The Numbers Behind a Skylight Installation Business

A free field guide from Bytell Press. The figures come from our example financial model for an owner-operated skylight installer with one helper. They are planning assumptions, not quotes for your market; the worksheet at the end is for your own numbers.

A skylight business needs little equipment, so it is easy to start one without working out how many jobs a month it takes to pay the owner. This guide gives you that arithmetic.

1. How the work is priced

Skylight work is sold **by the installed job**. The example model uses these bands:

Service line	Model price per job
Leak diagnosis and re-flash repair	$400–$1,200
Tubular sun tunnel	Up to about $1,400
Fixed or manual-venting replacement	$1,000–$2,200
New deck-mount cut-in	$1,800–$3,500
Solar-powered venting unit with blind	$2,800–$6,000
Multi-unit solar project	$6,000–$12,000
Blended across the mix	**About $2,200 per job**

The model runs at a **47% gross margin** after units, flashing kits and the helper's wage. Sun tunnels and repairs fill the schedule between larger installs, and the model's result depends more on a full schedule than on any one job's margin.

2. What it costs to open

The example model opens on about **$110,000**: a $45,000 vehicle loan and $65,000 of the owner's money.

Use of funds	Amount
Work van or truck with rack	$45,000
Ladders, roof jacks, fall-arrest gear, power tools	$7,500
Display units and flashing-kit inventory	$3,000
First-year insurance deposits	$7,500
Startup fees and setup	$2,000
Software, website, branding, launch marketing	$5,000

Use of funds	Amount
Working-capital and opening cash reserve	$40,000
Total	**$110,000**

The reserve pays for materials before the customer's money arrives and carries the business through its first winter.

3. What it costs to stay open

The helper's wage, about $5,200 a month, sits in the cost of each job, so it is already inside the 47% margin. What is left to cover every month:

Monthly fixed cost	Amount
Non-labor fixed costs	$6,500
Vehicle and tool loan payment	$845
Subtotal before owner pay	**$7,345**
Owner draw	$6,000
Total	**$13,345**

The model also spends about 5.2% of revenue on card processing and marketing. Those costs move with sales, so they come out of the margin in the next step.

4. The break-even: the one number to know

Break-even revenue = monthly fixed costs ÷ gross margin.

The model's gross margin is 47%. Take off the 5.2% for card fees and marketing, and 41.8 cents of each sales dollar is left to cover fixed costs.

Before owner pay: $7,345 ÷ 0.418 = about **$17,600 a month**, or 8 jobs at $2,200. With the owner's $6,000 draw included: $13,345 ÷ 0.418 = about **$31,900 a month**, or **14 to 15 jobs**.

Plan around the second number.

5. Plan for winter before it arrives

Skylight installation is seasonal. The model takes ten months to ramp from about $18,000 a month to a steady $50,000, and then applies these multipliers:

Season	Multiplier	On a $50,000 steady month
Peak summer	1.20	About $60,000
Deep winter	0.65 to 0.70	About $32,500 to $35,000

Even at full steady volume, a deep-winter month sits just above the $31,900 break-even. The model starts in January, and its first month of about $18,000 covers the bills and almost none of the owner's draw.

That is the job of the $40,000 reserve. Leak repairs are the usual winter work in the model because they depend less on dry install days.

6. Your numbers

Fill this in with supplier pricing and quotes from your own market before you spend anything.

Question	Model	Yours
Average job size in dollars	$2,200	_____
Gross margin after units, kits and install labor	47%	_____
Monthly fixed costs including your draw	$13,345	_____
Break-even revenue (fixed costs ÷ margin after card fees and marketing)	$31,900	_____
Jobs a month to break even	14–15	_____
Opening cash reserve	$40,000	_____

If your break-even needs more jobs than you and one helper can install in your slowest season, fix the plan before you buy the van: raise the average ticket, cut a fixed cost, or hold a larger reserve.

This guide is general business information, not legal, tax, accounting or investment advice. The figures are illustrative assumptions from an example model and are not a forecast or a promise of results. Licensing and insurance requirements vary by state and are not covered here; check yours with the state agency.

Bytell Press publishes the full business plan, the editable financial model behind these numbers, and the operating playbooks for a skylight installation company.

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