Print whole section

Running your own business

Guidance, tools and tips to help you run your business.

Good business habits

Using digital tools, getting advice and keeping accurate records will help your business to stay on track.

Using your business money and assets for private purposes

You may need to report money and assets taken from your company or trust as income in your tax return.

Supporting your small business

Tax time essentials, learning resources, tools and services to support small business.

QC 106454

Good business habits

Using digital tools, getting advice and keeping accurate records will help your business to stay on track.

Last updated 8 August 2025

Benefits of good business habits

Tax can be complicated and it's not the only thing to consider when running a business.

Our small business random enquiry program findings show that most small businesses aim to report accurately, but sometimes make mistakes.

Establishing good habits not only gives you the best chance of success but can also give you peace of mind and free up your time.

When we see businesses operating well, the common theme is getting the basics right.

1. Using digital tools and business software can help you streamline processes, spend less time on administration, and concentrate on areas that will improve your cash flow position.
2. Keeping good records ensures you have the right information to meet your obligations, avoid mistakes, and better assess the financial health of your business.
3. Getting advice from trusted sources, like your tax professional or the ATO website.
4. Setting aside GST, pay as you go (PAYG) withholding and super from your cash flow, so you have the funds available when it’s time to lodge and pay.

Practicing good business habits will help you:

- manage your cash flow and meet your tax and super obligations
- accurately report business income in your tax return
- know which expenses you're entitled to claim, and separate your business and private expenses correctly
- lodge and pay your business activity statements (BAS) correctly and on time
- know what you need to record and report for tax incentives your business receives
- understand the tax implications of your business decisions such as taking money out of your business for your own use

- manage your tax and super obligations and prove your claims.

Using digital tools

Using digital tools and business software can increase the efficiency of your business.

Digital tools can help you:

- track and streamline processes
- manage customer data and employee records
- reduce overhead costs
- support business growth
- easily assess your financial position.

While some digital tools have an upfront or ongoing cost, you can generally claim a tax deduction for the cost of digital products used in running your business. You can only claim a deduction for the business portion of your expenses.

You can claim most operating expenses as a tax deduction in the year you incur them. You may also be able to claim an immediate deduction for depreciating assets under the simplified depreciation rules.

Online services

You can manage most of your business reporting and transactions using our online services.

Sole traders can use ATO online services to make payment arrangements and manage activity statements, PAYG instalments and accounts.

Small business owners can use Online services for business to prepare and lodge activity statements, annual reports, manage accounts and update registration details.

The ATO app lets individuals or sole traders to easily view their personal tax and super information in one place. It has a range of features and tools to help you keep on top of your tax and super.

Good record keeping

Keeping accurate and complete records will help you meet your tax, super and employer obligations.

See our free and helpful resources:

- Essentials to strengthen your small business – Record keeping – a self-paced course on record keeping
- myDeductions – sole traders can use myDeductions, the record-keeping tool in the ATO app that makes it easier to keep records in one place
- Record keeping for business – how to stay on top of your tax, super and employer obligations
- Record keeping evaluation tool – a simple way to see how well you're handling your business records
- Selling or closing your business – records – check what you need to record when you sell or close your business.

Getting advice

Getting the right help makes it easier to navigate change and uncertainty in your business lifecycle, such as:

- Supporting your small business – learning resources, tools and services
- Tax support for businesses and not-for-profit – how to get help if you can't pay on time.

There are also organisations that provide information and services:

- Australian Small Business and Family Enterprise Ombudsman – helps small businesses and family enterprises grow and thrive, and provides the free My Business Health support tool
- Council of Small Business Organisations Australia – represents the interests of small business
- Registered tax or BAS agents – check if your agent is registered or find a registered agent to help you with your tax and super affairs
- Support for businesses in Australia – information, grants, services and support from across government to help your business succeed

- State Small Business Commissioners help small businesses deal with disputes in
  - New South Wales
  - Queensland
  - South Australia
  - Victoria
  - Western Australia

Lodging and paying

It's important that you lodge and pay your tax in full and on time. Tax returns, activity statements, other documents and information must be lodged or returned by their due dates. If you don't lodge on time, penalties may apply.

If you owe tax, you need to pay in full and on time to avoid general interest charges (GIC). GIC on overdue tax debt compounds daily, so if you don't pay in full and on time, you'll pay more.

If you're worried you won't be able to lodge and pay by the due date, contact us or your tax professional before the due date to find out what support options are available.

Tools and resources

See our range of tools, resources and support services to make it easier to meet your tax and super obligations:

- ATO Small business newsroom and newsletter – visit the small business newsroom for the latest updates on tax and super. You can also subscribe to our newsletter – 'Small business news' – to receive regular updates sent straight to your inbox
- ATO Community – get answers to your questions on our online community forum
- Employee or contractor – find out if your worker is an employee or contractor
- How to pay super – how to make super guarantee contributions for your employees

- How much super to pay – work out how much super guarantee you must pay
- Superannuation guarantee charge statement and calculator tool – work out how much super you need to pay if you haven't paid your super contributions on time
- Calculators and tools – to help you run your business and save you time
- Tax Time toolkit for small business – practical information and fact sheets to help your business throughout the year
- Income and deductions for business – income you need to declare and deductions you can claim
- Taking on an employee checklist – what to consider when you take on an employee
- ABN Lookup – check that businesses you deal with have an active ABN and whether they're registered for GST
- Contact us – for enquiries and options for managing your tax and super
- External review of our decision – further information on the external court or tribunal avenues for appealing our actions or decisions.

Learning resources

Check out our learning resources to help build good habits for running your business:

- Essentials to strengthen your small business – our online learning platform offers short courses to help you develop the skills and knowledge for your small business to thrive
- atoTV – watch a wide range of short videos about tax and super
- PAYG withholding – find out if you need to register for PAYG withholding, what your withholding obligations are, how much tax to withhold, and more
- PAYG instalments – find out if you can voluntarily enter PAYG instalments and reduce the tax you may need to pay at the end of the year

- Super for employers – learn everything you need to know about paying super for your workers
- Cash Flow Kit – a coaching resource to help guide conversations with your tax or business adviser about developing sustainable cash flow strategies
- Small business showcase – resources on workplace laws and information for small business owners
- Business.gov.au – the government's one-stop shop, including how to plan, start and run your business, and support for businesses impacted by natural disasters.

Cash Flow Kit

The Cash Flow Kit is a resource for advisers to help small businesses manage their cash flow and stay viable.

QC 66852

Cash Flow Kit

The Cash Flow Kit is a resource for advisers to help small businesses manage their cash flow and stay viable.

Last updated 15 April 2026

Go to the Cash Flow Kit

Cash Flow Kit

The Cash Flow Kit can be used offline by selecting **Download free desktop app for Windows** on the Tax, Super and You website.

You can also access the kit in the following formats:

- Cash Flow Kit instructional cards on business.gov.au
- paper kit or downloadable PDF using the ATO Publication Ordering Service and searching for ‘Cash Flow Kit – for advisers'

(NAT 75239-10.2019)

- open source code for the digital version available on GitHub.

Benefits of the Cash Flow Kit

The Cash Flow Kit is an evidence-based framework that:

- gives small businesses clear action to help them meet their financial commitments, including their tax and super obligations
- turns cash flow theory into practical solutions by focusing on 4 key questions
  - Is your client trading profitably?
  - Have they put enough money aside to meet their regular financial commitments?
  - Does their business have enough money to spend on themselves and pay others?
  - Is their business getting ahead or falling behind?
- helps all business types at any stage of their business lifecycle.

Learning resources

Advisers can watch a series of videos to learn more about using the kit:

- Digital Cash Flow Kit (14:55) – introductory recorded webinar
- Digital Cash Flow Kit - Lachlan Case Study (16:17) – how to use the cash flow canvas
- Introduction to the Cash Flow Kit (8:10) – how to use the paper kit
- Case study Cash Flow Kit (11:53) – how to have a cash flow conversation
- The collection of in-depth how-to videos, outlining how to use tools in the kit, are available on atoTV.

QC 57842

Using your business money and assets for private purposes

You may need to report money and assets taken from your company or trust as income in your tax return.

Last updated 2 July 2026

Bendel case - High Court decision

We're reviewing the content on this page as a result of a recent court decision. Refer to our Decision Impact Statement for more information.

For a summary of this content in poster format, see Using business money and assets (PDF, 274KB).

Who needs to know?

This information will help you understand how money taken out of your business, or using business assets for private purposes, must be recorded and reported for tax purposes.

It applies if you are an individual who is:

- a director, shareholder or employee of a company that operates a small business (your business)
- a trustee, beneficiary or employee of a trust that operates a small business (your business)
- a director of a corporate trustee for a trust that operates a small business (your business)
- or has been an associate of a shareholder (individual or entity) of a private company (an associate can include a relative, partner, spouse, or another entity controlled by a shareholder).

How do you use money or assets from a company or trust

The most common ways you may take or use money or assets from a company or trust are as:

- salary and wages – see employment income
- fringe benefits, such as an employee using the business's car
- directors' fees
- dividends paid by the company to you as a shareholder (a distribution of the company's profits) – see paying dividends and other distributions
- trust distributions by the trust to you as a beneficiary – see trust income
- loans from the trust or company – see loans by private companies
- allowances or reimbursements of expenses you receive from the trust or company.

There are reporting and record-keeping requirements for each of these types of transactions.

How to record and report the use of your business money or assets

You must maintain appropriate records that explain transactions where you have:

- taken money or assets from your business
- used the business's assets for private purposes.

The ATO view on minimum record-keeping standards is provided in Taxation Ruling TR 96/7.

There may also be reporting requirements for these transactions.

Salary, wages or directors' fees

You can be an employee, director and shareholder of the company that operates your business. You can also be an employee, trustee and a beneficiary of the trust that operates your business.

You must include any salary, wages or directors' fees you receive from your business as assessable income in your individual tax return.

The company or trust that operates your business can generally claim a deduction for any salaries, wages or directors' fees paid if it complies with the pay as you go (PAYG) withholding and reporting obligations for each payment.

Your business must:

- register for PAYG withholding and withhold an amount from salary, wages and directors' fees
- report PAYG withholding information in its business activity statements (BAS)
- report the payment information to the ATO using Single Touch Payroll (STP), unless covered by a deferral or exemption
- pay the amount withheld to the ATO and make compulsory employee superannuation contributions to a complying super fund by the relevant cut-off dates.

Example 1: taking money as salary or wages

Daphne is the sole director of a private company that sells speciality gift hampers to customers. She and her partner Jo are equal shareholders in the company. Before this income year, Daphne ran the business as a sole trader.

As a sole trader, Daphne paid $1,500 a month out of her business account and into her personal account for personal expenses. Regardless of the amounts that were transferred to her personal account, all the income Daphne earned as a sole trader is included as business income in the business and professional items schedule on her individual tax return.

Daphne decided to change business structures and set up a private company to run her business. Daphne is an employee, shareholder and director of the private company.

Daphne's tax agent explains to her that there are different tax consequences now that the business is run through a company, which is a separate legal entity.

As an employee of the company, Daphne is paid $1,500 a month as a salary. Daphne now reports the $1,500 a month she receives from her employment as salary in her individual tax return.

The tax agent helps Daphne set up PAYG withholding and STP reporting, as well as meet her company's superannuation guarantee obligations.

The company lodges a separate annual tax return. It reports the business income and claims a deduction for the salary paid to Daphne in the company tax return.

Fringe benefits and allowances

Fringe benefits tax (FBT) may apply when an employer, (for example a company or trust), provides certain benefits to its employees, directors, employees' families or other associates. These benefits can include a payment or reimbursement of private expenses or being allowed to use the business assets for private purposes, such as the business's car.

Your company or trust:

- may be entitled to claim a deduction for the cost of providing fringe benefits
- can generally claim GST credits for items provided as fringe benefits
- must lodge an FBT return and pay any FBT that applies to the fringe benefits provided to the employees or their associates
- must keep all records relating to the fringe benefits it provides, including how the taxable value of benefits was calculated.

There are various exemptions from FBT that may apply, for example, the small business car parking exemption.

There are also rules that address when FBT and Division 7A could both apply to a payment, loan or debt forgiven.

An FBT liability for your business may be reduced if you (as an employee) make a contribution towards the cost of the fringe benefit.

You don’t need to report the value of fringe benefits that you (or your associate) receive in your tax return, unless they are included as

reportable fringe benefits on your payment summary or income statement.

Example 2: FBT on the provision of private company assets to employees who are shareholders

Sameera is the sole director and shareholder of a small tourism company that runs tours and owns 3 coastal holiday houses.

Sameera is also one of 3 employees of the private company.

Each employee of the company is given the opportunity to stay in one of the holiday houses for up to 4 weeks each year during the off-peak season.

This year, Sameera and her family take up this offer and stay at their favourite holiday house for 2 weeks at no cost.

This is an employee's private use of one the company's business assets. The company is providing Sameera, in her capacity as an employee, with a fringe benefit.

The company reports the fringe benefit in its FBT return and pays FBT on the benefit.

Distribution of income and profits

Dividends

If your business is run through a company, the company can distribute its profits to its shareholders, which can include you.

This distribution of profits is known as a dividend.

If the company has franking credits, it may be allowed to frank the dividend by allocating a franking credit to the distribution. A franking credit represents income tax paid by the company on its profit and can be used by the shareholder to offset their income tax liability.

A company must issue a distribution statement at the end of each income year to each shareholder who receives a dividend. It must show the amount of the franking credit on the dividends paid and the extent to which they were franked. The company may also need to lodge a franking account tax return in certain circumstances.

Any dividends that you receive and franking credits on them must be reported in your tax return as assessable income.

The company cannot claim a deduction for dividends paid as these are not a business expense, but rather a distribution of company profit.

Trust distributions

If your business is operated through a trust, depending on the terms of the trust deed, the beneficiaries of the trust may be presently entitled to a share of the trust income for the income year.

By the end of an income year, the trustee should advise and document in the trustee resolution:

- details of the beneficiaries
- their share of the net income of the trust.

If the trustee resolution is not made according to the terms of the trust deed, it may be ineffective and, instead, other beneficiaries (called default beneficiaries) or the trustee may be assessed on the relevant share of the trust's net (taxable) income. Where a trustee is assessed, it may be at the highest marginal tax rate.

Details of the trust distribution should be included in the statement of distribution which is part of the trust tax return lodged for each income year.

The trust can't claim a deduction for distributions paid as it is not a business expense, but rather a distribution of trust income.

If the beneficiary of a trust is a company, and the trust doesn't pay the amount the company is presently entitled to, Division 7A of the *Income Tax Assessment Act 1936* may apply.

Closely held trusts

If you have a trust within your family group, in some circumstances you may need to include a trustee beneficiary statement as part of the trust return lodged.

For further guidance, see closely held trusts.

Lending money or assets

Companies lend money or assets to shareholders and their associates

When a private company lends money or assets to its shareholders or their associates, the shareholder or associate may be taken to have received a Division 7A deemed dividend if certain conditions are not met.

If this happens, the shareholder or associate will need to report an unfranked dividend in their individual tax return. The company also needs to report the unfranked dividend paid and the loan balance in its company tax return.

To avoid a Division 7A deemed dividend, before the company tax return is due or lodged (whichever comes first), loans must either:

- be repaid in full, or
- put on complying terms.

To put a loan on complying terms, the loan must be made subject to a written agreement that:

- states the names of the parties to the agreement, being the private company and the shareholder or shareholder's associate (the loan recipient)
- is signed and dated by the private company and loan recipient
- has an interest rate for each year of the loan that at least equals the benchmark interest rate
- doesn't exceed the maximum term of 7 years, or 25 years in certain circumstances when the loan is secured by a registered mortgage over real property.

The company must include any interest earned from the loan in its company tax return and complete the Division 7A company tax return labels.

You (the shareholder or shareholder's associate):

- must make the minimum yearly repayment for the loan each income year (use the Division 7A calculator to work this out)
- can't borrow money from the company to make the minimum yearly repayment

- can make repayments on the loan by offsetting against your entitlement to a dividend declared by the company - this dividend must be reported in your individual tax return as assessable income.

Example 3: loan received from the company and put on complying terms

Amir is the sole director of a private company that provides administration services to other businesses. He and his partner Aiesha are equal shareholders in the company.

Amir's and Aiesha's daughter is about to start high school and they have to pay $2,000 in school fees. Amir decides they should use money from the company to pay the fees.

Amir knows that he can't pay for a private expense using the company's money without properly accounting for it. As the director, he decides that the company will lend them the $2,000.

He draws up a written loan agreement for the loan to be repaid over 2 years, with an interest rate equal to the benchmark interest rate. The loan agreement identifies the company, Amir and Aiesha as the parties, and the repayment terms. It is signed by all parties. The loan agreement is made on complying terms under Division 7A.

The company lends Amir and Aiesha the money, which they pay back to the company with interest each year according to the agreement over the next 2 years. When Amir prepares the company tax return, he declares:

- the interest as income of the company
- the loan balance, as at the end of the income year.

Trustees lend money or assets to beneficiaries and their associates

If you borrow money from a trust, you will need to keep a record of it. If the loan is on commercial terms, you will need to repay the principal and interest as per the loan agreement. The trust will need to report the interest as assessable income in its tax return.

There may be a situation where someone receives an amount of trust income instead of the beneficiary who is presently entitled to that amount in an arrangement to reduce tax. This can happen where the trustee, instead of paying the trust income to the presently entitled beneficiary, lends that money on interest-free terms to another person.

This is called a reimbursement agreement and the anti-avoidance rule in section 100A of the *Income Tax Assessment Act 1936* may apply.

Repayments of loans made to companies and trusts

If you have lent money to your company or trust, it can't claim a deduction for any repayments of principal it makes to you. However, it may be able to claim a deduction for interest it pays to you on the loan if it incurred the interest expense for an income-producing purpose. The company or trust should keep records of any loan agreements and documents explaining these payments being made to you.

You don't have to declare the principal repayments, but any interest you receive is assessable income to you and must be included in your individual tax return.

When you take your business's money or assets in another way

If you take money out of your company or trust or use its assets for private purposes in a way not described, you or your company or trust may have unintended tax consequences. This may include triggering Division 7A.

To ensure your business transactions are transparent:

- You should consider setting up a separate bank account for your business to pay business expenses from, and avoid using it to pay for your private expenses.
- If you take money out of the business or use its assets, make sure you keep proper records that explain all relevant transactions, including all income, payments and loans to you and your associates from the business.

- If your private company lends money to its shareholders or their associates, make sure the loans comply with Division 7A.
- Ensure all transactions are correctly reported for tax purposes.

If you make an honest mistake when trying to comply with these obligations, you should tell us or your registered tax agent as soon as possible.

Example 4: repaying a loan before the company's lodgment day

Jian is the sole director and shareholder of a private company, that he uses to run his plumbing business. Jian decides to have his home repainted, which he pays for using his company's bank account.

Jian meets regularly with his bookkeeper, who notices the unusual transaction.

The bookkeeper advises Jian that the transaction will be treated as a Division 7A deemed dividend if he doesn't pay the money back or make it a complying loan before the company tax return is due or lodged for the income year (the company lodgment day). Jian has enough money in his personal bank account, so he decides to repay the company the full amount.

As he repays the full amount before the company's lodgment day, there are no Division 7A consequences for Jian.

He also takes his bookkeeper's advice and makes sure he stops paying his private expenses from the company bank account.

QC 67807

Supporting your small business

Tax time essentials, learning resources, tools and services to support small business.

Last updated 8 October 2026

Support for tax time

We offer a range of tools and services to help small businesses meet their tax and superannuation obligations. No matter what stage of the business lifecycle you're in, there's support available to help you stay on track.

If you haven't already, you should consider engaging a registered tax practitioner. Professional advice can help you better understand and meet your obligations. Tax professionals can also help you find the right support and provide personalised advice.

Tax time toolkit

Our Tax time toolkit for small business has guides to help you with:

- small business tax concessions
- home-based business expenses
- motor vehicle expenses
- travel expenses
- claiming deductions for the cost of digital expenses
- using business money and assets
- pausing or permanently closing your business.

You can also download the Tax time toolkit for small business (PDF, 1.4MB).

To find out what's new and any changes that may affect you at tax time, visit new measures for small businesses.

If you are carrying on a primary production business, you may also be eligible for additional concessions at tax time. To find out more visit information for primary producers.

Support for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples

We're committed to making tax and superannuation as easy as possible for Indigenous small businesses. We have tailored information for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, including information on how to start or run a business.

Reach Out is our Indigenous business support program that works with Indigenous small business owners to help them meet their tax and superannuation obligations. It also helps to improve their business and financial acumen.

To learn more about the support we offer, visit Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.

Support in your language

We offer educational support to culturally and linguistically diverse small businesses. We also have a range of translated information about tax and superannuation in Australia to help people understand their responsibilities, obligations and rights.

To find out more visit information in your language.

Support in natural disasters and difficult events

We recognise that natural disasters and other difficult events can cause financial difficulties that can have a major and lasting impact on taxpayers. We remain committed to ensuring we apply our actions with fairness and understanding, particularly for taxpayers impacted by events outside of their control. Support tailored to your circumstances is available, you can also speak to your registered tax practitioner or find information in your language.

There are many organisations that can provide information and support to help you with your mental health and wellbeing. For a list of organisations, and information about the support we can provide you, visit personal crisis support.

You can also download our information for small businesses impacted by a natural disaster (NAT 75758 PDF, 499KB).

Government support related to natural disasters

If you're affected by a natural disaster such as a bushfire, cyclone, flood, storm or drought, we can help you with your tax affairs so you can focus on your family and community. There are also a range of tailored concessions available to primary producers that can help them prepare for or manage the impact of a natural disaster. If you receive a government disaster support grant or another payment to support your business, you may need to report it in your tax return.

For information about assistance from other government agencies in Australia, visit Disaster Assist.

Help meeting your obligations

If you need help to meet your tax or super obligations, tax support is available. You should contact us or speak with a tax professional before your lodgments and payments are due to discuss the support options available. To provide you with help, we may ask for evidence that your business is in financial difficulty.

Payment plans

If you're experiencing financial difficulties, you may be eligible to set up a payment plan to pay the tax you owe. A payment plan allows you to break down your payment into smaller amounts that are made via instalments. Payment plans will generally require an upfront payment, and repayments should be completed within the shortest possible timeframe to reduce the general interest charge that you'll pay.

You can also speak to a registered tax practitioner to discuss your payment options.

Resources to help small businesses

Tax and super resources, tools and calculators to help you run your business.

Managing your business online

Online support options to help small business owners manage registration, tax, and super responsibilities.

QC 48675

Resources to help small businesses

Tax and super resources, tools and calculators to help you run your business.

Last updated 8 January 2026

Tools and calculators

We have resources such as tools, calculators and checklists available to help you run your business more effectively and meet your tax and super obligations. Some of the most useful resources for businesses include:

Record-keeping evaluation tool – see how well your business keeps records.

Tax withheld calculator – work out the amount of tax to withhold from payments to payees weekly, fortnightly, monthly or quarterly.

Super guarantee contributions calculator – work out the super guarantee amount to pay to your employee's super fund.

Super guarantee charge statement and calculator tool – work out how much super you need to pay if you have not paid your super contributions on time.

You can also search our other Calculators and tools for those that are relevant to your situation.

If you're taking on an employee for the first time, you can find out what you need to consider and what steps you need to take in the Hiring employees checklist. This also includes non-tax information such as pay rates, workplace health and safety and workers compensation.

When dealing with other businesses, make sure that you check that they have an active ABN and whether they're registered for GST.

By using these resources, you can make informed decisions about your business and stay compliant with your obligations.

Educational resources

Essentials to strengthen your small business is an online learning site with short, free courses to help you improve your business, financial and tax knowledge. It provides targeted education across key areas such as business registration, record keeping, employer responsibilities, and using ATO online services.

There are over 30 courses, covering different:

- lifecycle stages – thinking about starting a business, running a business, changing a business and closing a business
- reporting obligations – if you have workers, or need to report GST or fringe benefits tax
- learning needs – if you want to learn more about good record keeping, improving cash flow or growing your business
- circumstances – if you want help setting up a business, want to check if your business is viable or are thinking of closing your business.

QC 106038

Managing your business online

Online support options to help small business owners manage registration, tax, and super responsibilities.

Published 8 January 2026

Online services

Our online services make it quick and easy to manage your tax and super.

- Sole traders and individuals can use the ATO app to access and manage their tax and super on the go.
- Most of your business reporting and transactions can be done online through Online services for business. This includes preparing

and lodging activity statements and annual reports, organising payment plans and managing accounts.

- Sole traders can access Online services for individuals and sole traders on any device to lodge their tax return, manage business activity statements, PAYG instalments and accounts, make payments, set up payment plans and more.

  Managing your business registrations

  There are other government online services available to help you manage your business registrations. These can also help you nominate others to act on behalf of your business.

- You can use Australian Business Register (ABR) online services to apply for, update and cancel an ABN. You can also manage your other registrations, such as GST, through your ABN application.
- If you are a company director, you can use ABRS online to apply, maintain and manage your director ID information. You will need to use a Digital ID, such as myID, to log on to ABRS online.
- myID is the Australian Government's Digital ID app, which lets you prove who you are when logging in to a range of government online services.
- As a business owner, you can use a Digital ID to link your business in Relationship Authorisation Manager (RAM) and authorise others to act on behalf of your business. Using RAM will also help simplify your interactions with government agencies.
- You can also use your Digital ID to log in to Access Manager to manage access and permissions for ATO online services such as Online services for agents, Online services for business and Australian Business Register (ABR).

Engage with us

To get the latest updates on tax, super and registry services for small businesses, you can subscribe to our Small business newsroom. You can also join the discussion online by following us on social media or checking out our ATO Community forum to ask questions about tax and super.

If you need more help, you should contact us or speak with a tax professional before your lodgments and payments are due to discuss the support options available.

QC 106039

Building and construction tradies – tax essentials

A quick way for tradies to find and understand key tax, super and registration obligations.

Published 27 May 2026

Employee, business or both?

Your tax, superannuation and registration obligations vary depending on whether you:

- get paid wages by an employer, and they withhold tax for you
- run your own business or work as a contractor and have an Australian business number (ABN)
- earn wages as an employee and run your own business.

Are you an employee tradie?

Are you a business tradie?

Unsure if you are an employee or a contractor?

Do you work as an employee and run a business?

Are you an employer?

Employee tradies

Employees in the building and construction industry can use this information to understand tax and super obligations.

Business or independent contractor tradies

Tax, super and registration essentials for tradie businesses and independent contractors in building and construction.

QC 107394

Employee tradies – building and construction

Employees in the building and construction industry can use this information to understand tax and super obligations.

Published 27 May 2026

Tax essentials for employee tradies

This information helps get your tax, super and registration essentials right if you're an employee tradie. If you're not sure, check whether you're an employee, business or both.

Starting work as a tradie

Earning and declaring income

Work-related expenses or deductions

Lodging your tax return

- Records tradies need to keep
- Paying tax
- Tradies and super
- Protect yourself from an employer going out of business

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Business or independent contractor tradies – building and construction

Tax, super and registration essentials for tradie businesses and independent contractors in building and construction.

Last updated 27 May 2026

Tax essentials for tradie businesses

Use the following information to get your tax, super and registration essentials right if you're a business or independent contractor tradie. If you're not sure if you're a business or employee tradie, check whether you're an employee, business or both.

- Starting a tradie business
- Income, expenses and cashflow
- Reports and returns for tradies

- Hiring workers
- Paying super as an employer
- Paying tax
- Changing, selling, closing a tradie business
- Record keeping for tradie businesses
- Protect yourself from other businesses going bust
- Help and support for tradie business owners

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Our commitment to you

We are committed to providing you with accurate, consistent and clear information to help you understand your rights and entitlements and meet your obligations.

If you follow our information and it turns out to be incorrect, or it is misleading and you make a mistake as a result, we will take that into account when determining what action, if any, we should take.

Some of the information on this website applies to a specific financial year. This is clearly marked. Make sure you have the information for the right year before making decisions based on that information.

If you feel that our information does not fully cover your circumstances, or you are unsure how it applies to you, contact us or seek professional advice.

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