



Can You Run This Business From Home in Singapore?

Description

A qualifying home-based business must remain small enough that the home is still primarily a residence. The operator must be an owner, registered occupant or tenant with consent, with no non-resident employee working there and no third party taking over the premises.

This guide is for a flat or private-home resident planning a small business from the dwelling. Its job is specific: decide whether the activity fits the home-based business scheme or needs another premises or scheme. Use the table first, then the worked example and checklist; keep any calculation as a labelled estimate until the controlling body or live service confirms it.

home based business rules Singapore: the decision table

Situation	Practical next step
Solo baking or sewing at small scale	Test the home-business conditions and sector rules
Administrative office with outside staff	Check the separate Home Office Scheme
Frequent deliveries or bulk stock	Move storage or operations to suitable commercial space
Food sold from home	Add SFA food-safety and prohibited-activity checks

The table separates the common branches that lead to different outcomes. It is not a substitute for reading the current source: re-open the cited authority on the day the decision is made, especially where a deadline, rate, eligibility rule, opening condition or safety instruction is involved.

Start with the controlling rule

URA permits examples such as small-scale baking, sewing, freelance creative work and tuition for no more than three students at a time when conditions are met. [URA Home-Based Business Scheme](#).

A home food operator remains responsible for safe preparation, handling and sale even where a separate SFA licence is not required for the basic model. [SFA home-based food-business guidance](#).

These two checks define the reader's starting position. Record the date and the facts used, because a later application, booking or dispute is easier to resolve when the original basis is visible.

Apply the rule to the real decision

No non-resident employee may work at the residence, and a third party cannot operate the business there. [URA Home-Based Business Scheme](#).

Food activities must stay within SFA's home-based scope; businesses must not assume the residential scheme overrides food-law restrictions. [SFA home-based food-business guidance](#).

Do not compress separate conditions into a single yes-or-no answer. Work through the eligibility, timing, amount and evidence questions in that order, and stop if a live record does not match the assumption.

Build the evidence trail

There must be no external sign, poster or advertisement displayed at the premises. [URA Home-Based Business Scheme](#).

Ingredient sourcing, allergen communication, cold-chain control and traceability are practical evidence items for a home food business. [SFA home-based food-business guidance](#).

Save the relevant confirmation, receipt, official result or case reference. This is not administrative decoration: it is the record that allows the authority, provider or household to reconstruct what happened.

Know the limit of the answer

Heavy non-domestic equipment, large-scale storage and frequent loading or unloading are inconsistent with the scheme. [URA Home-Based Business Scheme](#).

The dwelling must remain residential and the operator must comply with other authorities, including food and fire-safety rules. [SFA home-based food-business guidance](#).

This guide resolves the general task for a Singapore reader. It does not replace an individual notice, contract, clinical assessment, legal advice or an officer's direction at the point of service.

Worked Singapore example

A home baker plans 25 cake orders a week and two courier collections each day. The scheme does not publish an order cap, so the household tests the real impacts: equipment, storage, visitors, loading and neighbour disturbance. It keeps a food-safety file and sets a stop rule if deliveries become frequent or stock needs a distribution setup.

The example shows the method, not a promised outcome. Replace its dates, balances, prices, route conditions or personal facts with the reader's own information. Where the example performs arithmetic, it is an editorial calculation and should be reconciled against the live statement, bill or official calculator.

Action checklist

1. Confirm owner or tenant consent
2. Map every person working at the home
3. Count customers, students and collections
4. List appliances and storage volume
5. Remove external signage
6. Check sector rules with the competent agency
7. Set a trigger for moving to commercial space

Work through the list in sequence. If one item cannot be verified, record the gap and use the official contact route rather than guessing. Keep screenshots only as supporting evidence; the live authority page and issued document remain controlling.

Two original tools in this guide

A six-impact home-business test covering people, equipment, stock, visitors, deliveries and signs. This converts the source material into a reusable decision aid. Copy it into a note or spreadsheet and enter only verified personal inputs.

A practical move-out trigger before a residential activity becomes a commercial operation. This is the final control before an irreversible payment, submission, booking, journey or household decision. It is an editorial framework derived from the sources, not an official form.

Primary-source ledger

Official or primary source	Material claims checked
URA Home-Based Business Scheme	Who may operate, the residential-use safeguard and limits on workers, signs, equipment and storage.
SFA home-based food-business guidance	Food-safety responsibilities and the scope of home-based food operations.

Each inline link sits beside the claim it is intended to support. Both source pages were opened during the evidence pass. If a page is revised after publication, use the latest controlling text and treat this article's worked examples as historical calculations rather than fresh official advice.

Errors that change the outcome

- Treating 'online' as automatically home-compliant

- Letting an outside employee work at the flat
- Using the home as a distribution centre
- Ignoring allergen and food-safety duties
- Assuming neighbour complaints cannot end the arrangement

The recurring failure is to act on a familiar label without checking its definition. Preserve the original notice, policy wording, booking terms, eligibility record or authority response so that a later review starts from evidence rather than memory.

Continue with the next useful step

For the adjacent task, read [separate home and building approvals](#). If the decision moves into another stage, continue with [review the home protection file](#). These links were selected for reader progression, not as mechanical category links.

Questions readers ask

Can I hire someone to work in my home?

Not under the basic Home-Based Business Scheme; check the separate Home Office route. [URA Home-Based Business Scheme](#).

Can I put a sign outside?

URA says no advertisements, signs or posters at the residential premises. [SFA home-based food-business guidance](#).

Is home baking automatically licensed?

The scheme does not displace SFA food-safety rules; check the exact food activity. [URA Home-Based Business Scheme](#).

Accuracy note: This article was checked against the linked primary sources on 2026-07-25. Individual facts and live services can change. No interview, first-hand use, first-hand meal, price check or field observation is claimed unless expressly stated.

Date Created

26/07/2026

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