Evergreen Yard Co. — Business Plan

Landscaping business in Charlotte, NC · Startup plan

Executive summary

Evergreen Yard Co. is a new landscaping business in Charlotte, NC offering weekly and biweekly lawn mowing and edging; spring and fall cleanups and mulching; hedge trimming, pruning and bed maintenance; and small installs: sod, plantings and paver paths. The model is recurring maintenance on tight routes, priced per visit from real costs, with installs and seasonal work layered on top.

Startup budget: $14,208 across 8 items, funded from savings. Target: $12,000 in monthly sales.

Twelve months from now, success looks like this: Forty recurring lawn clients on a tight route, one crew member hired, and one install job a month

Products and services

Evergreen Yard Co.'s core service is weekly and biweekly lawn mowing and edging. Recurring visits run on fixed days so the route stays tight, installs are quoted per project with a deposit, and seasonal offers keep the calendar full in the shoulder months.

- Weekly and biweekly lawn mowing and edging
- Spring and fall cleanups and mulching
- Hedge trimming, pruning and bed maintenance
- Small installs: sod, plantings and paver paths

Market analysis

The customers are homeowners who value their weekends, property managers and HOAs who want one reliable contractor for recurring grounds work, and the small commercial sites in between.

- Homeowners who'd rather pay than spend Saturday on the yard
- Landlords, HOAs and property managers with recurring grounds contracts
- Small commercial sites — offices, clinics and churches
- Real-estate agents who need a listing to look sharp fast

Marketing strategy

Most customers will find Evergreen Yard Co. on Google Maps and through word of mouth from neighbors — a searched-for lawn service, or the street that noticed one yard looking sharp every week. Reviews on the Google Business Profile, yard signs, cards on the street, and a website with before-and-after photos and a quote request form turn that into recurring bookings.

- Google Business Profile and Google Maps — “lawn care near me” plus your city
- Word of mouth and next-door referrals — one good lawn sells the street
- Door-knocking and cards on the streets you already mow
- Property managers and HOA boards who award recurring contracts
- A website with services, starting prices per visit, before-and-after photos and a quote request form

Operations plan

Routes are built by neighborhood and day so the truck barely moves between jobs. The owner works the crew in year one, maintains equipment on a schedule, and hires only when a full route proves the pricing covers wages.

- Recurring clients grouped by neighborhood and day so the truck barely moves
- Prices set from your real costs: minutes per lawn, fuel, blades and dump fees
- Equipment maintained on a schedule — a down mower is a lost day
- Seasonal offers that fill the shoulder months: cleanups, mulch, leaves, holiday lights
- Installs quoted per project with a deposit before materials are bought — and the contractor license where your state requires one

Startup costs

What it will take to open the doors, funded from savings.

Startup costs

ITEM	AMOUNT
Commercial mower, trimmer, edger and backpack blower	$5,324
Hand tools, safety gear and first supplies	$825
General liability (first year) — tools cover and commercial auto at the high end	$2,875
Business registration (LLC or DBA) and EIN	$455
Truck or trailer lettering, yard signs and business cards	$600
Website and Google Business Profile	$0
Scheduling, invoicing and payments software (first year)	$0
Working capital (two months of fuel, upkeep, dump fees, marketing, software)	$4,129
Total	**$14,208**

Typical range to start a landscaping business in the US: $5,980–$24,643. Your list is what you decided to spend — replace estimates with real quotes as you get them. Website and Google Business Profile: Your Zarla plan includes the website — a call button at the top, your services and starting prices, and a quote request form — and walks you through your Google Business Profile; a designer typically charges $1,500 or more to build one. Scheduling, invoicing and payments software (first year): Your Zarla plan includes quote requests, invoicing and customer management with the website — no separate subscriptions for those to start.

Financial plan

The numbers below come from your own startup list and the sources named on each line — the makers' list prices, Insureon's medians, the state boards' fees and O*NET's pay data — with the lines no page prices labeled as planning ranges. Startup costs are modest; the seasonal dip and the first hire are the two things to plan cash for.

Typical monthly operating costs for a landscaping business: $2,019–$7,255 a month, before the owner's own pay.

At $12,000 in monthly sales, Evergreen Yard Co. would clear $4,745–$9,981 a month before owner pay and tax, and recover the $14,208 startup budget in roughly 2–3 months.

Typical monthly operating costs

COST	TYPICAL RANGE
Fuel for the truck and equipment	$200–$800
Equipment maintenance, blades and repairs	$100–$400
General liability — tools cover and commercial auto once the truck carries your name	$63–$415
Dump fees and materials (mulch, plants, sod)	$100–$2,000
Scheduling and payments software (included with Zarla)	$0–$79
Marketing	$50–$400
A crew member, 80 to 160 hours a month (once you hire)	$1,506–$3,011
Workers' compensation, once you hire	$0–$150

US ranges for a small operation; replace with your own figures as you learn them. Lines marked (included with Zarla) are what those tools cost separately — with Zarla they are part of one monthly plan.

Risks and honest downsides

Every landscaping business plan should say out loud what can go wrong. For Evergreen Yard Co., the real risks are:

- It's seasonal — winter income needs a plan (leaf cleanups, snow, holiday lighting) or savings
- Equipment breaks; a down mower in peak season is a lost week of income
- Underpricing is the classic mistake — a full route at a thin per-visit price still loses money once fuel and blades are counted
- Margins tighten sharply once you hire; wages, no-shows and training eat the per-lawn profit
- Weather cancels days and compresses the schedule; clients still expect their day

Licenses, permits and insurance

What Evergreen Yard Co. needs before it can legally trade in the US. Rules vary by state and city — confirm each item with your local licensing office and an accountant.

- Business registration and EIN — In the US, an LLC or a DBA with your state — $125 in North Carolina, $40 in Kentucky, $300 in Texas, $200 plus publication in New York, $70 plus an $800 yearly tax in California — and the free EIN from the IRS.
- The landscape contractor license, where your state has one — In North Carolina, the Landscape Contractors' Licensing Board's license once a job site passes $30,000 in a year ($75 application, $150 exam, $100 license, a $10,000 bond; mowing, edging and turf care are exempt); in California, the C-27 from $1,000 a job ($450 + $200, a $25,000 bond, four years' experience). In Texas, Florida and New York, no state landscaping license — New York City's home improvement contractor license covers landscaping on residential property. Check your own state's rules.
- Pesticide and fertilizer applicator certification — In the US, each state certifies commercial applicators under the federal rule (40 CFR part 171): North Carolina's Commercial Ground Applicator license is $75, Texas commercial applicator license $200 a year, New York's $450 plus a $100 exam, California's Maintenance Gardener Pest Control Business license $180, and in Florida anyone applying commercial fertilizer to a lawn holds a $25 certification and herbicide work in beds a landscape-maintenance certificate. Needed the day you spray or spread for pay; check your own state's rules.
- Irrigation license — In Texas, any irrigation work needs a TCEQ irrigator license ($111); in North Carolina, the Irrigation Contractors' Licensing Board's license. Check your state before the first sprinkler repair.
- Sales tax — In Texas, landscaping and lawn care are taxable services (a self-employed individual under $5,000 of receipts a year is exempt); in New York, mowing and maintenance are taxable while a new lawn or planting is an untaxed capital improvement; Florida does not tax lawn care; California taxes the plants and sod you sell, not the labor; North Carolina treats landscaping as a capital improvement — no tax on the bill, tax paid on the materials. Ask an accountant before you print a price list.
- General liability and workers' compensation — In the US, none of the five states read requires general liability for a landscaper — clients and HOAs do by contract; Insureon's October 2026 median is $63 a month, $761 a year. Workers' comp from three employees in North Carolina, from one in California, from four in Florida, for nearly all employers in New York, optional in Texas.

Milestones: the next 30 days

The first month's to-do list for Evergreen Yard Co., in order:

- Register the business, get an EIN and open a business bank account
- Buy general liability insurance and check whether your state licenses the contractor, the applicator or the irrigator for the work you'll do
- Buy or service your equipment and set a maintenance schedule
- Price your services per visit by lot size from real costs and two or three local quotes
- Set up a free Google Business Profile and put your website with a quote request form live
- Knock on doors in two or three target neighborhoods and offer a first-cut deal for recurring clients
- Fill one route day completely before opening a second
- Ask every happy client for a Google review and a referral

Appendix: what a lender will ask for

This plan tells the story and shows the numbers. If you take it to a bank, expect to be asked for these documents as well:

- Two years of personal tax returns and a personal financial statement
- A month-by-month 12-month cash-flow projection that shows the seasonal dip
- Proof of insurance and your business registration
- A list of recurring clients or contracts, with expected monthly revenue
- Quotes for the truck or equipment if you're borrowing for them
- Your credit report and anything you can offer as collateral

Sample plan for a fictional business, written by Zarla's free business plan generator. Every figure is a typical US range or calculated from the sample's own numbers — nothing is a market projection. Make it yours in five questions: zarla.com/business-plan-generator?industry=landscaping

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