

Seed deck checklist: 12 checks before you send it

Run these 12 checks on your deck and your model before an investor does. They follow the order of the deck, and each one names its slide and the fix.

The 12 checks, in deck order

Open your deck and your model side by side. Tick a box only when the answer is a plain yes.

-
- ☐ **1. Ask up front** Where: Slide 2. Do your first three slides say how much you're raising and what it gets you to?
Fix: Put the amount, the runway in months and three milestones on slide 2.
 - ☐ **2. Runway** Where: The ask. Can you say, from your model, how many months this raise lasts?
Fix: Divide cash plus the raise by average monthly net burn, and put the months on the ask slide. The raise calculator does the arithmetic.
 - ☐ **3. Market** Where: Market. Is your market size counted bottom-up (reachable customers $\times$ price $\times$ 12), not only a top-down industry figure?
Fix: Count reachable customers, multiply by your price and 12, and name the source of each count.
 - ☐ **4. Unit economics** Where: Business model. Can you say what a customer costs to win and how many months they take to pay that back, or say plainly that you don't know yet?
Fix: Show acquisition cost and payback in months, or one line on how you'll measure both in the next 90 days.
 - ☐ **5. Traction** Where: Traction. Does your traction slide show dated numbers (users, revenue, pilots, signed letters), or say plainly that you're pre-traction?
Fix: Date every number and say what it measures. No traction yet? Show the evidence of demand you do have.
 - ☐ **6. Team** Where: Team. Does your team slide say why this team can win, with one relevant fact per person?
Fix: Replace job titles with one fact per person that matters to this business.
 - ☐ **7. Headcount** Where: Team, Financials. Does every hire on your team or hiring slide appear in your costs, with a salary and a start month?
Fix: Add a hiring plan: role, start month, salary and on-costs, linked to operating costs.
 - ☐ **8. Tie-out** Where: Financials, and every slide with a number. Do the figures in your deck (revenue, costs, team size, the raise) match your model exactly?
Fix: List every number in the deck, find its cell in the model, and correct whichever side is wrong.
 - ☐ **9. Revenue build** Where: Financials. Is revenue built from customers (or units) times price, not from a growth rate typed in?
Fix: Rebuild revenue as customers $\times$ price $\times$ 12, with customer counts driven by a sales plan you can explain.
 - ☐ **10. Use of funds** Where: Use of funds. Does your use of funds split the raise into 3 to 5 lines, each tied to a milestone for the next round?
Fix: Replace category percentages with lines that name what the money buys and what it proves.
 - ☐ **11. Length** Where: Whole deck. Is the deck 10 to 15 main slides, readable as a PDF without you there to present it?
Fix: Cut to 15 main slides, move detail to an appendix, and give each slide a headline that states its point.
 - ☐ **12. Assumptions** Where: Model file. Are all your assumptions on one tab, so changing one updates every statement?
Fix: Move every typed input to one assumptions tab and replace typed-over cells with formulas.
-

The six questions every read checks

Every read I write tests these six. The 12 checks cover all of them, plus the deck and round items an investor sees first.

Runway	How many months does this raise really buy?
Revenue drivers	Is growth built from customers and price, or typed in?
Unit economics	What does a customer cost, and when does it pay back?
Headcount	Do your planned hires appear in your costs?
Use of funds	Does the money reach next-round milestones?
Tie-out	Do your three statements agree?

A 12-slide order, with each check on its slide

Ten to 15 main slides is the range in the length check. This order uses 12 and puts the ask on slide 2, where it frames everything after it.

1. **Cover:** what the company does, in one line.
2. **The ask:** the amount, the runway in months and three milestones. Checks: Ask up front, Runway
3. **Problem:** who has it, and what it costs them today.
4. **Solution:** what you built, and how it solves the problem.
5. **Market:** reachable customers $\times$ price $\times$ 12. Checks: Market
6. **Business model:** price, cost to win a customer, payback. Checks: Unit economics
7. **Traction:** every number dated. Checks: Traction
8. **Go-to-market:** how the next customers will be won.
9. **Team:** one relevant fact per person, and the planned hires. Checks: Team, Headcount
10. **Financials:** revenue, costs and cash, taken from the model. Checks: Tie-out, Revenue build, Headcount
11. **Use of funds:** 3 to 5 lines, each tied to a milestone. Checks: Use of funds
12. **Close:** the ask again, and how to reach you.

Across the whole deck: **Length**, and **Tie-out** on every slide with a number. In the model file: **Assumptions**.