BUSINESS RESOURCE

Small Business Bookkeeping Checklist

A step-by-step routine for keeping your financial records accurate, organised and under control throughout the year.

A practical Harrian Bookkeeping guide for small businesses across the UK.

How to use this guide
Work through the steps in order. Tick off or note anything that needs attention, and keep the guide with your bookkeeping records for reference.

Set up the right foundations

1 **Separate business activity**

Keep business income and spending easy to identify. A dedicated business bank account is usually the simplest way to avoid mixing business and personal transactions.

2 **Choose one place for your records**

Decide where invoices, receipts and statements will be stored. A consistent digital filing system is easier to maintain than documents spread across email, paper folders and phone photos.

3 **Use consistent categories**

Use the same bookkeeping categories for similar transactions. Consistency makes reconciliations and reporting more reliable and reduces year-end clean-up.

Your regular bookkeeping routine

1 **Capture income**

Record sales and other business income promptly. Make sure the amount, date, customer or source and supporting invoice are easy to trace.

2 **Capture expenses**

Record supplier invoices, receipts, subscriptions and other business costs. Attach or store the supporting document while the transaction is still easy to identify.

3 **Reconcile the bank**

Match the transactions in your bookkeeping system to the actual bank statement. Investigate anything missing, duplicated or unexplained rather than simply forcing the balance to agree.

4

Review outstanding items

Check unpaid customer invoices, supplier bills and any transactions waiting for clarification. Dealing with queries regularly is much easier than trying to remember them months later.

Monthly sense-check

- All business bank and card accounts have been reconciled.
- Sales income appears complete for the month.
- Supplier invoices and receipts have been captured.
- Duplicate or unusual transactions have been investigated.
- Personal transactions have been clearly identified where they appear in business accounts.
- Any bookkeeping questions have been noted and resolved where possible.
- Digital documents are stored securely and can be retrieved quickly.

Before you hand records to your accountant

Your accountant should not need to rebuild the bookkeeping. Aim to provide reconciled records, clear supporting documents and a short list of genuine queries or unusual transactions. That makes the handover quicker and gives your accountant a cleaner starting point.

Good bookkeeping is a routine, not a year-end rescue job. Small, regular updates are usually easier to manage than a large clean-up at the end of the year.

Important

This guide provides general bookkeeping information only. Record-keeping and tax requirements depend on your business structure and circumstances. Check current HMRC guidance or speak to your accountant or tax adviser where needed.

Official references

HMRC - Business records if you're self-employed: https://www.gov.uk/self-employed-records

HMRC - What records to keep: https://www.gov.uk/self-employed-records/what-records-to-keep

HMRC - How long to keep your records: https://www.gov.uk/self-employed-records/how-long-to-keep-your-records

Need help keeping your bookkeeping organised?

Harrian Bookkeeping provides reliable bookkeeping support for small businesses across the UK. Email **hello@harrianbookkeeping.com** or call **07831 524703**.