START A BUSINESS - ILLINOIS

How to start an auto detailing business in Illinois

Form the business and register for sales tax; we found no state detailing license, so check local rules and ask how your services are taxed.

Sources verified 2026-11-21 - Updated 2026-11-21

1 Is detailing right for you?

Detailers clean and protect vehicles inside and out. It suits careful, patient people and can start small with a mobile setup.

2 Form the business and register for sales tax

1. Choose a structure. LLCs and corporations file with the Illinois Secretary of State.
2. Register with the Department of Revenue (MyTax Illinois) for retailers' and service occupation taxes on parts and goods.
3. Check your city or county for business licenses and zoning.

3 Licenses

We found no Illinois State license for detailing or car washes. Check your city or county for business licenses and zoning.

4 Sales tax

Products you sell are taxable. Ask the Department of Revenue how your washing and detailing charges are treated.

5 Your first steps

1. Form the business and register for sales tax.
2. Get local business licenses and check zoning.
3. Buy insurance and equipment.
4. List your business on Nearby Car Care

Requirements at a glance

Tax on products you sell; ask about services

Required - State - Illinois Department of Revenue

Products you sell are taxable. Ask the Department how your washing and detailing charges are treated. We found no Illinois State license for detailing.

Official agencies and links

Illinois Tax Handbook for Legislators (2025)

Illinois General Assembly, Legislative Research Unit

https://www.ilga.gov/commission/lru/TaxHandbook2025.pdf

Frequently asked questions

Do I need a license to detail cars in Illinois?

We found no state license.

This guide is general information, not legal advice. Rules change and can depend on your city or county, so confirm with the official agencies linked below before you apply.

https://nearbycarcare.com/resources/business/start-auto-detailing-business/illinois/