

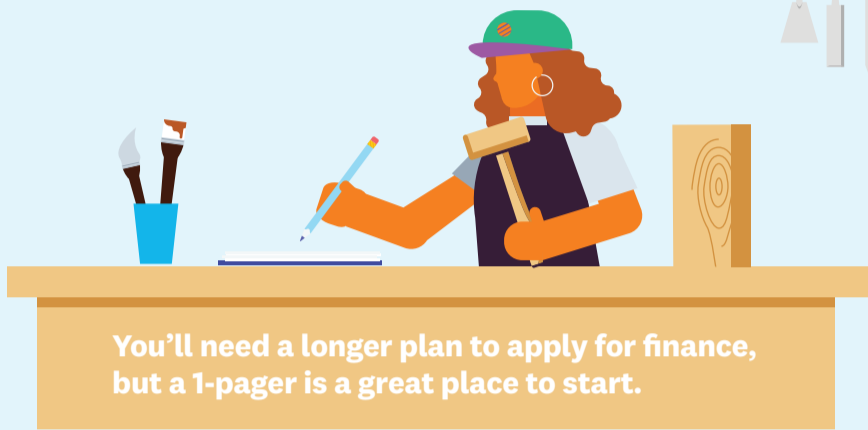
# Starting a business

Your business idea is clearly inspired. Otherwise you wouldn't have emailed it to yourself late last night. So what do you do now? We take a look at the next steps.

## 1 Start with a 1-page business plan

A short plan helps you lock in the idea, and iron out the rough bits. You can make it longer later.

[Download Xero's 1-page business plan template.](#)

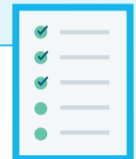


The government will assume you're a sole trader unless you register as a partnership, company, or corporation.

## 2 Profile your customer

List key characteristics like:

- where they are
- what they care about
- how much they spend



This will help you refine your product and your marketing.



## 3 Check out the competition

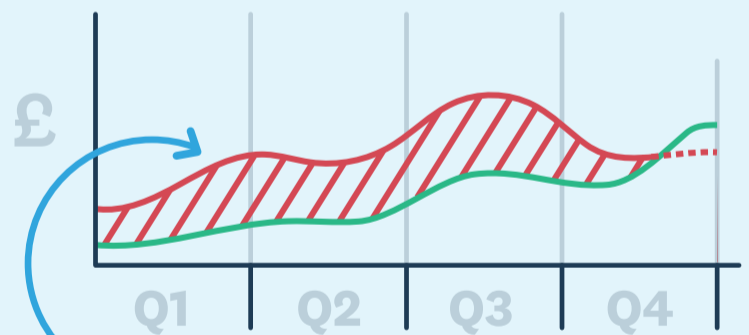
List their:

Weaknesses	Strengths
Why you can win.	Why winning will be hard.



## 4 Do your numbers

Plot your **projected costs** on a timeline. Do the same with **projected income**.



Where will this come from?  
Savings? Loans? Investors?

## 5 Speak to a pro

Check your numbers with a bookkeeper, accountant, or a business mentor. [Find a Xero advisor.](#)

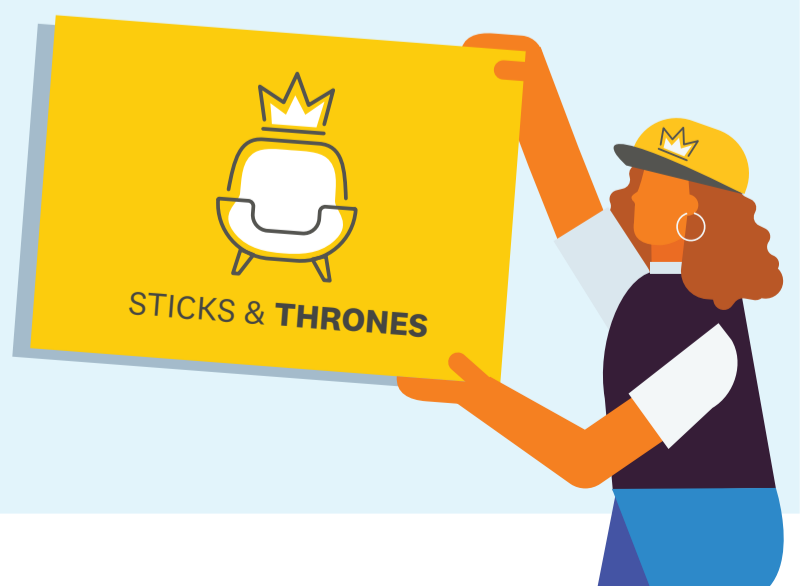


Where most UK businesses get their money:

- 22% owner's savings
- 12% bank loans
- 9% friends and family
- 17% credit cards

## 6 Register your business

You can register as a sole trader, partnership, or company at [gov.uk](http://gov.uk). You'll be able to figure out your VAT obligation there too.



Find out how Xero can help you and your new business at [xero.com](http://xero.com)

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