Getting Paid

Bank Account, Wave & Stripe — the three pieces that let money find you.

“Own your work. Own your life.”

Scrappy Stacks

Introduction

Getting paid shouldn’t be the hard part. Most new business owners either wait too long to separate business money from personal money, or they sign up for the first payment tool they see and end up paying monthly fees for features they don’t need. This guide covers the three pieces that actually matter — a real business bank account, free invoicing through Wave, and a Stripe Payment Link for taking cards online — and how they connect to each other so money moves in, gets tracked, and lands where it belongs.

Chapter One: Opening Your Business Bank Account

Open this before you take your first dollar, not after. Mixing business and personal money in one account makes taxes harder, makes it impossible to see if the business is actually profitable, and looks bad if you ever form an LLC and need to show real separation. Most banks and credit unions offer a free business checking account with no minimum balance — you’ll typically need your fictitious name filing or LLC paperwork, your EIN from the IRS, and a government ID. Online-only options like Novo or Bluevine are worth a look too — no monthly fee, no branch visit required, and an account open in about ten minutes. Once it’s open, every business dollar goes in and out of that account and nowhere else.

Chapter Two: Setting Up Wave

Wave (waveapps.com) is free invoicing and bookkeeping software built for exactly this stage of business — no monthly fee for the core invoicing and accounting tools. Create a free account, add your business name and logo, and connect your new business bank account so transactions import automatically instead of you typing them in by hand. From there, build your first invoice: add your client, list what you’re charging for, and send it straight from Wave by email — the client gets a clean, professional invoice with a due date, and you get a running record of what’s been billed and what’s still outstanding, all in one place.

Chapter Three: Accepting Payments Online with Stripe

Stripe (stripe.com) lets you accept card payments without a merchant account or any code. Create a free account, verify your business details, and connect the same bank account from Chapter One so payouts land automatically. Then create a Payment Link — a simple, shareable URL that opens a checkout page for a specific product or amount. Drop that link in an invoice, a text message, or an email, and the client pays by card in under a minute. Stripe takes a small per-transaction fee (typically around 2.9% + 30 cents) and nothing else — no monthly charge for a Payment Link, so you only pay when you actually get paid.

Chapter Four: How the Three Pieces Fit Together

Here's the full loop: the business bank account is where money lives. Wave is where you track what's owed and send invoices. Stripe is how a client actually pays one of those invoices online, and the payout lands back in the bank account, which Wave then reconciles automatically. You can also add your Stripe Payment Link directly inside a Wave invoice, so a client gets one email with both the itemized invoice and a working "Pay Now" button — no separate steps, no chasing a check, no manual transfers between accounts.

Chapter Five: Keeping It Simple

Resist the urge to add more tools before you need them. A lot of new business owners sign up for paid accounting software, a separate invoicing subscription, and a payment processor with monthly fees — all doing what this free three-piece setup already covers. Add complexity only when a real, specific need shows up: recurring subscription billing, multiple team members needing access, or inventory tracking. Until then, a bank account, Wave, and a Stripe Payment Link are enough to run a real business and get paid reliably, for free. And if the idea of wiring all of this together yourself still sounds like more than you want to take on, that's exactly the kind of setup work Build It For Me handles for you.