

The Wholesale Starter Kit

Three checklists that save new resellers from the three most expensive mistakes. Free from SupplyRank — no signup, no catch. Sourced from our research of 1,200+ brands and 470+ verified US suppliers.

Checklist 1 — Set Up Legally (in this order)

Doing these steps out of order wastes weeks: every legitimate wholesaler asks for your resale certificate at account opening.

- **Form your entity (LLC or sole prop + DBA).** An LLC is the standard for marketplace sellers; your invoices must later match this exact legal name.
- **Get your EIN** (free, 10 minutes, irs.gov — never pay a third party for this).
- **Register for a sales tax permit** in your state (usually free; this is the prerequisite for the next step).
- **Get your resale certificate.** State-specific; most are free. We keep a plain-English guide for every state at supply-rank.com/guides/ (see the resale certificate series).
- **Open a business bank account.** Wholesalers expect payment from an account matching your company name — and so does Amazon during verification.
- **Only now approach suppliers.** With entity + resale certificate ready, account approval takes days instead of weeks.

Checklist 2 — Verify a Supplier Before Wiring Money

Every scam we have documented failed at least three of these checks. Run all ten — it takes 20 minutes and can save your whole bankroll.

- **Company registration exists** — search the state business registry for the exact legal name.
- **Physical address is real** — check it on Maps: a warehouse or office, not a house or virtual mailbox.
- **Phone is answered during business hours** — call twice on different days.
- **Domain age matches the story** — a "20-year-old distributor" on a 6-month-old domain is a red flag (check any WHOIS tool).
- **They ASK for your resale certificate** — legitimate wholesalers must collect it. A "no paperwork needed" wholesaler is not one.
- **Pricing is plausible** — authorized wholesale runs 25–50% off retail. 80–90% off means counterfeit or stolen goods, full stop.
- **Payment by wire/ACH to a US business account matching the company name** — never Zelle, crypto, gift cards or personal PayPal.
- **Authorization claims are in writing** — if they say "authorized distributor of Brand X", ask for the letter. Real distributors provide it.
- **Search "[name] + scam / reviews"** — including Reddit and BBB; read the negative results first.
- **First order is a test order** — smallest viable quantity, even if the per-unit price is worse.

Checklist 3 — An Invoice That Survives Amazon Verification

Most ungating rejections are documentation problems, not product problems. Before you buy for a gated category, confirm your supplier can issue an invoice with ALL of the following:

- **Made out to your exact legal entity** — the same name as in Seller Central. This one mismatch kills more applications than everything else combined.
- **A real invoice, not a receipt** — order confirmations, packing slips and PayPal receipts do not pass.
- **Itemized by product with UPC/model numbers** and quantities (10+ units per item is the practical floor).
- **Supplier's full details** — company name, address, phone, website that works. Amazon checks, and sometimes calls.
- **From a verifiable supplier** — invoices from Alibaba-type middlemen, liquidators and "invoice services" fail even when the goods are real.
- **Dated within 180 days** of your application.
- **Consistent with your supply story** — if Amazon asks for more documents, your bank records must show payment to this supplier.

What to do with a brand BEFORE you commit capital

One question decides everything: is the brand's wholesale channel even open to you? We checked 1,200+ brands by hand — the answer is free: **supply-rank.com/wholesale-checker/** — paste an Amazon link or brand name, get open / gray-market / closed in a second.

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