MILESTONE BUSINESS CONSULTANCY

UAE Company Setup Checklist

A practical, no-fluff guide to choosing your jurisdiction, gathering your documents, and getting your UAE company licensed and operational.

mbconsultancy.net · +971 56 166 0009 · One JLT Tower, Dubai, UAE

Step 1 — Choose Your Jurisdiction

Every UAE company sits in one of three jurisdictions. Picking the right one from the start avoids costly restructuring later.

- **Mainland**
  A trade license that lets you operate anywhere in the UAE, trade directly with the local market, and bid on government contracts. Licensed and regulated by the Department of Economic Development (DED).
- **Freezone**
  100% foreign ownership and attractive tax treatment, with setup that can move as fast as your documents do. Best suited to companies that don't need to trade directly in the local UAE market.
- **Offshore**
  Confidential, cost-efficient structures for international trading, holding assets, or structuring investments — not licensed to operate inside the UAE itself.

Popular Free Zones at a Glance

- **DMCC (Dubai · JLT)**
  One of the world's most-awarded free zones. Strong recognition for trading, commodities and financial services companies, supporting 600+ business activities.
- **IFZA (Dubai · Digital Park)**
  One of the fastest-growing free zones in the UAE — known for quick licensing, flexible visa packages and budget-friendly setup.
- **RAKEZ (Ras Al Khaimah)**
  Well suited to industrial, trading and warehousing operations wanting lower setup and operating costs outside Dubai.
- **Ajman Free Zone**
  One of the UAE's most cost-effective free zones — a strong fit for general trading, media and e-commerce ventures watching their budget.

Step 2 — The 5-Step Setup Process

A clear process so you always know what's happening with your application.

- **1. Free Consultation**
  We learn about your business and recommend the right jurisdiction and license type.
- **2. Jurisdiction & License**
  Mainland, free zone or offshore — we handle the paperwork and initial approvals.
- **3. Documentation**
  We prepare, submit and track every document with the relevant authorities.
- **4. Visas & PRO**
  Medicals, Emirates ID, labour cards and visa stamping for you and your team.
- **5. Bank & Handover**
  Corporate bank account support and a full handover of your company documents.

Documents You'll Typically Need

[ ] Passport copies for all shareholders and directors

[ ] Passport-size photographs (white background)

[ ] Proposed trade name options (in order of preference)

[ ] Description of your intended business activity

[ ] Proof of residential address (utility bill or bank statement)

[ ] No Objection Certificate (NOC) — only if currently on another UAE employment visa

[ ] Bank reference letter — for some jurisdictions and activities

Ready to Get Started?

This checklist covers the essentials, but every business is a little different. Book a free consultation and we'll map out the fastest, most cost-effective path for your specific activity — no obligation.

Milestone Business Consultancy DWC LLC
One JLT Tower, Dubai, UAE

+971 56 166 0009 · mukhtar@mbconsultancy.net

mbconsultancy.net