



2025 Holiday Readiness Timeline

A month-by-month guide for small retailers
to plan inventory, promotions, and customer



Fit Small Business

The holiday season is the biggest sales period of the year, but 2025 is different: slower growth, earlier shopping, and tighter margins. This timeline breaks down what small retailers need to do each month to stay ready—from June planning through January returns.

Month	Key Tasks
June Plan demand and review tariffs	Review last year’s sales data and forecast demand. Identify tariff/duty risks; run cost sensitivity tests. Set preliminary budgets and revenue goals.

Tariff Risk Checklist	Tech Readiness Checklist	Logistics Readiness Checklist
☐ Review product mix for high tariff exposure ☐ Run cost-sensitivity tests ☐ Keep a buffer of critical items ☐ Explore alternate origins	☐ Run load/stress/soak tests ☐ Freeze code by September ☐ Test POS and payment systems ☐ Set up error alerts	☐ Reserve carrier space by October ☐ Confirm surcharges in advance ☐ Monitor customs and lead times ☐ Have a backup plan for weather delays

The holidays are tough, but with the right planning you can stay ready, serve your customers, and protect your margins.

