

Procurement Essentials Checklist

A practical guide for Canadian businesses buying goods and services — covering planning, supplier selection, purchasing controls, and contract oversight.

1. Planning & Needs Definition

<input type="checkbox"/>	Define the business need clearly before going to market Document what you need, why you need it, and what success looks like.
<input type="checkbox"/>	Set a realistic budget and get internal approval Confirm funding is approved before approaching suppliers.
<input type="checkbox"/>	Determine the appropriate procurement method Decide between direct purchase, quotes, RFQ, or formal tender based on dollar value.
<input type="checkbox"/>	Check Canadian procurement thresholds (CFTA/CETA) Purchases above thresholds may require open competitive processes.
<input type="checkbox"/>	Identify key stakeholders and decision makers Confirm who has authority to approve the purchase and sign contracts.
<input type="checkbox"/>	Assess whether existing contracts or standing offers apply Check if a pre-approved supplier arrangement already covers this need.

2. Supplier Identification & Selection

<input type="checkbox"/>	Conduct market research to identify potential suppliers Use trade directories, industry associations, and online platforms.
<input type="checkbox"/>	Issue a Request for Quotation (RFQ) or Request for Proposal (RFP) Use an RFQ for defined goods/services and an RFP for complex or undefined requirements.
<input type="checkbox"/>	Ensure at least 3 competitive quotes are obtained Best practice for most purchases — required for many Canadian public sector purchases.
<input type="checkbox"/>	Evaluate suppliers using a consistent scoring criteria Assess price, quality, delivery, experience, and financial stability.
<input type="checkbox"/>	Verify supplier credentials and references Check business registration, insurance, and speak to previous clients.
<input type="checkbox"/>	Confirm supplier compliance with Canadian labour and safety laws Ensure suppliers meet applicable provincial and federal requirements.
<input type="checkbox"/>	Document supplier evaluation and selection rationale Keep records to support audit trails and defend decisions.

3. Purchasing Controls & Approvals

<input type="checkbox"/>	Ensure purchase orders (POs) are raised before goods/services are received Never receive goods or services without an approved PO in place.
<input type="checkbox"/>	Confirm three-way matching is in place (PO, receipt, invoice) Match purchase order, delivery receipt, and supplier invoice before payment.
<input type="checkbox"/>	Apply appropriate signing authorities for all purchases

	Purchases must be approved by the right level of authority for the dollar value.
<input type="checkbox"/>	Maintain a conflict of interest declaration for all procurement decisions Required for both public sector and corporate procurement in Canada.
<input type="checkbox"/>	Keep a complete audit trail of all procurement activity Retain all quotes, evaluations, approvals, and correspondence for 7 years.
<input type="checkbox"/>	Ensure HST/GST treatment is correctly applied to purchases Verify tax applicability based on supplier location and goods/services type.

4. Contract Management & Supplier Oversight

<input type="checkbox"/>	Ensure a signed contract or PO is in place before work begins Verbal agreements are not sufficient — always document terms in writing.
<input type="checkbox"/>	Review key contract terms before signing Check payment terms, delivery dates, warranties, termination clauses, and liability.
<input type="checkbox"/>	Set up a contract register to track all active agreements Record supplier name, value, start/end dates, and renewal windows.
<input type="checkbox"/>	Schedule regular supplier performance reviews Review against agreed KPIs — at minimum quarterly for significant contracts.
<input type="checkbox"/>	Monitor contract expiry dates and plan renewals in advance Begin renewal or re-tender process at least 90 days before expiry.
<input type="checkbox"/>	Manage supplier invoices and payments in line with contract terms Late payment damages supplier relationships and may breach contract terms.
<input type="checkbox"/>	Document and escalate any supplier performance issues promptly Keep written records of all issues, discussions, and agreed remediation steps.