

Small Business

Salesforce Pricing for Small Business: What a 5 to 10 Person Team Really Pays

Small teams hear "\$25 a user" and assume Salesforce is cheap. Then the implementation quote arrives and it looks like a different product. Both numbers are real. This guide shows how they fit together for a team of 5 to 10 people.



Key takeaways

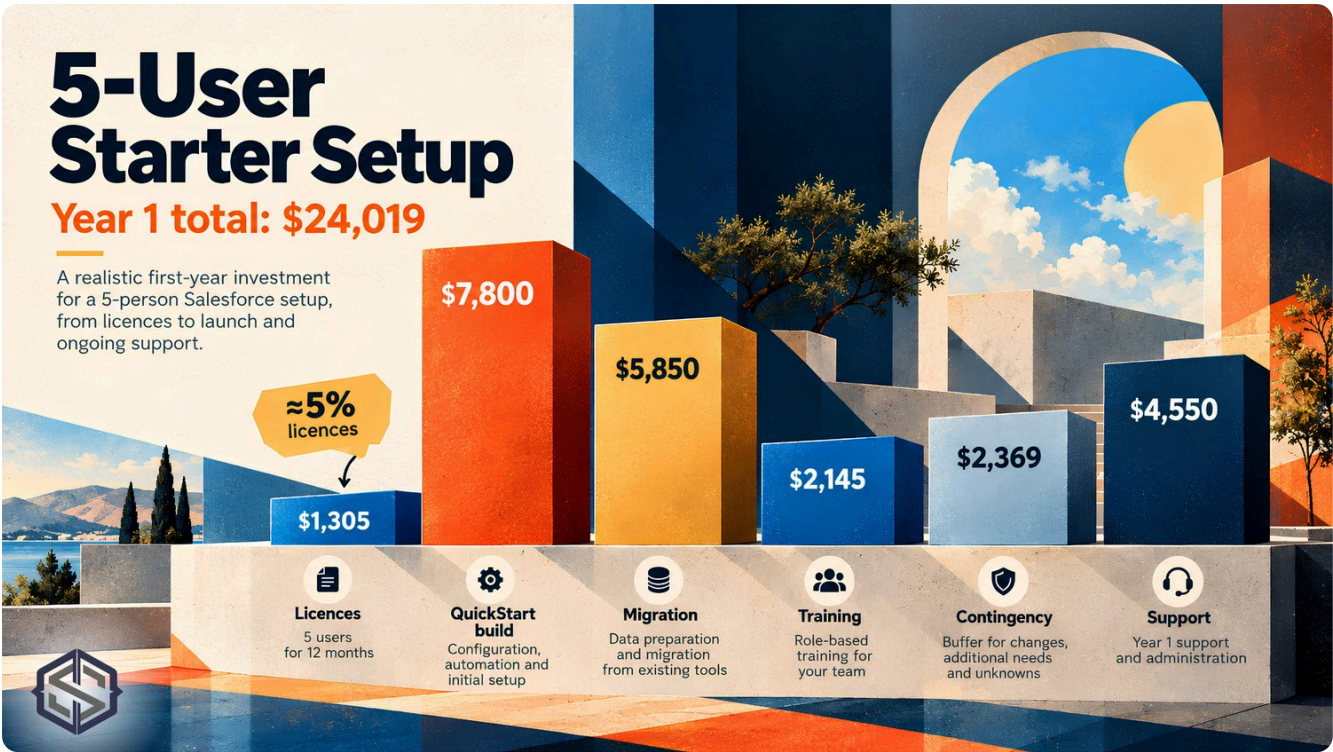
- Starter Suite is \$25 and Pro Suite \$100 per user per month. For 5 users, Starter is \$1,500 a year at list.
- A 5-user Starter setup costs about \$24,000 in year one once migration, training and support are included. Licences are only 5% of that.
- A 10-user Pro Suite setup costs about \$33,400 in year one and \$71,800 over three years.
- Move to Core when you need a customer portal, custom objects, or a Partial Copy sandbox, not just because the team grows.

The two entry tiers

Salesforce built two tiers for very small teams in its September 2026 lineup. Starter Suite is \$25 per user per month. Pro Suite is \$100. Both are billed annually and both sit below Core, which at \$195 is the entry

point for real customisation.

The estimator recommends Starter Suite only for a very specific profile: five users or fewer, standard processes, and nothing that needs customisation. It recommends Pro Suite for small teams of up to about 15 people with simple needs. Past that, Core.



Example one: five people on Starter Suite

A five-person sales team moving off spreadsheets, tracking a pipeline with standard processes, delivered by an offshore team at \$65 an hour:

Line	Year 1
Starter Suite licences, 5 users (benchmark)	\$1,305
QuickStart implementation, 120 hours	\$7,800
Data migration from spreadsheets, 90 hours	\$5,850
Training and enablement, 33 hours	\$2,145
Contingency at 15%	\$2,369
Support, 7 months at 10 hours a month	\$4,550
Year 1 total	\$24,019

TwinStack Cost Estimator, 29 September 2026 data. At list price the licences are \$1,500.

The licence is \$1,305 of a \$24,019 year. The rest is people. Over three years the total is about \$42,500, and years two and three each cost around \$9,200, almost all of it the support retainer. That ratio is the single most useful thing a small buyer can know.

Example two: ten people on Pro Suite

Now a ten-person business, still pipeline only, still standard processes:

Line	Year 1
Pro Suite licences, 10 users (benchmark)	\$10,440
QuickStart implementation, 120 hours	\$7,800
Data migration from spreadsheets, 90 hours	\$5,850
Training and enablement, 36 hours	\$2,340
Contingency at 15%	\$2,399
Support, 7 months at 10 hours a month	\$4,550
Year 1 total	\$33,379

Licences are \$12,000 at list. Three-year total about \$71,800 with a 6% yearly uplift.

Doubling the headcount did not double the cost. The build is almost the same size, because a small QuickStart is mostly configuration that does not scale with users. That is why small teams get better value per seat as they add people, and why the all-in first-year cost per user falls from about \$4,800 to about \$3,300 between these two examples.

Signs you have outgrown Starter and Pro

- **You want a customer or partner portal.** Experience Cloud needs an Enterprise-level edition, so Starter and Pro Suite are out. Our guide to portal pricing explains the costs that follow.
- **Your processes are not standard.** Custom objects, automation across teams and tailored permissions are what Core is for.
- **You want a proper testing environment.** Starter and Pro cannot add Partial or Full Copy sandboxes. A Developer Pro sandbox is the practical option below Core.
- **You are blending outside data into dashboards.** Core bundles Tableau Next, which the smaller tiers do not.

If two or more of these are true, price Core as well. Our Core, Advanced and Max comparison shows what happens above that.

Three ways small teams overspend

- **Buying the biggest edition "to grow into".** Moving from Pro Suite to Core when you need it is simpler than paying Core prices for two years of unused headroom. At 10 users Core is \$23,400 a year at list against \$12,000 for Pro Suite.
- **Treating migration as an afterthought.** In both examples above, getting spreadsheet data in properly is 90 hours, \$5,850 at offshore rates. A messy import costs more to fix than to prevent.
- **Skipping the owner.** A small team without anybody responsible drifts. A 10-hour monthly support block, \$650 a month offshore, is the cheapest insurance in the budget.

What the first-year budget actually buys

The \$24,000 to \$33,000 first-year figure is not "software". It buys a shared customer record with your history imported, a pipeline your team agrees on, reports a manager can open without asking anyone, users who have been shown how to use it, and a named person to call when something breaks. Compared with the cost of a salesperson losing a deal because nobody logged a conversation, many small firms find it modest. Compared with the cost of a spreadsheet, it is not cheap, and you should be honest about which comparison applies to you.

How to keep a small implementation small

1. Write down the three outcomes that justify the purchase. Everything else waits for phase two.
2. Clean your spreadsheets before anyone touches Salesforce. Duplicates and inconsistent names cost hours.
3. Use a repeatable import tool for ongoing loads. Our free Smart Lookup Data Loader handles upserts and lookup matching natively.
4. Pick a fixed scope and a go-live date, then say no to additions until after launch.
5. Budget a small support block from day one. A system with no owner decays quickly.

Compare delivery models honestly. A five-person firm rarely needs a global integrator, and the difference between \$65 and \$175 an hour is the difference between a build of roughly \$18,000 and one of roughly \$49,000 for the same Starter setup. We compare the options in offshore vs onshore Salesforce implementation.

To see your own numbers, open the estimator, or use the express calculator if you already know you want Starter or Pro Suite.

Frequently asked questions

How much does Salesforce cost for a small business?

At list, Starter Suite is \$25 per user per month and Pro Suite is \$100. A 5-person team on Starter pays \$1,500 a year in licences, and a 10-person team on Pro Suite pays \$12,000. Add implementation, which for a small team usually costs more than the licences in the first year.

Is Salesforce too expensive for a 5-person company?

Not necessarily, but go in knowing that the licences are the small part. In our estimate a 5-user Starter Suite setup costs around \$24,000 in year one, of which licences are about \$1,300. The question is whether a shared customer record is worth that to you, not whether \$25 a seat is cheap.

What is the difference between Starter Suite and Pro Suite?

Pro Suite is the next step up and suits small teams that need more than the starter feature set. Past that sits Core, which is the entry point for custom objects, automation and permissions. If you need a customer portal, you also need an Enterprise-level edition, which means Core or above.

Do I need an implementation partner for a small team?

Not always, but most first-time buyers underestimate the data work. Cleaning spreadsheets, mapping columns and loading related records correctly is where small projects go wrong. A tightly scoped QuickStart of about 120 to 150 hours is often enough.

When should a small business move up to Core?

When you need things Starter and Pro cannot give you: a self-service portal, real customisation of the data model, or a Partial Copy sandbox for safe testing. Growth in headcount alone is not a reason.

Prices are Salesforce list prices in USD as verified on 29 September 2026. Estimator figures are estimates, not quotes.

Run your own numbers. Try the free TwinStack Salesforce Cost Estimator at twinstack.net/cost-estimator, or book a free 45-minute call with our team.