

Here are 10 tips to get your commercial registration for a W.L.L in Bahrain faster than everyone else.

Applying for your Commercial Registration (CR) certificate can be a lengthy process if left unplanned—especially if you’re applying for a W.L.L, or With Limited Liability company (refer to the [MOIC guide](#) for a breakdown of a W.L.L.)

We understand that the time and energy your startup spends on organizing paperwork, visiting government offices, scouting locations, and obtaining permits could be directed elsewhere.

FYI, the CR system was recently revamped. The traditional process has been accelerated with the website [Sijilat](#), which not only allows you to check on and apply for your CR online, but also access the database of activities available and registered enterprise names. In other words, you get to map out who’s doing what in Bahrain, with the names of the businesses and activities.

Starting in May 2016, the number of commercial activities shrank considerably, from 1854 to 381. Perhaps the biggest change, though, was the launching of [Sijili](#), the long-anticipated virtual CR for aspiring Bahraini entrepreneurs. Not to be confused with [Sijilat](#), Sijili allows Bahrainis to start businesses without having a shop address, and sign contracts with companies that demand a commercial record in 39 pre-set commercial activities. Basically, Sijili is there to nurture your individual Bahraini-born projects.

We asked business owners and officials from the Bahrain Investors Center for tips they have found useful in speeding up the sometimes-tedious process of getting your CR for a W.L.L. If you’re currently stuck as a startup founder, or if you’re planning on registering your company anytime soon, here are some quick tips we’re sure are going to make this process smoother:

1. **Know the A-Z of the paperwork involved.** The CR process is constantly changing in Bahrain to accommodate a dynamic business environment. Rules and policies, documentation, and requirements can change without clear notice.
2. **Offline out, online in.** For the most part, registering your CR can be done online on the [Sijilat online platform](#). You can easily call their hotline and ask if your specific case would work out if done online.
3. **Memorize this magic number.** Based upon our research, we found dozens of numbers online, many of which led to nowhere of use—and, to our surprise, some were inactive. BUT, we found this number (17562222) to be very useful the past couple of times we called.
4. **Be sure to check the activity codes you need for the CR** or W.L.L you are applying for. Study them, look at them, and befriend them. Every activity could end up having dif-

ferent requirements. Make sure that's clear to you. You don't need any surprises halfway through for something you could have planned for.

5. **Get ahead by planning ahead.** Some subcategories of the activities you want could take up to two weeks to complete. For example, make sure you know what to prepare in every step of the process, and which steps take more time than others. You could visit the respective government entities required in every part of the process to build a correct process timeline...but that's hardcore advice.
6. **You don't need a lawyer.** Many think that the process of registering your business or preparing the documents required requires a lawyer, the help of a law firm, or a document clearing office. Here's a tip. You don't. The following documents don't require a lawyer:
 1. **Memorandum of Association (US)/Articles of Association (UK):** You can find a template for this legal document online. Better yet, you can get an Arabic template from the Bahrain Investors Center in the Bahrain Financial Harbor. Build some knowledge around this, as it could be valuable in the long run. It's important to understand what you and your partner(s) are getting into beforehand. One more thing—when submitting this document online, don't submit an Adobe PDF (.pdf) version, but a Microsoft Word (.docx). After all, it is a draft, and not the final document. The Microsoft Word document also allows the government employee to edit as necessary.
 2. **Partners Resolution:** This applies to companies that will have partners when established, such as Limited Liability Companies (LLC) or With Limited Liability Companies. Potato, potato. This letter requires the signatures of all the partners involved. It should not be signed by one party, because then it could be seen as one-sided.
 3. **No-Objection Letter:** If requested, you might need a letter that basically says “my employer/business partner/XYZ knows I'm starting a company, and they do not object to it, and there's no conflict of interest.”
7. **Follow up (without being a nuisance).** In your next (or first) visit, get the phone numbers and other contact information of the people helping you during the registration process to avoid delays when you're not there. And who knows? You'll probably gain a new acquaintance and meet more professionals to connect with in the future.
8. **Scout locations for your business beforehand.** A standard commercial registration requires an address for the business. Use popular real estate applications or websites, newspaper listings, or websites like [Expatriates](#); or ask around to understand the rents of some office locations. Then take a drive around these areas and get a feel for the neighborhood/area. In other words, how will this office building in this area strategically help my startup?
9. **Get your permit while you're applying for the CR.** Before, you needed to get a CR to get a permit for your office space, restaurant location, or to build a kitchen or open a bank account. Now you can get these permits without a CR. This automatically speeds up the process.
10. **Follow the instructions!** Instructions are as simple and straightforward as they can be. For example, if the document wants you to write down three items, write three, not two

or one. Otherwise, your application will be rejected, and you will waste more time and energy resubmitting your application. Also, for highly specific forms that seem confusing, don't just submit a blank form (unless they tell you to, which is weird, but it happens). Submit what you can provide to the best of your ability, then check the progress on the application.

Lastly, if you don't understand a step of the process, ask for clarification. There's nothing more inefficient than resubmitting a rejected CR without understanding the reasons behind it. Make use of relevant help desks, websites, and friends who've done this before.

Think of the CR as a hurdle along the path: once you pass that barrier, you're good to go, and can get your startup up and running. Why wait? Just get it done it with! The process of reducing the bureaucracy of the CR is in motion, so don't fret.

Disclaimer: This list is not meant to be a comprehensive guide, but rather a set of tips we encourage aspiring entrepreneurs, and readers generally, to consider when applying for a CR. If you think we should edit or update this list, please do not hesitate to contact us.