

Dubai trade License:

How to Get a Dubai Trade License (Step-by-Step for South Africans)

Short Answer:

You can get a **Dubai Free Zone trade license** in **3–5 days** without living in Dubai. Costs start at **~R25K** (depending on Free Zone).

Here's the **fastest, cheapest, and most compliant way** to do it:

📌 Step 1: Choose a Free Zone

*Best for Online/AI Businesses:

Free Zone	Cost (USD)	Best For	Remote Setup?
RAK (Ras Al Khaimah)	\$1,500	Low-cost startups	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes
DMCC (Dubai)	\$3,500	Tech/AI companies	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes
Ajman	\$1,200	Cheap but fewer banks	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No (UAE visit)

👉 Recommendation: **RAK Free Zone** (cheapest, remote-friendly, Wio Bank accepts it).

📌 Step 2: Prepare Documents*

You'll need:

1. **Passport copy** (SA passport works).

2. **SA ID copy**.
 3. **Proof of address** (SA utility bill).
 4. **Business plan** (1-page summary).
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📌 Step 3: Apply Through an Agent (Mandatory)

- **Why?** UAE requires a **local sponsor/agent** for registration.
 - **Cost:** ~R25K–R40K (includes license, virtual office, and bank intro).
 - **Trusted Agents:**
 - [Creative Zone](<https://creativezone.ae/>) (best for startups).
 - [PRO Partner Group](<https://www.propartnergroup.com/>) (premium service).
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📌 Step 4: Get Your Trade License (3–5 Days)

- **What's Included:**
 - **Trade license** (allows 100% foreign ownership).
 - **Virtual office address** (for mail).
 - **Visa eligibility** (if you move to UAE later).
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📌 Step 5: Open a Business Bank Account

- **Best Banks for Non-Residents:**
 - **Wio Bank** (100% remote, instant virtual card).
 - **Emirates NBD** (requires UAE visit).
- **Documents Needed:**

- Trade license.
- Passport.
- SA proof of address.

💰 Total Costs (For South Africans)

Item	Cost (ZAR)
Trade License (RAK)	R25,000
Agent Fees	R5,000–R10,000
Wio Bank Account	R0 (Free)
Total	**~R30K**

⚡ Pro Tips

- **No UAE visit needed** for RAK/DMCC.
- **0% tax** on international income.
- **No need to live in Dubai** (license is valid forever).

🚀 Next Steps

1. **Pick a Free Zone** (RAK or DMCC).
2. **Contact an Agent** (I can refer you to a cheap, reliable one).
3. **Get Licensed → Open Wio Bank → Start Operating Tax-Free.**

****Need help?**** DM me—I work with **Dubai setup experts** who specialize in SA entrepreneurs. 

(This is how you legally own a Dubai business without moving there.)