

# INCOME BOOST BLUEPRINT

## BICYCLE REPAIR SHOP HOME BUSINESS

If you're good at fixing bikes, you can charge people to repair their broken bicycles. You can work out of your home and you may already have many of the supplies you would need right there in your garage. You don't need to rent or buy additional space unless you wish to expand your business as it grows.

### REQUIRED SUPPLIES

A bicycle repair shop has several essential equipment pieces.

**Consider these supplies as you build your bike business:**

1. **Tools.** You'll need a good set of tools to repair bikes.
2. **Workbench.** A bench for your garage, workshop, or other space will make it easier to do the repairs.

3. **Bike parts.** Collect new and used bike parts to help you make repairs. ***You may want to check out garage sales for parts.***
4. **Safety goggles.** They'll protect your eyes as you make repairs.
5. **Safety gloves.** A good, strong pair of gloves can help you avoid blisters, cuts, and other issues.
6. **Fire extinguisher.** You probably won't need to use it, but it's good to have one in your workshop.

*As your business grows, you may need to invest in other supplies for bicycle repair.* However, these essential items will help you set up your business.

## **GETTING STARTED**

A bicycle repair shop in your home doesn't have to be complicated. Nevertheless, you'll want to consider several important ideas and steps before you start looking for clients. You don't want to miss a crucial step that will affect you later.

## Consider these steps to get started:

1. **Check out the bike repair competition.** Who is the local competition for your bike business?
  - ✓ Visit several local bike repair shops and analyze them.
  - ✓ Find out who else has a bike repair shop at home. This will help you understand the business aspects and learn more about potential clients.
2. **Consider if seasons will affect you.** If you live in an area with four seasons instead of a tropical paradise with one, think about how this will affect your business.
  - ✓ In locations with cold winters, many people give up biking and wait for spring. Could you survive this drop in clients?
  - ✓ Also, consider your target audience. How often do they need bike repairs?
3. **Check local laws about home businesses.** Your city, state, or county may have specific laws. You may need to obtain a permit, license, or other paperwork before you start.
  - ✓ It may be beneficial to consult a lawyer about setting up a home business in your area.

4. **Check on insurance.** You may need to get insurance for your new home business.

- ✓ How would you handle your clients if their bikes were stolen from your garage while you worked on them?
- ✓ You need insurance to protect your business and home from potential losses.
- ✓ You also need insurance to help you if a client isn't satisfied with a bike repair. Talk to an insurance agent who understands small businesses like bike repair shops.

5. **Make a bike shop business plan.** What are the goals for your bike shop, and what do you want to accomplish? If this is just a side income, you still need a business plan because it will help you. What do you want from this business?

- ✓ Outline clear strategies for competition, marketing, advertising, and clients. The plan should include steps for growth, so you can scale your business.

6. **Consider your hours.** How many hours a week can you devote to a bike shop?

- ✓ You'll want to give potential clients a clear schedule of your hours, so they can contact you during your established business hours.
7. **Consider your location.** It's easy to run a bike repair shop out of your garage if you have space. However, what do you do if your garage is filled with junk and boxes?
- ✓ You can set up a workshop in your backyard with a tent or shed.
  - ✓ You can also turn a room in your house into a bike shop, but it can be messy. Be prepared for the mess and plan ahead.
8. **Pick a unique and clear business name.** Pick a name that stands out from your bike shop competition.

These first steps are a crucial part of building a strong bike repair shop business at home. It's like the old saying, "Get ready, get set, go (in that order)!"

## FINDING CUSTOMERS

You know your ideal customer is a person who needs bike repair. However, finding customers isn't an easy process, and you have to consider the other bike shop competition.

*Formulate a plan to attract an ongoing stream of bike customers.*

**Consider these tips for finding customers:**

1. **Attend bike races and competitions.** You can attend these events and hand out your home bicycle repair shop business cards.
  - ✓ These events will help you connect with the local bicycle community.
2. **Offer bicycle storage during colder seasons.** Did you know that many of your customers may struggle with winter storage? ***You can grow your bike business by offering to store their bicycles.***
  - ✓ You can use your garage or rent a storage unit. In either case, ensure you have a clear contract with each bike owner.

- ✓ Although the winter months are usually the main reason why people need storage, you may also find that others need it during vacations. They may also be moving and need a temporary, safe place to keep their bikes.
- 3. **Hang out at bike stores.** You can meet potential customers at stores that sell bicycles and other equipment.
- 4. **Create a website and promote it.** A website that has details about your bicycle shop can help you attract customers. Make it easy for people to contact you. Include your email, address, and phone details on your website.
- 5. **Check out neighborhood social media pages.** Does your neighborhood have its own pages on social media accounts? They can be valuable sources of information and allow you to share your business details.
- 6. **Consider offering weekend hours.** Many of your clients may be too busy during the week to get their bikes fixed. You can attract busy professionals who need bike repair by working on weekends.
- 7. **Consider offering emergency bike services.** If a customer breaks down in an area near you, can you come to the rescue?

- ✓ By offering emergency bike services, you'll open a new market of customers.
- ✓ They'll know they can call you for help and get quick repairs. You may want to consider how to coordinate the process, so it's efficient.

*As a home business, you'll be competing with shops in retail areas and other small businesses.* It's important to find customers who need bike repairs and see the value of your services.

## MARKETING YOUR BUSINESS

Marketing can set you apart from others and help you build a steady stream of customers. Depending on your area, the bike repair shop business may be extremely competitive. Even if your competition is limited, you still want to market your business for your best results.

### Try these marketing tips:

1. **Advertise your bike repair business in local magazines and newspapers.** Your local media can help you attract new customers.
  - ✓ Does your city or town have its own paper and magazines? You can purchase ads to market your bicycle business.



2. **Advertise online.** You can buy ads online targeted to locals.
  - ✓ You can find ad agencies in multiple markets. Focus on ones that work with small, home businesses.
3. **Advertise on social media.** Purchase ads on social media networks such as Facebook and Twitter.
4. **Invest in good business cards.** Design your business cards to stand out while giving potential customers clear information.
  - ✓ If local establishments allow it, consider leaving piles of your business cards. Local bike shops, stores, and gathering places are good locations to leave your business cards.
5. **Sponsor bike races in your area.** This may be a more expensive option, but you can start off small and sponsor one race. This will allow you to have your business name all over the event and merchandise.
  - ✓ You can get T-shirts, stickers, hats, and other items with the event name and your business name.
6. **Work with local charities.** You may be able to make a deal with local charities in exchange for their business.

7. **Give customers an incentive for referrals.** Word-of-mouth marketing is a great tool to build your bike repair shop. Ask your current customers for referrals and offer them a discount or a gift in exchange.
8. **Post fliers.** This may seem like an old fashioned idea, but posting fliers can be effective.
  - ✓ Post fliers in your neighborhood or in parks that have a lot of bicycle activity.
  - ✓ Ask local businesses if they would be willing to post your fliers.
9. **Join local bike clubs.** Your city may have its own bike clubs that encourage this fun activity. Join and share your repair shop business.
10. **Partner with small businesses.** Do you know a small business that relies on bikes as part of their work? Do you know of businesses that encourage their employees to bike to work?
  - ✓ You may be able to partner with these companies and offer your repair services.
  - ✓ You can become their personal expert, and the one they turn to for all of their bike needs and repairs.

- ✓ Try to partner with courier services and package delivery companies that use bikes. You can also look at schools that teach biking or weight loss groups that use bikes every day.

11. **Connect with national cycling groups.** Your business may be local and home-based, but you can still benefit from national groups.

- ✓ These groups may hold events in your area and may need your help.

12. **Connect with other bike repair shops. *They may be your competition, but they can also help your business.*** They can send you customers they can't help or give you advice as you start out.

- ✓ If you specialize in a particular type of bike repair that other shops can't do, then you can get a steady stream of customers from them. Exchange services and help each other.

13. **Connect with schools.** Build a partnership with local schools and their cycling clubs. Many schools encourage biking as an extracurricular activity.

- ✓ From elementary school to high school, students need help with their bikes.
- ✓ You may be able to create a program at schools to teach them how to repair their bikes. This will increase your community visibility and build trust among families.

14. **Connect with the YMCA and other clubs.** These organizations often have programs for kids.

- ✓ The YMCA and other organizations help kids through a variety of programs. They may be interested in a bicycle program that you can teach. By volunteering, you can offer your services and build new connections.

15. **Consider repairing and giving away bikes to those in need.** This type of charitable action can help you in multiple ways.

- ✓ Not only will you get the satisfaction of giving back to your community, but you'll also show potential customers you care. You can give away bikes that you have repaired and fixed.

- ✓ ***This type of activity may also attract local media attention.***  
The media may profile you and your business, so be prepared for the extra attention!

**16. Partner with local environmental and green groups.**

Cycling is a popular way to be more eco-friendly and save the planet. Build an exchange or simply ask them to help in your business promotion efforts.

***The marketing techniques you implement can have a dramatic impact on your entire business.*** Create a customized plan for your bike repair shop. The future of your business depends on effective marketing that targets bike owners.

## **CONCLUSION**

***A bicycle repair shop can be a fulfilling home business that helps many people.*** You can start it with a small amount of tools and space, and expansion is possible over time.

Your marketing steps will help build a strong business that attracts bike clients for many years.