THE MONTHLY BOOKKEEPING READINESS CHECKLIST

A cleaner month-end starts before the reconciliation.

CLEAR BOOKS. CALM OPERATIONS. CONFIDENT DECISIONS.

Business Operations & Bookkeeping Support

A Cleaner Month-End Starts Before the Reconciliation

Bookkeeping becomes harder when the information needed to complete it is scattered across inboxes, receipts, bank feeds, payment platforms, and memory. This checklist gives you a simple monthly rhythm for gathering the right information before the books become a catch-up project.

It is not an accounting lesson. It is a practical preparation tool for business owners who want cleaner records, fewer unanswered transactions, and more useful month-end conversations.

How to use this checklist

Work through it once near the end of each month or during the first few days of the next month. Mark what is complete, flag anything that needs context, and keep the supporting records in one dependable place.

Your monthly goal

- ☐ Every bank and credit-card account is accounted for.
- ☐ Receipts, bills, reimbursements, and owner-paid expenses are captured.
- ☐ Customer payments, deposits, refunds, and transfers have enough context.
- ☐ Open questions are resolved while the month is still fresh.
- ☐ Important records are saved before you move on.

STEP 1

Bank and Credit-Card Activity

Start with the accounts that move money in and out of the business.

☐ All business bank accounts for the month are connected, imported, or statements are available.

☐ All business credit-card accounts for the month are connected, imported, or statements are available.

☐ New accounts opened during the month have been added to the bookkeeping process.

☐ Closed accounts have a final statement saved.

☐ Transfers between business accounts are identified as transfers rather than income or expense.

☐ Loan, line-of-credit, or financing payments have enough information to separate principal, interest, and fees where needed.

☐ Cash withdrawals or unusual transactions have a business purpose noted.

☐ Any duplicate, missing, or unexpected transactions are flagged for review.

Questions to resolve

Transactions I need to explain or ask about:

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STEP 2

Receipts, Bills and Owner-Paid Expenses

The transaction may be visible in the bank feed, but the supporting detail can still be missing.

☐ Receipts for significant or unclear purchases are saved.

☐ Vendor bills received during the month are recorded or forwarded to the right person.

☐ Bills paid outside the normal bookkeeping workflow are identified.

☐ Business expenses paid personally by the owner are listed with receipts or supporting detail.

☐ Employee or owner reimbursements are documented.

☐ Recurring subscriptions and software charges are reviewed for new, changed, or cancelled services.

☐ Large equipment, furniture, vehicle, or technology purchases are flagged so they are not treated like ordinary supplies without review.

☐ Sales-tax, payroll-tax, or other tax payments are clearly identified rather than left as unexplained withdrawals.

Keep the evidence with the story
A clean set of books is easier to maintain when the transaction and the supporting document can be connected without relying on memory.

STEP 3

Customer Payments, Deposits, Refunds and Transfers

Money coming in can be just as easy to misread as money going out.

- ☐ Customer payments received during the month are matched to the correct invoices or sales records where applicable.
- ☐ Merchant-processor deposits (such as card or online-platform payouts) can be traced back to gross sales, fees, refunds, and taxes where relevant.
- ☐ Cash or check deposits have enough information to identify the customer or source.
- ☐ Refunds, chargebacks, credits, and returned payments are identified.
- ☐ Owner contributions are identified separately from business income.
- ☐ Owner draws/distributions are identified separately from business expenses.
- ☐ Transfers between accounts are not being counted twice.
- ☐ Loan proceeds, insurance proceeds, reimbursements, or other unusual deposits are flagged with context.

Deposits or payments needing context

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STEP 4

Resolve the Open Questions While the Month Is Fresh

Unanswered transactions become harder to identify with time. A five-minute question now can prevent a much longer cleanup later.

Date / transaction	What needs clarification?	Who can answer?	Resolved
			☐
			☐
			☐
			☐
			☐
			☐
			☐

A useful rule

If you cannot tell what a transaction is from the description alone, add context now. Do not assume you will remember it three months from now.

STEP 5

Save the Month-End Records

Before moving into the next month, make sure the records someone may need later are easy to find.

- ☐ Bank statements are saved or readily accessible.
- ☐ Credit-card statements are saved or readily accessible.
- ☐ Merchant/payment-platform statements or payout reports are available where relevant.
- ☐ Payroll reports are available where relevant.
- ☐ Loan or financing statements are available where relevant.
- ☐ Sales-tax or other filing/payment confirmations are saved where relevant.
- ☐ Key vendor bills and receipts are stored in the agreed location.
- ☐ Customer invoices or sales summaries are available where relevant.
- ☐ Any month-end notes or unresolved questions are stored with the month rather than left in email or memory.

Where are these records kept?

Primary folder / system:

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Who has access?

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STEP 6

Take a Five-Minute Owner Review

Bookkeeping is most useful when it helps you understand the business, not simply complete a monthly task. Once the month is reasonably current, pause long enough to notice what changed.

- ☐ Do revenue and major expenses look broadly consistent with what I expected?
- ☐ Is cash moving in the direction I expected?
- ☐ Are there overdue customer balances or bills that need attention?
- ☐ Did any expense category increase enough to deserve a closer look?
- ☐ Are there unusual transactions I still do not understand?
- ☐ Is there anything my bookkeeper, CPA, tax preparer, lender, or business partner will need context for?
- ☐ What is one question I want answered from this month's numbers?

The one question I want answered this month:

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How Ready Are Your Books?

Use this quick check to decide whether the month is ready to close or still needs attention.

Area	Ready	Needs follow-up	Not sure
Bank & credit cards	☐	☐	☐
Receipts & bills	☐	☐	☐
Owner-paid expenses	☐	☐	☐
Customer payments & deposits	☐	☐	☐
Refunds/transfers/unusual items	☐	☐	☐
Open questions	☐	☐	☐
Month-end records	☐	☐	☐

If several areas still need follow-up

That does not mean the books are a disaster. It usually means the monthly information flow needs a clearer rhythm. The best fix may be a simple checklist, one shared folder, clearer ownership, or consistent bookkeeping support.

My priority before this month is complete:

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Cleaner Books Come From a Repeatable Monthly Habit

The purpose of this checklist is not perfection. It is to reduce the amount of detective work required at month-end and make the financial side of the business easier to understand.

If you can gather the right records, identify unusual activity, resolve open questions, and keep the supporting information in one dependable place, you are already creating a much stronger bookkeeping foundation.

When professional support may help

If the books are regularly behind, transactions stay unanswered, reconciliations are inconsistent, or you are spending too much owner time trying to keep everything current, Professional Bookkeeping support may be worth exploring.

SCHEDULE A DISCOVERY CALL

MKG Legacy Ledger

Professional Bookkeeping + Business Operations Support
Clear Books. Calm Operations. Confident Decisions.
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