



BEACON AVL

The Volunteer A1 Starter Checklist

Your first six Sundays behind the board.

Clarity. Consistency. Confidence.

Welcome to the booth. The goal of your first six Sundays is not perfection — it is understanding, repeatability, and confidence. Mixing is a craft, and every great operator started exactly where you are. Use this checklist every week. Check the boxes. Ask questions. Trust the process.

Print this. Keep it at the console. Bring it every Sunday.

HOW TO USE THIS CHECKLIST

1. Work through Pre-Service, During Service, and Post-Service every Sunday.
2. The Weekly Focus sections build on each other — Sunday 1 through Sunday 6.
3. Anything you don't understand, circle it and bring it to your tech lead.
4. When in doubt: lower the fader, take a breath, solve one problem at a time.

PRE-SERVICE ROUTINE

Arrive 60–90 minutes before service. Every Sunday. No exceptions.

Arrival & Setup (60 min before service)

<input type="checkbox"/>	Sign in with your tech lead and review the service order.
<input type="checkbox"/>	Power on the console, amps, and monitor system in the correct order. <i>Console first, then outboard, then amps last. Never the reverse.</i>
<input type="checkbox"/>	Confirm ProPresenter, livestream, and comms are up and talking to the board.
<input type="checkbox"/>	Verify the stage is patched to match this week's input list.
<input type="checkbox"/>	Put on headphones and confirm solo bus, PFL, and talkback all work.

Line Check (45 min before service)

<input type="checkbox"/>	Walk every input. Ring out every mic, DI, and playback source.
<input type="checkbox"/>	Confirm labels on the console match the stage plot.
<input type="checkbox"/>	Check phantom power on every condenser and active DI.

<input type="checkbox"/>	Mute any channels not in use. Unused channels = unused noise.
<input type="checkbox"/>	Set rough gain structure at the preamp — green, not yellow, not red.

Soundcheck (30 min before service)

<input type="checkbox"/>	Drums first, then bass, then rhythm instruments, then vocals. <i>Build the mix from the bottom up. Speech and lead vocal sit on top.</i>
<input type="checkbox"/>	Check in-ear and monitor mixes with each musician before touching FOH.
<input type="checkbox"/>	Set high-pass filters on every vocal and most instruments.
<input type="checkbox"/>	Confirm pastor/speaker mic level with a voice check at podium volume.
<input type="checkbox"/>	Save a scene or snapshot once everything is dialed in.

DURING SERVICE

Your job is clarity for speech, warmth for music, and reliability for the room. Stay present. Stay calm.

Core Habits

<input type="checkbox"/>	Eyes on the stage and ears on the PA — not on the screen.
<input type="checkbox"/>	Ride the lead vocal. It should always be intelligible above the music.
<input type="checkbox"/>	Mute the pastor/speaker mic any time they are not speaking.
<input type="checkbox"/>	Watch meters, but mix by ear. Green is good. Yellow is warning. Red is fix it now.
<input type="checkbox"/>	Keep the talkback closed to the room. Only open to the team on comms.

Transitions

<input type="checkbox"/>	Announcements → worship: open band channels, raise the mix gently.
<input type="checkbox"/>	Worship → message: pull down the band, open the pastor mic, check for rumble or wind.
<input type="checkbox"/>	Message → response song: bring music back under the speaker before the speaker stops.
<input type="checkbox"/>	Prayer → dismissal: watch for hot mics and unmuted channels.

When Something Goes Wrong

<input type="checkbox"/>	Breathe. Do not panic. The room does not know what you know.
--------------------------	--

<input type="checkbox"/>	Isolate the problem: is it the source, the channel, the bus, or the system?
<input type="checkbox"/>	Lower the fader before making any big change. Silence is better than feedback.
<input type="checkbox"/>	If feedback starts, pull the offending channel down 6 dB and identify it, don't EQ blindly.
<input type="checkbox"/>	Write down what happened. You will fix it this week, not during service.

POST-SERVICE ROUTINE

The service is over when the room is reset, the team is debriefed, and the notes are logged.

Shutdown

<input type="checkbox"/>	Power down the system in reverse order: amps first, outboard, console last.
<input type="checkbox"/>	Mute all channels and return faders to unity or zero per your house standard.
<input type="checkbox"/>	Coil and store cables using over/under technique. No knots. No kinks.
<input type="checkbox"/>	Return wireless mics and packs to the charging dock.
<input type="checkbox"/>	Lock the booth, console, and any rolling racks.

Debrief & Notes

<input type="checkbox"/>	Spend 5 minutes with your tech lead. What worked? What broke? What will you change?
<input type="checkbox"/>	Log anything that needs repair or replacement on the shared maintenance list.
<input type="checkbox"/>	Note one thing you did well today. Celebrate small wins.
<input type="checkbox"/>	Note one thing to focus on next Sunday. Growth is weekly, not monthly.

SIX-WEEK GROWTH PLAN

Each Sunday has one focus. Master one thing before stacking the next. This is how confidence is built.

WEEK	FOCUS	WHAT YOU'RE LEARNING
Sunday 1	Observation	Shadow your lead. Watch every move. Ask what, why, and when. Do not touch the board.
Sunday 2	Signal Flow	Trace every input from stage to speaker. Know where every signal starts, stops, and routes.
Sunday 3	Gain Structure	Set every preamp correctly. Clean gain at the top = clean mix everywhere else.
Sunday 4	The Vocal Mix	Make the lead vocal sit right. Intelligible. Present. Not harsh, not buried.
Sunday 5	Full Mix Balance	Mix the full band plus vocal. Focus on the low end and the stereo image.
Sunday 6	Solo Flight	Run service with your lead watching, not helping. Own the desk. Own the room.

WEEKLY FIELD NOTES

Use this space each Sunday to capture what you learned, what broke, and what to ask about next week.

Sunday 1

What went well:

What to improve:

Question for my tech lead:

Sunday 2

What went well:

What to improve:

Question for my tech lead:

Sunday 3

What went well:

What to improve:

Question for my tech lead:

Sunday 4

What went well:

What to improve:

Question for my tech lead:

Sunday 5

What went well:

What to improve:

Question for my tech lead:

Sunday 6

What went well:

What to improve:

Question for my tech lead:

A NOTE FROM BEACON AVL

This work is ministry, not just tech. Every Sunday you step behind the board, you are serving the people in that room and the mission of the house. You are not there to be flashy. You are there to be faithful.

Mistakes will happen. They happen to every operator, at every level, forever. What separates a great A1 from an average one is not that they never fail — it's that they are calm, prepared, and present when it matters.

Show up early. Ask good questions. Serve the team. Trust the process.

— *The Beacon AVL Team*