

FREE PREVIEW

The Federal Contracting Launch System

The complete, click-by-click system to take your business from zero to federal-contract-ready — the exact way I did it.

This free preview contains the complete table of contents and Step 1 in full, so you can see exactly how every step is written before you buy.

Includes: Step 1 of 3, complete and uncut

Full guide: 32 pages · \$29 one-time

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What's in the full guide

Every step is laid out the same way, so you always know where you are: What you'll accomplish · Why it matters · Screen-by-screen instructions · Common Mistakes, flagged before you make them · "You're done when" checklists.

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Text Edition — written in enough click-by-click detail that you never need a screenshot. Every common mistake flagged right where it can happen. What follows is Step 1 exactly as it appears in the full guide.

Step 1: Create Your Login.gov Account

Already have a Login.gov account? Skip to Step 2.

What you'll accomplish

A working Login.gov account — the single sign-in you'll use for SAM.gov and the SBA certification portals (and Grants.gov, and more).

Why it matters

Login.gov is the front door to everything. You create it once and reuse it everywhere. Getting it clean now — with two-factor backups in place — prevents the account lockouts that derail people later.

Good news: you only need the free, basic Login.gov account. SAM.gov does not require Login.gov identity verification at this stage — no SSN or photo ID. An email plus two-factor is enough.

Before you start

- An email address you'll always control — a business email on your OWN company domain (e.g., contracts@yourcompany.com) is the recommended best practice. Personal Gmail/Yahoo is technically allowed by Login.gov, but a company-domain, role-based address stays tied to your record and survives staff changes.
- A cell phone that can receive text messages — that's all you need for the simplest setup.
- 5–10 uninterrupted minutes — confirmation links and codes are time-sensitive.

Getting there — open Login.gov

Do this:

1. Open your web browser, type login.gov in the address bar, and press Enter.
2. On the Login.gov home page, click **"Create an account."** That opens Screen 1 below.

Screen 1 — Enter your email

You'll see: The **"Create an account"** page (secure.login.gov) with an email field, an email-language selector (English is the default), and a **Rules of Use** checkbox.

Do this:

1. Type your email.
2. Check the **Rules of Use** box.
3. Click **Submit**.

Screen 2 — Confirm your email

You'll see: A "Check your email" message, and an email from Login.gov with a "Confirm your email address" button.

Do this: Click **Confirm** in the email (it expires — request a new one if it lapses). You're returned to Login.gov.

Screen 3 — Create your password

You'll see: A password screen with a strength meter and a 12-character minimum.

Do this:

1. Enter a strong 12+ character password you don't reuse from email or banking.
2. Click **Continue**.

Screen 4 — Choose how you'll get your sign-in code

You'll see: A list of ways to sign in, grouped as “More secure” (security key, face/touch unlock, authentication app) and “Less secure” (text message, phone call, backup codes).

Do this:

1. For the simplest setup, choose **Text message (SMS)** — Login.gov will text you a code each time you sign in, with nothing to download.
2. Click **Continue**. *(Want the more secure, phishing-resistant option instead? Use an authenticator app — see Appendix B at the back.)*

Screen 5 — Enter your phone and the texted code

You'll see: A field to enter your mobile phone number.

Do this:

1. Type your mobile number and click **Send code**.
2. Login.gov texts you a 6-digit code — type that code in.
3. Click **Continue**.

Screen 6 — Add a backup method (prevents logout)

You'll see: A prompt to add another sign-in method, and/or a list of one-time backup codes.

Do this: Add a second method so you're never locked out if you lose your phone. The easiest one to add is Backup codes — Login.gov shows you a list; download or print them and keep them somewhere safe (not only on your phone). That's your safety net.

Screen 7 — Account created

You'll see: Your Login.gov dashboard — or you're sent straight into the partner site (like SAM.gov) if you started there.

Do this: Nothing more needed. You can now sign in to SAM.gov and SBA portals with this account.

COMMON MISTAKES — avoid these

- Setting up only ONE authentication method. If you lose it with no backup, Login.gov cannot restore access — the official fix is to delete the account and start over. Always set up two.
- Using backup codes as your only method — lose them and you're locked out. Keep them as a secondary.
- Using a personal Gmail/Yahoo or an employer email you could lose. Best practice is a role-based email on your own company domain (contracts@, admin@) that you control — it stays tied to your entity and survives personnel changes.
- Letting the confirmation link or one-time code expire mid-flow — request a fresh one instead of reusing an old one.
- Creating a second Login.gov account with a different email when you already have one tied to your registrations. Always sign in with the original email.

You're done with this step when:

- ☐ My Login.gov account is created and I can sign in.
- ☐ I set up TWO authentication methods.
- ☐ My backup codes are saved somewhere safe.
- ☐ I used a durable business/personal email I'll keep long-term.

THAT WAS STEP 1 OF 3

Get the rest of the system.

You just read Step 1 in full — the same level of detail runs through the entire guide.
Step 2 alone is 18 pages covering every SAM.gov screen in order, with the traps
flagged before you hit them.

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