

The Indie Game Launch Checklist

A step-by-step checklist to take an indie game from platform choice to a sustained post-launch sales push, covering distribution, pricing, marketing, community, payments, and tax.

Choose Where to Sell

- ☐ List which platforms fit the game's genre and target audience.
- ☐ Compare revenue share, submission fees, and discovery tools across at least three platforms.
- ☐ Decide whether reach or revenue share matters more for this release.
- ☐ Confirm the team has capacity to handle payment and tax independently before choosing a self-hosted store.
- ☐ Pick one primary platform to launch on first, rather than splitting effort across several at once.

Set Pricing and Understand Revenue Splits

- ☐ Research prices for comparable titles already live on the chosen platform.
- ☐ Calculate take-home revenue after platform fees at the proposed price point.
- ☐ Decide whether a launch discount or wishlist campaign fits the pricing strategy.
- ☐ Confirm the price is set before wishlist and marketing campaigns begin.

Create Marketing Assets Before Launch

- ☐ Script and produce a trailer focused on the game's most distinct mechanics.

- ☐ Build a playable demo and set a release date well ahead of launch.
- ☐ Identify genre-relevant events (PAX, Gamescom, IndieCade, A MAZE) to target.
- ☐ Set a wishlist goal and track progress weekly in the months before release.

Build a Player Community

- ☐ Set up a Discord server and post development updates on a regular cadence.
- ☐ Identify genre-specific subreddits and plan an AMA or regular engagement schedule.
- ☐ Decide whether crowdfunding fits the game's funding and community-building goals.
- ☐ Recruit beta testers through paid platforms or free gaming communities.
- ☐ Set up at least one feedback channel: a form, demo prompts, or forum thread.

Choose a Payment Partner

- ☐ List every country and currency the game will realistically be sold in.
- ☐ Confirm the payment setup supports regional payment methods, not just cards.
- ☐ Confirm fraud prevention is in place for digital goods specifically.
- ☐ Confirm the payment setup supports the pricing model used (one-time, DLC, subscription).

Handle Taxes and Global Compliance

- ☐ Check sales tax and VAT registration requirements for every country with planned sales.
- ☐ Confirm whether the chosen platform handles tax automatically or the developer does.
- ☐ Register for tax obligations before the first sale in a new market, not after.
- ☐ Revisit tax compliance status before any major market expansion.

Plan for Post-Launch Success

- ☐ Set up tracking for demo-to-full-game conversion rate
- ☐ Set up tracking for player retention and average session length.
- ☐ Set up tracking for revenue per player across each platform.
- ☐ Schedule a content update or patch cadence for the weeks following launch.
- ☐ Compare performance across platforms monthly, not just against an internal target.

Launch Week Final Check

- ☐ Confirm the store page states clearly what the game is and who it's for.
- ☐ Confirm the trailer and demo accurately represent the final game.
- ☐ Confirm pricing is live and matches what was announced pre-launch.
- ☐ Confirm the payment setup has been tested with a real transaction.
- ☐ Confirm community channels are staffed and ready to respond on launch day.