



# The QuickBooks Cleanup Checklist

Get messy books accurate, reconciled, and tax-ready

## Where to start when the books are a mess

If your QuickBooks file has fallen behind — unreconciled accounts, miscategorized transactions, balances that don't match reality — you're not alone, and it's fixable. Work through this checklist in order. By the end you'll have clean, reconciled, tax-ready books you can actually trust. Prefer to hand it off? That's exactly what we're here for.

## STEP 1

### Gather what you need

- Collect bank and credit card statements for the full period
- Gather loan statements and amortization schedules
- Locate the last filed tax return and any prior accountant adjustments
- Confirm you have admin access to the QuickBooks Online file
- Note the date your books were last known to be accurate

## STEP 2

### Reconcile every account

- Reconcile each bank account, month by month, to the statement
- Reconcile every credit card account to its statements
- Reconcile loans and lines of credit to current balances
- Investigate and clear old uncleared transactions
- Confirm beginning balances match the prior reconciliation

## STEP 3

### Clean up the chart of accounts

- Merge duplicate accounts
- Rename vague accounts so reports are readable
- Make inactive any accounts you no longer use
- Confirm each account has the correct account type
- Add sub-accounts where they add clarity

## STEP 4

### Fix the transactions

- Recategorize everything in Uncategorized Income and Expense
- Review and clear the Ask My Accountant account
- Find and delete duplicate transactions
- Record owner draws and contributions correctly (not as income or expense)
- Classify account-to-account movements as transfers, not expenses

## STEP 5

### Receivables & payables

- Review open invoices and write off truly uncollectible ones
- Match customer payments to the correct invoices
- Review unpaid bills and clear anything already paid
- Reconcile the A/R and A/P aging to reality

## STEP 6

### Payroll & taxes

- Confirm payroll liabilities match what was actually paid
- Verify payroll tax payments are recorded correctly
- Reconcile sales tax payable to filed returns
- Check that 1099 vendor information is complete

## STEP 7

### Final review

- Review the Profit & Loss for anything that looks off
- Review the Balance Sheet — every balance should be explainable
- Compare against the prior year for unexpected swings
- Run a final reconciliation report for each account
- Save the cleaned file and document what changed

### Rather not do it yourself?

Cleanup and catch-up is one of the most common ways clients start with us. We'll get your QuickBooks accurate and tax-ready — and keep it that way.

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