

## How to Use QuickBooks to Save Your Business Time and Money

The purpose of using small business accounting software is to prepare your books for your CPA, or to just make your accounting all-around easier. Maybe you've been doing your books for years and are already an expert with QuickBooks software, but below you'll find several tips that we regularly apply to help our clients close out their books in preparation for their taxes. If you're not using QuickBooks, then we highly recommend it as an easy and cost-effective solution for your small business unless you have specific industry needs or add on software that require other accounting software. By using these tips, you'll be able to save yourself time with tax filing, lowered tax preparation costs, and have a better understanding of your businesses financial position.

1. Check transaction dates – Ensure that expenses are reported in the correct tax year by reviewing all of the transaction dates for accounts, especially those near the end of the year (December 15 – January 15).
2. Cash or Accrual? – Reporting should be done in whichever method is best for your business. Typically under the cash method, income is not counted until cash is received and the expenses are not counted until they are actually paid. As opposed to the Accrual method, where transactions are counted upon order or delivery of products/services. Deciding which one is right for you is an important decision, and remember that changing back and forth between cash and accrual accounting is prohibited for each five-year period.
3. Quickbooks Keyboard shortcuts – This may seem simple, but using keyboard shortcuts and hotkeys can save you tons of time. Just like with your typical Copy (Ctrl-C) and Paste (Ctrl-P), Quickbooks has a number of keyboard shortcuts to save you time. Here are a few:
  - Ctrl-I Create Invoice
  - Ctrl-E Edit transaction selected in the register
  - Ctrl-F Find transaction
  - Ctrl-J Open Customer Center
  - Ctrl-M Memorize transaction or report
  - Ctrl-N New invoice, bill, check or list item in context
  - Ctrl-Q Quick report on transaction or list item
  - Ctrl-T Open memorized transaction list
  - Ctrl-W Write new check
4. Use Memos! – Provide detailed descriptions in the memos fields consistently. This may seem like a pain, but 12 months down the road you'll be thanking yourself when you know exactly where and when every expense was incurred. Use statement dates, or month or invoice numbers to make it easy to check consistent payments when doing a review.
5. 5. These aren't your grade school "Classes" – Class tracking on QuickBooks allows you to categorize and track your business activity, enabling you to create separate classes for business sectors, advertising expenses per region, or multiple locations. You can easily

turn on class tracking by going into Edit->Preferences->Accounting->Company Preferences->Use Class Tracking.

6. Bill and Income Automation – Do you have to pay some bills? QuickBooks has the ability to memorize recurring transactions for bills, incomes and savings. All you have to do is enter the bill through a memorized transaction and change the amount and date, and it automatically posts to the correct account.
7. Report comparison function – Understanding how you performed in the current year is great, but it's even better when you compare it to previous years. By comparing your reports you can easily find any inconsistencies or unusual changes.
8. Don't confuse it with a pool filter – The filters in QuickBooks let you quickly generate reports with predefined filters, if you're one of those types that like to regularly change information and re-run reports. To enable this setting, go into Edit-> Preferences and then select Reports & Graphs. On the My Preferences tab, enable the option by checking "Prompt Me To Modify Report" before opening up your reports.
9. Track fixed assets – QuickBooks features a fixed asset manager to track all of your fixed assets, or you can create sub accounts for each major asset to make it easy to identify and build depreciation schedules.
10. Back-back-back it up - Let's be honest, we've all been there. When you're computer randomly implodes and you lose of all of your data. However, QuickBooks allows for easy backup to removable hard drives or cloud storage.

If you or your bookkeeper is using QuickBooks, then hopefully these tips are helpful. If you need help or advice on specific modules or features feel free to [contact us](#). Are you a QuickBooks user and have your own tips? Feel free to leave a comment so we can all learn from each other.