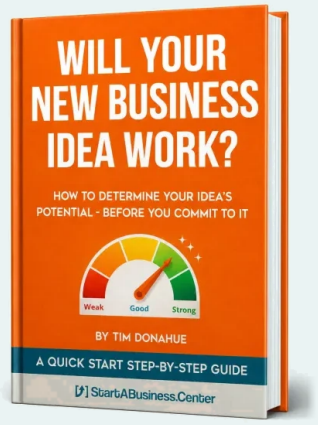
GUIDE 1 · QUICKIE WORKBOOK

Will Your New Business Idea Work?

The 1–2 hour version: test your idea before you commit to it.

Work through it alongside the guide: **startabusiness.center/guideslive/guide-1-assess-idea-summary**



Founder name _____ **Date started** _____

Your business idea in one line _____

e.g. Weekly healthy meal-prep kits for busy working parents in my area.

How to use this workbook

1. **Read, then do.** Each chapter header links to the matching chapter of the guide. Read it, then complete the exercises here. Work in order: later chapters reuse your earlier answers.
2. **Answer with evidence, not hope.** Write what you have seen people do, not what you expect them to do. "Not tested yet" is an honest and useful answer.
3. **Follow the worked example.** Olive lines that start with *e.g.* follow Jordan, who is testing a $79-a-week meal-prep kit for busy working parents. Fields start empty; type your own. Want more depth? Use the full Guide 1 workbook.
4. **Let the form do the math.** Shaded boxes are fields. Amber boxes calculate automatically in free Adobe Acrobat Reader; in other viewers, work out the formula shown and type the result. Save as you go.

Your roadmap

Tick each chapter when done; the verdict fills in from each chapter.

Ch.	The question	Focus	Done	Result (fills in)
01	Is there real demand?	Real demand	☐	
02	Does the math work?	Money questions	☐	
03	Why would customers choose you?	Differentiation	☐	
04	Is the market big enough?	Market size	☐	
05	Can you reach your customers?	First customers	☐	
06	Can it make a profit?	Profit	☐	
07	Are you the right founder?	Founder fit	☐	
08	What could go wrong?	Risks	☐	
09	Does it fit your life?	Lifestyle fit	☐	
10	GO, PIVOT or PARK IT?	Your decision	☐	

01

STEP 1: IS THERE REAL DEMAND?

Read Chapter 1 in the guide →

How to Find Real Demand for Your Business Idea

YOUR GOAL Run three quick tests. Pass at least two before you go on. Your excitement is not evidence; only actions count.

Test 1: Find 3 places where 100+ of your customers gather

Give yourself 10 minutes: Facebook groups, Reddit, LinkedIn groups, forums, local meetups. No 3 places in 10 minutes is a fail.

#	Place (name or link)	Members	100+
1			☐
2			☐
3			☐

e.g. Jordan: Denver School Parents (Facebook), 4,200 | r/MealPrepSunday, 2.9M | South Bay Moms Network, 1,100

Test 2: Find 3 competitors and their prices

No competitors usually means no market, not a gap.

#	Competitor	Price	Found
1			☐
2			☐
3			☐

e.g. Jordan: HelloFresh, about $60–90 a week | Local meal-prep delivery, $95 a week | Takeout, $60–80 a week

Test 3: Ask one community whether people struggle with the problem

Describe the problem only; don't pitch your idea. Three or more people saying "yes, that's me" is a pass.

Your post

e.g. "Working parents: is getting a healthy dinner on the table on weeknights a struggle for you? What have you tried?"

Where you posted

e.g. Denver School Parents

"Yes" replies

e.g. 14

Tests passed (out of 3)

Chapter 1: pass or fail?

☐ **Pass**
I passed at least 2 of the 3 tests.

☐ **Fail**
I passed fewer than 2. Rework the idea before going further.

02

STEP 2: DOES THE MATH WORK?

Read Chapter 2 in the guide →

Two Simple Money Questions Every Founder Should Answer First

YOUR GOAL Answer two questions: can it earn the income you need, and can you get the money to start? Both must be YES.

Question 1: Can it earn the income you need?

Works: 100–1,000 customers, a market at least 10× what you need, margins of 30%+. Breaks: 10,000+ customers just for a basic income, a market smaller than your need, margins under 20%.

Calculation or input	Your answer	e.g. Jordan
Annual income you need		*$60,000*
Revenue needed = income ÷ 0.30		*$200,000*
Price per sale		*$79*
Sales per year = revenue ÷ price		*2,532*
per month / per day		*211 / 7*
Purchases per customer per year		*20*
Customers needed = sales ÷ purchases		*127*
Target market size (people who have the problem)		*12,000 households*
Market ÷ customers needed (want 10× or more)		*94×*

2.1 Can you realistically reach that many customers? ☐ Yes ☐ No *e.g. Yes*

Question 2: Can you get the money to start?

If you can't access this money, stop: sort out funding before you plan any further.

Calculation or input	Your answer	e.g. Jordan
One-time startup costs		*$6,500*
Monthly operating costs		*$2,200*
Monthly living expenses not covered by a job		*$0 (keeps day job)*
Months of runway (3 minimum, 6 better, 12 ideal)		*6*
Total capital needed = startup + (operating + living) × months		*$19,700*

2.2 Can you access that money? ☐ Yes ☐ No *e.g. Yes: $12,000 saved, $7,700 gap closed by pre-selling*

2.3 Short of money? Tick what you'll try.

- ☐ Pre-sell to customers
- ☐ A side hustle to save the money
- ☐ A small loan or grant
- ☐ A partner who invests
- ☐ A credit card, carefully, with a payback plan
- ☐ Start smaller

Chapter 2: pass or fail?

☐ **Pass**
Both questions are YES.

☐ **Fail**
Either answer is NO. Change the price, market or model, or the funding, first.

03

STEP 3: WHY WOULD CUSTOMERS CHOOSE YOU?

Read Chapter 3 in the guide →

How to Make Customers Choose You Instead

YOUR GOAL Know your top competitor inside out, and state one specific reason a customer would choose you instead.

	Your answer	e.g. Jordan
Your top competitor		*HelloFresh*
What they charge		*About $60–90 a week*
What their customers like		*Variety, convenience, delivery*
What their customers complain about		*"Too much prep for a weeknight"; kids won't eat it*

3.1 Your advantage, in one specific sentence.

Pick what customers care about most: quality, price, speed, ease of use, service or status.

e.g. Healthy family dinners ready in under 15 minutes, with portions kids actually eat.

3.2 Warning signs. Tick any that apply to you.

- ☐ I can't say my difference in one sentence
- ☐ My difference is vague ("better quality")
- ☐ I'm competing only on price

Chapter 3: pass or fail?

☐ **Pass**
A specific advantage customers care about, with no warning signs ticked.

☐ **Fail**
Vague, price-only or no clear difference. Sharpen it before going on.

04

STEP 4: IS THE MARKET BIG ENOUGH?

How to Size Up Your Market Opportunity

Read Chapter 4 in the guide →

YOUR GOAL Check that the customers you can realistically reach cover the customers you need from Chapter 2.

Reachable customers

Healthy: 10,000+ potential customers, a stable or growing market, and under 5% of it needed. Too small: under 5,000 potential customers, 20%+ needed, or a shrinking market.

Calculation or input	Your answer	e.g. Jordan
Total potential customers		*12,000 households*
Share you can realistically reach, % (2–10% is typical)		*5%*
Reachable customers = total × share		*600*
Customers you need (Chapter 2)		*127*
Share of the whole market you need = needed ÷ total		*1.1%*

4.1 Is the market stable or growing? ☐ Yes ☐ No *e.g. Growing: more families eating at home*

Chapter 4: pass or fail?

☐ **Pass**
Reachable customers cover what you need, in a stable or growing market.

☐ **Fail**
You can't reach enough customers, or the market is shrinking.

05

STEP 5: CAN YOU REACH YOUR CUSTOMERS?

How to Find Your First Customers

Read Chapter 5 in the guide →

YOUR GOAL Map where your customers gather, choose a realistic way to reach them, and check that each customer is worth at least 3× what it costs to win them.

THE REALITY A website alone won't bring customers. SEO is slow. Paid ads waste money unless you know exactly what you're doing.

5 places your customers gather

#	Place
1	
2	
3	
4	
5	

e.g. Jordan: 2 school-parent Facebook groups | school newsletters | soccer sidelines | Nextdoor | r/MealPrepSunday

5.1 Your acquisition strategy: how will you reach them, specifically?

e.g. Weekly posts in 2 parent groups, school newsletter ads, and a $10 referral credit for every family that refers a friend.

Is a customer worth more than they cost to win?

Lifetime value (LTV) should be at least 3× customer acquisition cost (CAC).

Calculation or input	Your answer	e.g. Jordan
Cost to win one customer, CAC (ads, samples, time)		*$150*
Price per sale		*$79*
Purchases per customer per year		*20*
Years a typical customer stays		*1*
Lifetime value, LTV = price × purchases × years		*$1,580*
LTV ÷ CAC		*10.5×*

The Quickie Guide doesn't give an LTV formula; this one is simple and conservative. Only count the years you can actually expect.

Chapter 5: pass or fail?

- ☐ **Pass** — You can name where customers gather, and LTV is at least 3× CAC.
- ☐ **Fail** — No clear way to reach them, or they cost too much to win.

06

STEP 6: CAN IT MAKE A PROFIT?

Read Chapter 6 in the guide →

Does Your Business Have Profitable Potential?

YOUR GOAL Work out the profit on every sale, and see which margin band you're in.

Calculation or input	Your answer	e.g. Jordan
Price per sale		*$79*
Materials per sale		*$22*
Labor per sale (prep, packing, delivery)		*$13*
Overhead per sale (monthly fixed costs ÷ sales a month)		*$11*
Profit per sale = price − costs		*$33*
Profit margin = profit ÷ price × 100		*41.8%*

6.1 Numbers weak? Tick what you'll change, then re-run them.

- ☐ Raise prices
- ☐ Lower costs
- ☐ Increase distribution
- ☐ Improve the sales process

Chapter 6: pass or fail?

- ☐ **Pass** — A margin of 30% or more (20–30% if you have a clear plan to improve it).
- ☐ **Fail** — Under 20%, even after trying the levers above.

07

STEP 7: ARE YOU THE RIGHT FOUNDER?

Read Chapter 7 in the guide →

Are Your Skills & Resources a Good Fit as Founder?

YOUR GOAL Compare the skills this business needs with the ones you have, name your biggest risk, and decide honestly whether you can commit for 1–2 years.

	Your answer	e.g. Jordan
Skills the business needs		*Cooking, food safety, marketing, bookkeeping*
Skills you have		*Cooking, food safety, organizing*
Skills to learn or hire		*Marketing (course), bookkeeping (hire)*
Your biggest risk		*Not enough families reorder*
How you'll reduce it		*A 4-week paid pilot before buying equipment*

7.1 Can you learn or hire the skills you're missing? ☐ Yes ☐ No *e.g. Yes*

Hours a week you can give it

e.g. 12

7.2 Can you commit for 1–2 years, even when it's hard? ☐ Yes ☐ No *e.g. Yes*

7.3 Does it fit the life you want? ☐ Yes ☐ No *e.g. Mostly; deliveries are the hard part*

7.4 Will you still want this in 2 years? ☐ Yes ☐ No *e.g. Yes*

STOP CONDITION If you can't fund the launch (Chapter 2, Question 2), stop here until you can.

Chapter 7: pass or fail?

☐ **Pass**
You can cover the skills, and you answered yes to commitment, life fit and the 2-year test.

☐ **Fail**
A key skill can't be covered, or your answers show this isn't the right business for you now.

08

STEP 8: WHAT COULD GO WRONG?

Read Chapter 8 in the guide →

How to Spot Problems Before They Slow You Down

YOUR GOAL List your strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats in a line or two each, and decide whether any risk could sink the idea.

The Quickie Guide lists this chapter but doesn't cover it yet, so these short exercises come from the full Guide 1. Be specific: "good product" isn't a strength.

	Your answer	e.g. Jordan
Strengths		*Dietitian-designed recipes; food industry experience*
Weaknesses		*No marketing experience; small budget*
Opportunities		*More families eating at home; few local competitors*
Threats		*HelloFresh discounts; rising ingredient costs*

8.1 Could any threat or weakness sink the business? ☐ Yes ☐ No *e.g. No, if the pilot shows reorders*

Chapter 8: pass or fail?

☐ **Pass**
Strengths and opportunities outweigh the rest, and every big risk has a plan.

☐ **Fail**
At least one risk could sink the business, with no way around it yet.

09

STEP 9: DOES IT FIT YOUR LIFE?

How to Build a Business That Fits Your Life

Read Chapter 9 in the guide →

YOUR GOAL Check that you have the hours this business needs, on a real schedule, and that success would give you the life you want.

The Quickie Guide lists this chapter but doesn't cover it yet; these questions come from the full Guide 1. Even a simple business often needs 10–20 focused hours a week to get traction.

Calculation or input	Your answer	e.g. Jordan
Hours a week the business needs		*17*
Hours a week you can realistically give it (Chapter 7)		*12*
Shortfall = needed − available		*5*

9.1 When will you work on it, and what will you stop doing to make room?

e.g. Tue and Thu 8–10 p.m., Sunday 7–11 a.m.; drop one volunteer committee and outsource deliveries.

9.2 If it succeeds exactly as planned, will you be happy with that life? ☐ Yes ☐ No *e.g. Yes*

Chapter 9: pass or fail?

☐ **Pass**
The hours exist on your calendar, and success would give you the life you want.

☐ **Fail**
The hours aren't there, or success would take you away from what you want.

10

STEP 10: GO, PIVOT OR PARK IT?

Your Go/No-Go Decision

Read Chapter 10 in the guide →

YOUR GOAL Count the chapters you passed and let the score decide. Then commit to one next step this week.

Ch.	Chapter	Result
01	Real demand	
02	Money questions	
03	Differentiation	
04	Market size	
05	First customers	
06	Profit	
07	Founder fit	
08	Risks	
09	Lifestyle fit	

Chapters passed (out of 9)

GO (8–9 passed)

Move on to testing with real customers: Guide 2, *Test Your Business Idea Before You Build*.

PIVOT (5–7 passed)

Fix your weakest area this week, then score yourself again.

PARK IT (0–4 passed)

Rework the model, try a different market, or take the lessons to a new idea. That's not failure.

10.1 Your one next step this week, and when you'll do it.

e.g. GO: start Guide 2 and run a 4-week paid pilot with 5 families, starting Monday.

Want more depth? The full Guide 1 and its workbook: startabusiness.center/guideslive