SHOWHOW · CHECKLIST

Opening and Closing Checklist (Small Business)

The first and last 30 minutes of the day are when small businesses lose the most money: a fridge left open, a cash drawer that doesn't add up, a back door unlocked overnight. This checklist is for any shop, café, studio or service business where different people open and close on different days. Use it as a starting point and add the steps specific to your equipment.

What you'll need

- Keys and alarm code
- Starting cash for the register
- Cleaning cloths and spray
- Your opening and closing times

Steps

- [ ] **Opening: Check the outside of the building before you unlock.**
  Look for broken glass, forced doors or anything left overnight. If something looks wrong, don't go in alone; call the owner first.

  Watch out: If you suspect a break-in, stay outside and call for help.

- [ ] **Opening: Turn off the alarm and lock the door behind you.**
  Keep it locked until opening time.

- [ ] **Opening: Switch on equipment in the order it needs to warm up.**
  Machines with a long warm-up go first. Note any warning lights or error codes.

- [ ] **Opening: Check that fridges and freezers are running cold.**
  Write down the readings if you keep a log. Report anything unusual to the manager right away.

- [ ] **Opening: Count the starting cash and record the amount.**
  Count it twice. If it doesn't match last night's closing count, tell the manager before you open.

- [ ] **Opening: Do a quick clean of the customer area.**
  Wipe counters and door handles, empty any trash cans missed last night and check the restrooms.

- [ ] **Opening: Restock what you'll run out of first.**
  Bags, cups, receipt paper, napkins and change.

- [ ] **Opening: Unlock the front door at opening time.**
  Not five minutes later. Customers who find a locked door at opening time often don't come back.

- [ ] **Closing: Lock the front door at closing time.**
  Turn the sign around first so nobody else walks in, and finish serving anyone already inside.

- [ ] **Closing: Count the register and fill in the cash count sheet.**
  Count with a second person if you can. Leave the starting cash for tomorrow and deposit the rest the way your business does.

  Watch out: Never count cash where it can be seen from the street.

- [ ] **Closing: Switch off and clean equipment as each procedure says.**
  Leave fridges, freezers and anything that must run overnight switched on.

- [ ] **Closing: Sweep and mop the floors.**
  Customer area first, then behind the counter, then the back.

- [ ] **Closing: Take out the trash and recycling.**
  Put new liners in every can so the morning shift starts clean.

- [ ] **Closing: Check every door and window by hand.**
  Back door first, front door last. Push on each door after locking it.

  Watch out: Check the back door with your hand every night, not just by looking.

- [ ] **Closing: Set the alarm and lock up.**
  Wait until the alarm confirms it's armed before you walk away.

How to adapt it

- Split this into two procedures if different people open and close.
- Name your own equipment in the switch-on and switch-off steps.
- Put a QR code by the door so the last person can check the list on the way out.
- If you have an alarm company, add their phone number to the first step.