier, Penpot).
- ☐ Gather feedback on your UI/UX mockups from potential users before building.
- ☐ Develop or configure your MVP focusing solely on the core functionality.
- ☐ Select a free tier option for hosting your website/front-end (e.g., Cloudflare Pages, Netlify, GitHub Pages).
- ☐ Choose a free tier or initial free credit option for back-end hosting if your MVP requires it (e.g., Fly.io, Render).
- ☐ Set up your database and authentication using a service with a generous free tier (e.g., Supabase, Firebase).
- ☐ Research and select a Merchant of Record (MoR) or payment facilitator that operates purely on commission (e.g., PayPro Global).
- ☐ Integrate basic, free analytics into your MVP and landing page (e.g., Google Analytics, PostHog free tier).
- ☐ Set up a free customer support tool or system (e.g., Crisp.chat free tier, a dedicated email address).

Phase 3: Lean Marketing, Launch & Initial Feedback

- ☐ Identify one or two primary organic marketing channels to focus on initially (e.g., content marketing, SEO, specific social media platform).
- ☐ Create 3-5 initial pieces of high-value content relevant to your target audience and problem.
- ☐ Research relevant long-tail keywords for your niche to target with SEO.
- ☐ Establish a basic but professional presence on your chosen social media channel(s).

- ☐ Identify 3-5 online communities (forums, groups) where your target audience is active.
- ☐ Draft a personalized, non-spammy direct outreach message template for potential early users.
- ☐ Define the terms and benefits of an early adopter program for your first users.
- ☐ Launch your MVP to your email interest list and/or your existing service clients.
- ☐ Actively and systematically solicit detailed feedback from every early user.
- ☐ Set up a simple system for tracking user feedback and feature requests.

Phase 4: Iteration, Early Growth & Reinvestment

- ☐ Analyze all collected feedback to identify patterns and critical insights.
- ☐ Prioritize MVP bug fixes and feature iterations based on user feedback.
- ☐ Implement the highest-priority changes to your MVP.
- ☐ Track fundamental metrics: user sign-ups, activation (users completing a key action), and basic retention.
- ☐ If generating revenue from services or initial SaaS sales, reinvest it strategically into the SaaS (e.g., essential tools, further development if outsourced).
- ☐ Maintain consistent activity on your chosen organic marketing channels.
- ☐ Consider creating a small, dedicated online space for your users (e.g., a free Discord server, Slack channel).
- ☐ Regularly review your progress, assumptions, and user feedback to guide your next steps.

Remember: *This journey requires persistence, adaptability, and a relentless focus on providing value to your users.*