

Bookkeeping Software Setup Checklist

A practical guide for small businesses setting up their bookkeeping system

Setting up bookkeeping software correctly from the beginning can save hours of cleanup later. This checklist helps ensure your system is organized, accurate, and ready to support your business.

1. Choose the Right Software

Select bookkeeping software that fits your business size and needs.

- ✓ Choose a reputable platform (e.g., QuickBooks Online or similar)
 - ✓ Confirm it supports your tax requirements
 - ✓ Ensure it connects to your bank and payment tools
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2. Enter Your Business Information

Before recording transactions, make sure the basic business details are accurate.

- ✓ Business name and contact details
 - ✓ Fiscal year-end date
 - ✓ Business number / tax ID if applicable
 - ✓ Sales tax settings configured correctly
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3. Set Up Your Chart of Accounts

The chart of accounts organizes all financial activity in your business.

- ✓ Review default accounts created by the software
- ✓ Add accounts relevant to your business

- ✓ Remove unnecessary or duplicate accounts
 - ✓ Keep the structure simple and clear
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4. Connect Bank & Credit Card Accounts

Linking financial accounts allows transactions to import automatically.

- ✓ Connect business bank accounts
 - ✓ Connect business credit cards
 - ✓ Verify that transactions import correctly
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5. Configure Sales Tax

Proper tax setup prevents errors later.

- ✓ Set the correct sales tax rate(s)
 - ✓ Confirm tax is applied to the right products or services
 - ✓ Test a sample transaction to confirm calculations
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6. Create Products or Service Categories

Setting these up helps track income sources.

- ✓ Create product or service categories
 - ✓ Assign correct income accounts
 - ✓ Assign sales tax settings if applicable
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7. Set Up Invoices & Payment Settings

If you invoice clients, configure these tools early.

- ✓ Customize invoice templates
 - ✓ Set payment terms
 - ✓ Connect online payment options if used
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8. Establish a Document Storage System

Keep financial documents organized and accessible.

- ✓ Decide where receipts and invoices will be stored
 - ✓ Use digital storage where possible
 - ✓ Maintain consistent file naming
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9. Create a Monthly Bookkeeping Routine

Consistency keeps bookkeeping manageable.

- ✓ Schedule monthly transaction review
 - ✓ Reconcile accounts regularly
 - ✓ Review financial reports each month
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10. Review Before You Begin

Before recording real transactions, confirm everything is working.

- ✓ Accounts connected properly
 - ✓ Chart of accounts reviewed
 - ✓ Sales tax settings correct
 - ✓ Test transactions completed
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