

Step 14 · Test First

Frequently Asked Questions

Should I start with a cart or trailer before opening a café?

It can be a useful smaller test, provided the mobile business makes sense on its own. Owners describe learning service, finding customers, and growing gradually, but transport, setup, storage, utilities, and selling locations still take money and work. Set a limit on what the test should cost and what you want to learn. A successful market cart does not prove that a permanent café, with different customers and overhead, will succeed.

Confirm the permissions and support facilities for the actual test before trading.

How should I test whether customers will like a new drink?

Make a small set of repeatable versions and ask the intended customers what they notice and prefer. Keep the recipe and serving conditions clear so you know what changed. Your own taste and friendly praise can guide development, but neither proves that people will pay. Once the drink is safe and practical to serve, test the actual offer at its intended price and watch purchases, repeat interest, preparation time, and waste.

What should I prepare for my first farmers market?

Keep the menu manageable and rehearse setup, orders, payment, and pack-down. Confirm the organizer's arrangements and required approvals, including power, water, food handling, and weather plans. Bring sensible stock and a way to handle shortages; attendance is not a guaranteed order count. If possible, arrange help for restocking and problems. Record sales, waste, waits, and full costs so the first market teaches you what to change next time.

Use the actual food-safety requirements for your setup, not another vendor's cleaning recipe.

Can I test the business while my café is being built?

Yes, if a permitted, affordable test can answer a useful question. A pop-up, shared-space service, or packaged-coffee offer may be possible, but each has its own permissions and costs. Ask the responsible authorities about your actual menu and setup before buying a cart or advertising. Compare preparation space, travel, fees, and time with what the test could teach. If no workable sales test exists yet, use the time for training and preparation.

Educational guidance. Check your own circumstances with the appropriate local professional.