

Cleaning Biz Guide

For any further questions, feel free to DM @cleanwcarly on Tiktok!

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The Basics

Business Name

My business' name is, FreshLee Cleaning Co. My service area is in Lee County, FL. Fresh means clean. I wanted to make a play on words and that's how I came up with my business name! If you decide to take the location route, I would try to stick to your service area. That way your name immediately tells potential clients the areas you currently serve.

Other ideas: Last name, nickname, inside joke (PG please! 😊), etc.

Once you have a few names picked out, make sure to look them up on google and your states business registry. I live in Florida, which means I would use, <https://search.sunbiz.org/Inquiry/CorporationSearch/ByName>

You want to make sure that the name isn't taken already and that no other business in your state has a name even close to yours. This is why it's important to come up with a unique name. I would have loved to name my business Carly's Cleaning Co. But, let's be honest, it's basic and would absolutely be taken. If you were to google Carly's Cleaning Co. You will get multiple hits in multiple states. But no other business in the U.S has a name even similar to mine. If you google my business, only my business pops up. That's exactly what you want. Having a name similar to another company, even if it's in a different state, can be incredibly confusing to potential clients.

Pro Cleaner? Maid? Housekeeper? What the hell is the difference?!

I can't even begin to tell you how many times people have thought I was a maid or they confuse a maid with a housekeeper, etc.

I am a professional cleaner and I specialize in residential cleanings. So it is correct to call me a pro cleaner or a house cleaner. But, I am not a maid or a housekeeper. There is nothing wrong with being a maid or housekeeper, it's just not what I wanted to specialize in. All 3 have different cleaning checklists. This guide is geared more specifically towards pro cleaners that specialize in residential house cleanings.

Pro Cleaner: A Professional House Cleaner cleans homes weekly, bi-weekly, or monthly. We tend to focus more on deep cleaning and sanitizing rather than tidying up.

Maid: A maid regularly shows up to a home (even daily) to clean. But they tend to dedicate more of their time to doing dishes, making beds, doing laundry, taking out the trash, and picking up items (tidying up).

Housekeeper: Housekeepers tend to live on the property and also supervise home staff like a house cleaner or a maid. They direct the team of employees that work on the property. Their main focuses are, supervising staff, creating meal plans, cooking meals, and making sure the home is clean.

LLC or Sole Proprietor:

I didn't form my LLC until 3-4 months after I started my business. I genuinely just couldn't afford it. It's not something you need right off the bat BUT you should absolutely get licensed and insured as soon as you possibly can.

LLC: A business structure that is registered with the state. The owner does not have a personal liability for the business' debts. I chose an LLC because I wanted to be registered and I thought I

would eventually hire staff. There is an option for a single-person LLC. Forming an LLC helps build credibility with clients and makes you look more professional and “legit”.

Sole Proprietor: A business you own but you don't have to formally register with the government. I do suggest you fill out a fictitious business name statement that way you can own the business name you chose. I would recommend making sure the name is available. Even though you don't typically need to register a sole proprietorship, it all depends on your state so please check your states division of corporations website. As a sole proprietor, you will face full responsibility for any debts or legal issues. Also, you will not need to file a separate business tax return.

Insurance & Bond:

All businesses should have general liability insurance. I got insured on <https://www.simplybusiness.com> and pay \$26 per month. The first month will of course be more expensive. Also, insurance pricing can differ.

Insurance protects you and your employees from risks like injuries, property damage, and lawsuits. Bonds safeguard your clients from theft. You can purchase janitorial bond from <https://www.suretybonds.com>

Solo Cleaner vs Larger Company

Fly Solo?

Most solo cleaners didn't plan to stay solo. I sure as hell didn't! Unfortunately hiring staff isn't as easy as many business owners online make it seem. One of the hardest lessons cleaning business owners learn is that you can't expect others to care about your business as much as you do. My business is my baby and I've realized that I don't feel comfortable trusting someone else. I have really high standards and my reputation is everything. Being a solo cleaner is a blessing and a curse! A blessing because I don't have to chase after employees and the cleanings will always be to my standard. BUT, a curse because if I get sick or I have a family emergency, I don't have any one to fill in for me. Thankfully that hasn't happened yet but it absolutely could and that's super stressful to even think about. Also, it's so freaking exhausting to do it alone. Unfortunately, I am not at a place where I can trust someone else to do some of the cleaning for me but that doesn't mean this will be the case for you too!

When hiring staff, you can either hire an employee or a subcontractor.

Employees: Staff you hire to work for you permanently instead of by the job. They can be part-time or full-time.

Benefits of hiring employees:

1. You are in charge of their schedule, train them to your standards, and control their pay.
2. Because you train them, they will be more familiar with your business practices and clients.
3. They are more committed to doing right by your business than most subcontractors.

Cons of hiring employees:

1. You're responsible for deducting taxes from their pay.
2. You will have to provide cleaning supplies and employee benefits (vacation time, healthcare, sick days, etc) which will get expensive.
3. It is more difficult to let them go after the trial/30-60 day probation.

Salary: Your employee will receive the same pay every single week regardless of how much work is available. Even if they work more than 40 hours, they will still receive the same amount. Salaried workers do not receive over time pay. Having a salaried employee will make payroll easier because the numbers will not yo-yo.

Hourly: Your employee will be paid a certain rate per hour. In my opinion, you should aim for at least \$17 an hour. If hourly employees work past 40 hours in a week, you will be required to pay their time and a half for the over time hours (in most states). Also, keep in mind that eventually, some of your cleaners will clean on their own. There is a risk of them milking the clock since you won't personally be supervising them.

• *Quick Tip:* If you decide to hire an employee, please pay them well. Cleaning is hard work and even if cleaning businesses in your area are paying their employees \$13 an hour, it doesn't mean it's the right thing to do and that you should follow along and offer the same pay. No one can survive on \$13 an hour. There is absolutely no way in hell that anyone can provide for their families on that hourly wage. If you take care of your employees, they will take care of you. Also, a lot of cleaning business owners will tell you to hire employees to do the work for you from the get-go. I personally think that is HORRIBLE advice. If you decide you don't want to do any cleanings at all and hire an employee to do the cleanings for you, please think twice. At least in the beginning. If you don't do ANY cleanings at all, how will you know how to train your staff? How will you set standards? A great boss is someone that has done the work before, you understand what your employees do every single day, and you learn to appreciate the work they do.

Subcontractors: Self-employed cleaners that you hire by the job.

Benefits of hiring a subcontractor:

1. They are paid by the job instead of a salary or hourly pay.
2. They provide their own supplies and cleaning tools.
3. They pay their own taxes and benefits (vacay time, healthcare, sick days, etc)
4. The process of letting a subcontractor go is much easier than firing an employee.

Cons of hiring a subcontractor:

1. There is a chance they might try to take clients from you.
2. Because they provide their own cleaning supplies, you don't have any control in the quality of work they provide. They will use the products they believe is best not the ones you believe are

best.

3. If they work for you, they possibly work with other cleaning business owners so their schedule can be all over the place and they might not be available when you need them or if a last minute cleaning pops up.
4. They set their own pay and hours.

• *Quick Tip:* You can find subcontractors by posting job ads on your social media business pages (facebook, Instagram, Next Door, etc). You can also post a \$5 ad on Craigslist. There are other apps like Indeed, Zip Recruiter, etc.

Mandatory Supplies

Must-Have Products in Caddy:

With time you will test out products and figure out which ones you prefer. You don't have to use the ones that I personally use. Please for the love of god do not blow all of your money on all of the products you see influencers push online. I can't tell you how many products I have just sitting in my cleaning closet wasting space because they weren't as life changing as certain influencers claimed. In the beginning, I bought products by the bottle (not in bulk). Once you figure out what you like, you should buy them in bulk because that is the smartest and more affordable way to go.

PLEASE READ LABELS ON BOTTLES BEFORE USING. NEVER MIX CLEANING PRODUCTS. ALWAYS TEST PRODUCT ON SMALL AREA FIRST.

• *Quick Tip:* An all-purpose cleaner can be used on counters, stoves, microwaves, fridges and even floors. A multi-purpose cleaner can be used on multiple surfaces but not ALL. They are completely different products so please keep that in mind. This was something that confused me early on!

1. All Purpose Cleaner: Some great and **affordable options** are, Lysol All Purpose Disinfecting Cleaner and Method All Purpose AntiBac Cleaner. **Bulk Option:** <https://www.homedepot.com/p/ZEP-1-Gal-Antibacterial-Disinfectant-Cleaner-ZUBAC128/202218262> **Best Overall:** <https://www.bayareadeconfl.com/shop>
2. Microfiber Towels: Make sure to get them in multiple colors. Create a color key that way you aren't using bathroom towels in the kitchen, for example. When washing microfiber towels, wash them in cool water and try to air dry them. If you would like to dry them in a dryer, please do not dry them with clothing or other towels. Dry them on no heat if possible or low heat. **Bulk Option:** <https://amzn.to/48GVHjC>
3. Glass Cleaner: Sprayway makes the best glass cleaner on the market. **Affordable Option:** Make your own glass cleaner at home! 2 cups of warm water, ¼ cup of white distilled vinegar, and ½ teaspoon of dawn. **Bulk Option:** <https://amzn.to/4a3Eodo>

4. Gloves: Make sure to use Nitrile Gloves because they resist punctures and protect your hands from harsh chemicals. • **Affordable Option**: <https://amzn.to/3uZX3bc>
5. Tall Kitchen Trash Bags: I recommend having a roll in your caddy or pack one bag per home.
6. Toilet Bowl Cleaner/Toilet Bowl Brush: Lysol and Clorox both make great toilet bowl cleaners. You could also get Clorox's Disposable Toilet Bowl Wands. Some clients don't have toilet brushes and this can save you a headache but it is the pricier option.
7. Floor Cleaner: I personally recommend using Zep's Neutral pH Floor Cleaner, it can be used on vinyl, marble, granite, stone, rubber, sealed concrete, and tile. ***Do not use on wood floors***. For wood floors, I recommend Bona Hardwood Floor Cleaner. The best antibacterial floor cleaner is Zep's Antibacterial Disinfectant.
8. Non-Scratch Sponge: I personally recommend the Scrub Mommy or Daddy. You can buy an 8 pack on Amazon and cut them in half which results in 16 sponges. Of course there are many more **affordable options** out there (Scotch-Brite, Dawn, etc). **Bulk Option (Scrub Daddy)**: <https://amzn.to/3uQSdx7>
9. Soft Bristle Brush: I recommend the garage brush from the Dollar Tree.
10. Grout Brush: <https://amzn.to/3TqVz2b>
11. Scouring Stick (Pumice Stone): **Bulk Option**: <https://amzn.to/438xHor>
12. Steel Wool Grade 0000: Safe to use on glass. Please make sure it's 0000!
13. Vacuum: **Affordable Option**: <https://amzn.to/42H5lfh> **Best Backpack Vacuum**: <https://amzn.to/3TqGDIN>
14. Mop: **Affordable Option**: <https://amzn.to/3P6eMEY> **Best Overall**: <https://shop.tovarseasycleaning.com>
15. Paper Towels: PLEASE FOR THE LOVE OF GOD ONLY USE PAPER TOWELS WHEN CLEANING TOILETS! 😬 **Bulk Option**: <https://amzn.to/48MbgX0>
16. Cream Cleanser: Great for cleaning sinks, stainless steel fixtures, chrome fixtures, bathtubs, and brass fixtures. **Affordable Option**: Barkeeper's Friend Soft Cleanser. **Best Overall**: <https://www.longproducts.com/p/ABCL546/Pelican-Quixee-Cream-Cleanser-Qt/>
17. Hard Water Remover: **Best Overall**: <https://amzn.to/3T7XY1n>
18. Duster: **Best Overall**: <https://amzn.to/3uQg3SZ> **Refills in Bulk**: <https://amzn.to/49Wvsq8> (cheaper at Costco)
19. Mold and Mildew Cleaner: Tilex Mold and Mildew Remover is the best option. **Bulk Option**: <https://amzn.to/3V8aBMy>
20. **(OPTIONAL)** Rinseroo: This useful for when clients don't have removable shower heads. This hose has a rubber attachment that can go over most shower heads and makes it easier to rinse the shower/tub after a cleaning. <https://amzn.to/3TmYU3c>

Cleaning 101

Finally, the fun part!

Both of my parents were janitors pretty much my entire life so I grew up in a very clean home. But, even though my parents were cleaners, I was actually never taught how to clean properly. My home

was always clean because my parents handled it. So, please do not be embarrassed if you're just now learning how to clean! ♥ We all start somewhere and practice makes perfect!

- **The most important rules:** Always read the labels on bottles, familiarize yourself with different surfaces, never ever mix cleaning products, always make sure you completely rinse off a product before using another on the same surface, and always test a small area first when using a new product. Mistakes do happen, we're human but we need to try our best to prevent them ♥ Always clean from top to bottom and left to right. Also, always dry dust before spraying a cleaner on a surface like a toilet or counter, it prevents wet dust which is a PAIN.

- If you are ever at a cleaning and feel stumped on what to use, find me on Facebook, <https://www.facebook.com/profile.php?id=61556043794620&mibextid=LQQJ4d> and DM me a photo with a quick description of the issue and I will get back to you as soon as I possibly can!

Let's Get to Cleaning!



- Glass Shower Doors: When doing a deep clean you will have to use stronger products, especially if the doors look like this. I start by rinsing the glass, grabbing a Steel Wool 0000, applying CLR to the steel wool (usually you should dilute it but in this case, I did not), then scrub away! After, rinse the doors again, you might need to go through the process one more time to get the doors just right, then you can squeegee the doors and dry off with a microfiber towel. To polish the glass you can go ahead and use a glass cleaner. The outside of the doors should be okay with just glass cleaner. For a maintenance cleaning, you can feel free to use the steel wool 0000 with the following options: Barkeeper's Friend, Quixee Cream Cleanser, Dawn Dish Soap, or the Power Paste or the Pink Stuff.



- Shower Cleaning: To start, I used Clorox Tilex Mold Spray. Open up a window and door because this stuff is STRONG. Let the product sit for a 3-5 minutes. If it's on a ledge and the product is dripping off...grab a paper towel, tuck it into the ledge and spray the Tilex on the paper towel. Make sure to fully rinse off the solution before moving on. Once the stains are gone and the solution is rinsed, I went in with a mixture of Dawn dish soap and water. I scrub the tile walls with a brush or non-scratch sponge. Once the walls have been cleaned, I rinse all of the product off. Then squeegee the water down. Then I clean the shower pan with "Soft Scrub with Bleach" and a magic eraser. If you do not have a magic eraser, you can use another scrubbing tool. When the shower looks like new, rinse the product off and then dry with towels! Make sure to dry the corners and ledges.



- Glass Cooktop Cleaning: Okay, this is going to be scary but you've trusted me so far so don't quit on me now! 😊♥ The first step is use a mixture of Dawn and water. Spray that and wipe the glass top with a microfiber towel. This helps remove the grease and top layer. If you have burnt on foods like this photo, you will need to use my bestie, the pumice stone. Make sure to soak the stone in water for 5 minutes before using it. Once it's done soaking, spray the surface with the water and Dawn mixture. Then, use the pumice stone. You don't need to scrub like crazy. Make sure to keep the surface and the stone wet. Once you have removed all of the gunk, use a glass cleaner to polish the glass.



- Toilet Cleaning: When cleaning a toilet always start by dry dusting with a paper towel. Make sure you don't forget the base of the toilet. If you need to remove the toilet seat for a deep clean, I suggest cleaning it in a tub. Next, use a disinfectant spray and spray it all over the toilet. Let the solution "marinate" for the amount directed on the label. Usually, 3-5 minutes is enough. Then wipe, the toilet down with paper towels. The next step is to grab a bucket filled with water and pour it into the toilet bowl, this will cause the toilet to force flush. This is important because a toilet filled with water will dilute the toilet bowl cleaner. After, you will use a toilet bowl cleaner, let the solution work it's magic for a few minutes before you scrub. If there is a toilet ring, I suggest using a pumice stone. Remember to soak the pumice stone and water and keep the surface and stick wet. Once you scrub, flush the toilet and you are good to go!



- Microwave Cleaning: For a simple microwave cleaning, I suggest getting a microwaveable mug or bowl and putting a mixture of water and white vinegar. Microwave that for 3-5 minutes. The steam will make it very easy to clean. Please make sure to remove bowl or mug carefully as it can be hot. If the microwave looks like the one in the photo, you can do the same thing but after, I suggest spraying Dawn Powerwash and letting it marinate for a few minutes. This should loosen up the gunk. After, either wipe it with paper towels or use a non scratch sponge to scrub if it's a bit tougher.



- Cleaning Chrome Fixtures: I love cleaning chrome fixtures, it's always so damn satisfying! Dawn Powerwash, Quixee Cream Cleanser, Barkeeper's Friend, The Pink Stuff and Scrub Daddy's Powerpaste will all work great on these fixtures! Rinse the fixtures to start, apply the product on a soft non-scratch sponge (preferably the softer side of a Scrub Mommy) and start scrubbing away! In order to get the small crevices, I recommend using a small crevice brush. Please don't forget to scrub the base of the fixtures and don't forget the back. Rinse the product off and then dry with a microfiber towel.



- Fridge Cleaning: If the fridge isn't too bad you can spray disinfectant in fridge, let it sit for the directed time (at least 3 minutes) and then wipe. Buuuuut, usually you won't clean a clean fridge 😞 😂 If the fridge, looks like the fridge in the photo, a handheld steamer will be a lifesaver but at the time of that cleaning, I did not have one. I mixed Platinum Dawn and hot water and carefully poured it on the areas needed and let it sit for as long as I possibly could (while I cleaned other parts of the kitchen) then I went in with a scrub mommy, scrubbed all the gunk off. I suggest cleaning the glass shelves in the sink with soap and hot water. After, I sprayed disinfectant in fridge, let it sit for a few minutes and then went in and wiped with paper towels.

Services to Offer

So Many Options!!

When I first started my cleaning business, I had a game plan. I was going to be a solo house cleaner for the first 3 months. Then, I'd start hiring and start going after commercial contracts. Ten months later, I'm still a solo house cleaner 🙄🤔 I'm telling you this because it's okay if things don't go to plan. This is a huge industry and there's a lot you can offer. But, if you decide commercial isn't for you, residential is still great! And, there's many other services you can offer!

Main Services:

- Residential: House Cleaning
- Commercial: Office/Business Cleaning
- Short Term Rental: Airbnb, Vrbo, and vacation rental cleaning
- Post-Construction: Either Residential or Commercial properties.
- Restoration: Cleaning after fire, flood, or storm damage.

Add-On Services:

- Oven Cleaning- Deep clean the exterior and interior of oven including grates. **(\$50-\$100)**
- Fridge Cleaning- Deep Clean the interior of refrigerator. The exterior is typically included in basic cleanings (dusted and cleaned). **(\$40-\$75)**
- Dish Washing- Wash dishes by hand. This service is typically included in maid services but considered an add on service for house cleaners. Some business owners charge a flat rate and some charge by the load. I personally charge a \$15 flat rate. There is no special reason why I chose \$15 to be honest. I wanted to make it affordable because typically it's the elderly and single parents that ask me to wash dishes. If you decide to charge by the load, the average price I see is **\$10-\$25 per load**. Flat rates are usually **\$15-\$35**.
- Pet Cleaning: Vacuuming all pet areas. Usually the fee is per pet. Please do not allow clients to force you into cleaning pet feces, urine, or vomit. You are not a bio cleaner. Cleaning up after pets adds extra time so price accordingly. Do not be afraid to enforce this, you'll regret it if you don't. **(\$25-\$50 per pet)**
- Baseboard Cleaning- Wet wipe, wash and scrub baseboards. Some cleaners include this service in their deep cleans. But, if you're solo I do recommend offering this as an add on service. It's

extremely time consuming and starting in April, I will only be offering this as an add-on or for move in/out cleanings. (\$10-\$20 per room)

- Garage Cleaning- Sweeping garage. (\$10-\$20 per car stall)
- Window Cleaning- Wipe down and wash window tracks and sills. (\$5-\$15 per window)
- Dishwasher Cleaning- Clean the interior of empty dishwasher. (\$25-45)
- Wall Washing- Wipe down small stains and marks. Typically included in moving cleanings. (\$10-\$20 per room)
- Blinds Cleaning- Dust and wet wipe window blinds. (\$15-\$35 per window)
- Laundry: Washing, drying, and folding laundry. (\$10-\$25 per load)

***The prices above are just suggestions based on prices I have noted from other business owners around the country. I recommend you look into your competitors' websites and see what other businesses are charging in your area.**

Airbnb Cleaning 101

Literal nightmare (IMO 😊😂)

Vacay rental cleanings kickstarted by cleaning business and I'll forever be grateful for that but my god it is a TON of work! Short term rental cleanings (STR from now on) are like residential deep cleans every single time! They can usually be booked at any time which makes scheduling a nightmare. As a solo cleaner, I no longer promote STR cleanings because it was so difficult to have a set residential schedule and then have a vacation rental get booked and all of a sudden I need to start moving cleanings around. If you have a team, it'll be a much easier process.

How to connect with STR owners:

1. Join Turno For Cleaners (app): Turno has a marketplace that sends you notifications any time a STR owner is looking for a cleaner. You will then place a bid and the owners accepts the bid of the cleaner they choose. You will see the number of bedrooms and bathrooms, sqft of home, how long cleaning should take and whether laundry needs to be washed or not. The downside of Turno is that there are a lot of lowballing cleaners on there. I've lost bids for cleaners offering to clean a 5 bedroom/3 bath for \$10 an hour 😞 To sign up for Turno, you must pay a \$15 background check fee. They take 5% of each completed cleaning. You do not pay for leads. The sign up process takes about one week.
2. Hoosst.com- Completely free. You make a free account and start a search for your area. The owners contact information will be displayed. This is the easiest and most affordable option

BUT it is a newer site and not very well known so unfortunately there might not be a lot of hits for your area. I have acquired two clients through this site.

3. Facebook Airbnb Cleaning Services Groups- On the group search type in your state and Airbnb cleaning. Join the groups for your city or state and start sharing your flyers.
4. Craigslist- You can post a \$5 ad on the “home services” category and share a description of the services you provide.

STR Cleaning Walkthrough Questions:

1. How many bedrooms and bathrooms?
2. What is the sqft?
3. How many beds? Any bunk beds?
4. Are pets allowed?
5. Does laundry need to be washed?
6. If so, what is the quickest setting for washer and dryer?
7. What are your check in and out times? (Typically 10am and 4pm)
8. Do you accept same day- check ins? (A guest checks out at 10am and another guests checks in at 4pm)
9. Is there a cleaning closet or am I required to hold the restock items?
10. How many bed sets are available per bed?

***Please for the love of god, don't ever lowball yourself when it comes to STR's. They are a lot of work. These owners have an extra home they rent out. They can absolutely afford your services.**

Constructing Your Cleaning Checklist



The 411

Standard/ Basic Cleanings- Maintenance cleanings done weekly, bi-weekly or monthly. Common tasks included: dusting, wipe surfaces, mirrors wiped, bathroom cleaned and disinfected, clean kitchen, cobwebs removed, etc.

Deep Cleaning- Complete cleaning giving attention to often neglected areas. Deep cleans are more extensive and more expensive than standard cleanings. You should always require an initial deep clean when you have a first-time client. If a client only calls you every couple of months, charge them for a deep clean. Anything past a month should be considered a deep clean. You should deep clean your clients homes every 3-6 months.

The best part of being a business owner is that you make the rules. Some cleaning businesses offer a fridge cleaning, oven cleaning and baseboard cleanings in their deep clean services. You

don't have to. I don't like doing any of those so they are add on services for me. You do not have to follow someone else's checklist. Make one that works for you!

My cleaning checklist, as an example: <https://freshleeclean.com/residential-cleaning/>

Pricing

The Part You've All Been Waiting For

Pricing depends on A LOT, your location, what type of cleaning, the frequency of cleanings, size of home, your expenses, etc. Your best bet will always be to get quotes from your local competitors and get a price for your own home. My prices down here in South FL will not work well if you live in NYC or if you live Oklahoma.

Most Common Pricing Structures:

- Bedrooms and Bathrooms: Most cleaners tend to charge by bedrooms and bathrooms which I personally do not recommend because it doesn't take into account the entire home. Some homes have offices, gyms, multiple living rooms, multiple kitchens, etc. **Usually they start with a flat rate like \$100 for a 1 bed/1 bath and then \$15-\$25 per additional bedroom and bathroom.**
- Hourly: Most cleaners try to make between **\$50-\$75 per hour/per cleaner**. I personally do not recommend charging by the hour. With time, you will get faster as your skills get better and as you start building a system.
- Square Foot: This is what I recommend and what I use for my own business. This makes the most sense because it does take the entire property into account and a flat rate is a lot less scary for potential clients than an hourly rate. What sounds less scary to you? \$50 an hour or \$200 per cleaning?

National Average for sqft pricing:

1. Weekly: \$0.10
2. Bi-Weekly: \$0.12
3. Monthly: \$0.14
4. Deep Clean: \$0.15-0.20
5. Move In/Out: \$0.25-0.30
6. Post-Construction: \$0.45-\$0.60

My Pricing Structure in SW Florida:

1. Weekly: 0.10 per sqft. Having a lower weekly rate than bi-weekly gives clients an incentive to see you more often.

2. Bi-Weekly: 0.11 per sqft.
3. STR: 0.12 per sqft.
4. Initial Deep Clean: 0.15 per sqft (I do not offer monthly services because most people tend to go for that. I want to see my clients as often as possible so I dropped monthly services entirely)
5. One-Time Deep Clean: 0.20 per sqft.
6. Move In/Out: 0.25 per sqft.

Online Marketing Tools

Social Media Will Be Your Bestie 🥰

Having an online presence is vital for having a successful cleaning business! You need to make sure you get your name out there and take advantage of all the ways you can promote your services online! Please make sure to be consistent!

1. Create a Facebook/Instagram business page. Post twice a day, lunch time and dinner time. Share promotions, flyers, before and after photos, client reviews, etc. Join local Facebook groups and share your posts on these groups (**mom groups, neighborhood groups, home services groups, etc**)
2. Create a Google Business profile. This will get your businesses listed on google which is the most popular search engine. Make sure to always keep the information updated. It can be a pain to get verified, if you have any issues please reach out to me.
3. Create a free Next Door Neighbor account. This is an app where your neighbors will ask for service recommendations. Pretty much every single day you will see someone ask for a cleaner. Check daily and make sure to be on the look out. Respond to them as quickly as possible.
4. Create a Yelp Business Profile. Yelp is extremely popular and it's super easy to make an account. Make sure to keep this information updated as well.

Gaining Clientele

Now, to the hard part 😊

Yes, this actually is hard. No, you're probably not doing anything wrong. It's really just this difficult. Especially if you can't afford online ads or paying for leads (which are usually a scam because the leads aren't usually hot). Please be patient and don't give up. The first 3 months are so difficult and I almost gave up a few times! Now, I have word of mouth built up and don't need to

promote my services as frequently as I used to. I started my cleaning business with \$20 so I didn't have money to spend on online advertising. I had to be creative.

Affordable ways to gain clientele:

- Facebook groups
- Next Door App
- Turno For Cleaners (STR)
- \$5 Weekly Craigslist Ads
- Get a t shirt created with your logo in front and contact information in the back. I use https://www.etsy.com/listing/1413730525/custom-business-logo-qr-shirts?ref=yr_purchases
- Passing around business cards and flyers (leave on cracks of doors, coffee shops, local business bulletin boards, gym front desks, etc)

Quick Tip: Design your business cards on Canva if you're not able to afford a designer. Take advantage of their 14 day free trial. The most affordable way to print is to go to <https://www.gotprint.com/home.html> you can get 1,000 business cards for \$41.

Pay For Leads:

1. Thumbtack
2. Yelp
3. Bark
4. Angi Leads
5. 99 Calls

Service Agreement 101

Protect Yourself & Your Business

- You must create a service agreement and require all clients to sign one. Whether they are a recurring client or only getting a one time cleaning. My service agreement has saved me multiple times!
- I create my service agreements on <https://squareup.com/us/en/contracts>
- Square is a CRM system that allows me to schedule myself, send invoices, send service agreements, allows potential clients to request a cleaning and track my earnings. I use their free

basic plan. I only pay a processing fee not a monthly fee 😊 They will also send you a free mobile card swiper after you sign up! Sign up today at

<https://squareup.com/us/en>

• **Clauses To Have In Service Agreement:**

1. Licensing and Insurance information.
2. Description of services.
3. Rate.
4. Cancellation/Rescheduling policy.
5. Payment Methods Accepted and Late Fee Policy.

View my service agreement: <https://squareup.com/contracts/32787b4d-6441-426c-89f0-0b53e6f663f8>

If you have trouble viewing my service agreement please email me at: carlyecastro93@gmail.com to receive a copy.

Please do not be afraid to enforce a service agreement. This will protect you and your client. If a client refuses to sign one, please do not take them as a client. Even if you can't afford to lose them. It is not worth it!

Cleaning Website 101

Now it's time to introduce my favorite human in the world, my bestie Raian 😊

- Like I always say, I am a sl*t for my website! I tell everyone and anyone about it! My vision for my website was: it needs to scream clean and luxury!
- Raian and I worked on my website for a month but I had been personally planning things out for about 3 months! I knew exactly what my brand colors would be, what information I wanted on there, and the vibe I wanted it to give off. Raian made it even better than I could've possibly imagined!! I know I might be biased because he's my bestie, but this man is a GENIUS! He's willing to go above and beyond to make your vision come to life, he's legit an expert in his field and he makes the process so easy. I can't recommend him enough. Raian, if you're reading this, I love you so damn much and I can't even begin to explain how proud I am of you! We really did this shit and made our dreams come true ❤️
- I do not recommend that you get a website early on. Websites are not cheap and you will be required to have certain information that you just won't have in the early days of your business.

And that's okay. Do not feel pressured to have one immediately.

Info Your Web Designer Will Require:

1. Logo. If you don't have one Raian can design on for you! <https://sinrabrands.com>
2. Description of services
3. Cleaning checklists
4. Before and after photos for photo gallery
5. About me (paragraph selling yourself and your business)
6. Business email (you can create one through google. I believe I pay \$7 per month)

How to have a successful cleaning business website:

1. Share your website on all of your social media business pages, business cards, flyers, and all marketing materials. The more clicks you get, the higher you will be on google.
2. Anytime someone wants information, send them your website. This is why it's important to have as much info on there as possible.
3. Pander to the crowd that you want. I won't lie, I want the people in the rich neighborhoods to hire me. So I made my website minimalist and it screams luxury because THATS the clients I want to get. After all, that's where the money is!

When you are ready for a website, fill out Sinra Brands (Raian's Web Design Company) contact form and use the code: CarlysGuide2024 for \$500 off (websites START at \$1300) !! You may not stack this promo with any other promo Sinra Brands is running at that time.

- Most websites run from \$1500 to as high as \$20,000 for very large companies.

Monetizing Cleaning Content 101

Let's Make That Money Honey

You know me, I keep it real. I make between \$1,000-\$2,000 per month on Tiktok. I get paid per views and also make commission on Tiktok shop (I promise all of my reviews are honest and I will NEVER lie to you, especially for money). In order to monetize your content on Tiktok, you need 10,000 followers to join the Creator Beta Program. Then, you get between \$0.50-\$1.00 per 1,000 views. I believe you can join the Tiktok Shop after you reach 5,000 followers. After awhile, brands will start noticing you and they will send you products for free as long as you make a review video for them and share that with your followers. I used to buy cleaning supplies pretty frequently. Now I only spend about \$50 every 3 months because brands usually send me cleaning tools and cleaning products. It's a bit of a process but if I can do it, so can you! Please try making a cleaning page on Facebook as well! There's a lot of people you can reach through there as well!

Tips for gaining Tiktok following:

1. Stick to your niche. If you're going to post cleaning content, only post that. Posting about different things will confuse the algorithm and it'll have a difficult time finding your targeted audience.
2. Post as frequently as you can. Aim for twice a day (usually once in the afternoon and once in the evening).
3. Do not post videos back to back. Give each video at least 2-4 hours before posting another. Give Tiktok the chance to push your video into the FYP.
4. Post the contact you wish you saw. I wanted to see more FREE cleaning business tips and so that's what I did!
5. Be authentic. What I love the most about Tiktok is that we like to see real people. We don't really care to see high fashion models. We want to see people we relate to. Be yourself. You're interesting. You're fun. And you're more than enough! ❤️

Be patient and consistent! There's more than enough money for all of us on social media! When you post a video, tag me and I'll repost it to share with my 55k followers. ❤️❤️

Walkthrough Questions

Get the 411

I don't have a vehicle so, unfortunately I am not able to do physical walkthroughs for all of my cleanings which is why I have to ask certain questions that way I know what surfaces are throughout the home, what products to bring with me, etc. It's important for me to gain as much information as possible and be as prepared as I possibly as possible.

Since I don't have a vehicle, most of my walkthroughs are virtual. Either through FaceTime or clients can upload photos of all the living spaces through my website.

<https://freshleeclean.com/residential-contact-us/>

If a potential client fills out my contact form, they must upload photos of all living spaces. If they do not, they must fill it out once again. Once the form is submitted and reviewed, I will give them a call where I will ask more questions.

Walkthrough Questions:

1. What is the sqft of home? (Confirm on Zillow)
2. What type of cleaning service are you interested in? (Recurring, Short Term Rental, Post-Construction, Restoration, etc)
3. (For recurring) How frequently would you like your home to be serviced? (Weekly, bi-weekly, or monthly)

4. Preferred day and time of cleaning.
5. Are there any pets on property?
6. Are there any allergies we should be aware of?
7. What type of flooring do you have?
8. Do we need a gate code, garage code, or door code to enter property?
9. Would you like to add an oven cleaning or refrigerator cleaning? (Upsell your add-on services)
10. Do you have any special requests?

Make sure to always get their contact information: first/last name, phone number, email, and address.

Once the client and I have agreed on a day and time, I head over to Square and schedule the appointment. After that, Square will email the client a booking confirmation. 24 hours before the cleaning, I will manually send the client a reminder text. An hour before my arrival, Square will send the client an automatic message.

Cleaner Safety

Safety Is #1

1. Appropriate Gear: As Pro Cleaners we work with harsh chemicals so it's important for you to wear nitrile gloves, face masks, and non-slip shoes.
2. Use Cleaning Products Correctly: Never mix cleaning products, always read bottle labels, and make sure to always test product on a small area first.
3. Share Your Location: I always share my location with my boyfriend. Since he's usually my ride, he knows where I am but it's important for me to share my location, while I'm working, just in case. Share it with your partner, parent, sibling, or best friend. Someone.
4. Carry Safety Tools: I carry pepper spray <https://amzn.to/4clrg5h> , and a defense keychain <https://amzn.to/3v8aJ4f>

Chemical Reactions:

- Bleach + Vinegar: Chlorine Gas
- Bleach + Ammonia: Chloramine
- Bleach + Rubbing Alcohol: Chloroform
- Hydrogen Peroxide + Vinegar: Peroxyacetic Acid

Business Owner Mental Health 101

Struggling? I promise, it's not just you!

I live, eat and breathe my business and that's actually quite problematic. For some reason, as business owners, we feel like we're being lazy if we aren't constantly doing something to push our business forward. I still struggle with that mentality and every single day, I try to improve and take some time for myself.

Self Care Tips:

1. **Never take on more work than you can handle.** Making money is important but taking on too much is exhausting and you will get burn out.
2. **Focus on your working hours.** If your business hours are 9-5, add an extra two hours for administrative work, laundry, and everything else you need to handle at home. After those two hours, take the rest of the day to decompress, if you're able.
3. **Take 2 days off per week.** As a business owner, you set your schedule. I personally don't mind working weekends so, I usually have off certain days of the week. No matter what, try to make your days off back to back. You work hard and deserve days off too.
4. **If you don't offer 24/7 services, don't answer that quote request form at 11pm.** They can wait til the following morning when your business "opens". Set boundaries and stick to them.
5. **Keep a notepad on you.** As business owners, our wheels are constantly turning. You will have rescheduled cleanings, special requests, emergency cleanings, last minute changes, etc. You're incredibly smart 🧠 but you're bound to forget things. Make sure to write down little notes for yourself. You'll thank yourself later.
6. **Never ever compare yourself to other cleanings biz owners.** I remember comparing myself to another owner when I first started. They started a month after me yet they had triple the clients I did, had employees, and seemed to be killing the game. I was happy for them but I couldn't help but wonder what I was doing wrong. Fast forward 3 months later, I found out they inherited a 30 year old cleaning business, and they were not doing well. Don't believe everything you see on social media. **Focus on you. You're going to be fine ♥**
7. **Celebrate your milestones.** Got that client you thought you wouldn't? Get yourself your favorite coffee! Hit your 6 monthiversary? Get a small cake! Got 500 followers on Tiktok? Treat yourself! Doesn't matter how big or small the accomplishment seems, you deserve to be celebrated!
8. **Don't be afraid to say no.** Seriously. If a potential client wants you to lower your price, say no. If a client is disrespectful and making you uncomfortable, grab your things and leave. If a client has a ridiculous request, say no. Know your worth and demand the respect your deserve.
9. **Befriend other pro cleaners.** Have a cleaning business owner you can lean on. I have two that I can call or text any time to vent (thanks Mel and Jen ♥). They know exactly what this job takes and how stressful it can be. It's nice to have someone that just gets it.
10. **Take time off.** Set a goal for a staycation or a vacation. That's my goal for this year. My boyfriend and I have never been on a vacation together and I want to make it happen this year.

It's expensive but we deserve it. And so do you! Remember your goal and make it happen ♥

Administrative Work Tips 101

My favorite part ♥♥

After cleaning all day, the last thing most cleaners want to do is hop on your computer and knock out hours worth of administrative work. This is why it's important to take care of it daily and not leave it all for the last second.

Make sure to have a good CRM system to help you stay organized.

As I mentioned above, I use Square. It allows me to schedule cleanings, send appointment reminders, service agreements, invoices, and helps me track my earnings.

Tips For Tackling Administrative Work:

1. Set a time for admin work: I always knock out what I can after my cleanings. And I make sure to never work past 8pm. Balance is key.
2. Create a to-do list: Whether it's on your phone, a journal or a post-it note, make sure to keep a reminder of what you need to get done. Make sure to hold yourself to the list. Do not allow the items on your list to build up and spill over time.
3. Keep a detailed calendar (or multiple): I use my Square calendar and I have a dry erase calendar by my front door. I'm one of those people that remember things if I write them down. It's nice to have a calendar available whether I'm on the go or at home. I never miss deadlines and I am always on top of things thanks to those two calendars.
4. Regularly perform back ups: Losing all of your work is a nightmare no one wants to deal with! We're busy as it is, the last thing we need is to have to start from scratch. Make sure to have all of your work backed up to other devices, other emails, etc. Also, make sure to have physical copies of documents in safe boxes.
5. Avoid Multi-Tasking: Tackling multiple things at once sounds like a great way to get things done but it's usually counterproductive. A sloppy business owner tends to make sloppy decisions. Focus on things one by one.

Debunking Cleaning Biz Myths

Don't believe everything you see on social media

There are cleanings business owners on social media that are not as successful as they make it seem. Even the ones trying to sell you guides. I know some personally that don't even follow their own advice. Be cautious with throwing your money at someone just because of their online persona.

Let's break down the most common myths:

1. Don't think about it, just start your business: Please don't do this. I understand some people want to be motivating by telling you this but it's horrible advice. You need to dedicate some time to researching cleaning products, pricing, cleaning etiquette, practicing cleaning methods, etc. The last thing you want to do is enter a clients home and damage their property. Take your time and I promise you'll be thankful you did.
2. Just hire people to do the work for you: As I mentioned above, hiring help is not as easy as many others claim it is. Its difficult which is why so many of us have continued to be solo cleaners. If you're struggling to find decent help, please know it's not just you. It's unfortunately a common problem.
3. Just buy leads or post FB ads: Both options are incredibly expensive and most of us don't start businesses because we have money to blow. Of course you have to spend money in order to make money but as mentioned above, there are affordable ways to gain clientele without paying hundreds for online ads or \$35 per lead. Lead generators like Angi, Thumbtack and Bark are predatory to new business owners.
4. If I can do it, so can you: This is usually true BUT what a lot of these business owners don't tell you is that they inherited an already successful business or took out a 60,000 loan. Those options aren't available to everyone. You aren't going to be able to take the same path as others and that's perfectly fine.
5. Cleaning is easy: THIS IS A DAMN LIE 😂 Learning how to clean correctly takes a lot of practice and research. This is really hard work on our bodies and our mental health. Some days I feel like I got hit by a bus! Practice in your own home, try to learn something new every day and make sure to take care of your physical and mental health.

The End?

That's it?!

Nope! I am still learning every day and I will continue to add more information! Please check in every once in awhile. I will make sure to put a date on all new information I add to each section.

I made the guide because as most of you know, my mom was a pro cleaner and passed the year before I started my cleaning business. Having my mom around during this process would've been amazing. She was a cleaner for my entire life and was a fountain of knowledge on all things cleaning. She would've made my life so much easier. She would've had an

answer for every question I had. Unfortunately I didn't have my mom to lean on for advice. Doing this alone is so f*cking hard. I struggled a lot and I don't want that for you. I refuse to climb the ladder and pick it up behind me. I want to lead the way!

This is going to be one of the hardest things you'll ever do in your life but if you give it your all, you ARE going to succeed. Do not doubt yourself. You are more than capable of having a successful business. I'm a high school dropout and recovering addict (8 years clean 🙌🙌). If I can do this, you sure as hell can too! It takes a massive amount of balls to start a business. Believe in yourself! Please reach out to me any time! Love y'all and im so freaking proud of you!! ❤️

Love,

Carly 🥰