FREE CLIENT RESOURCE

QuickBooks Online Setup Checklist

Set up the file so the opening balances, connected accounts, and reporting structure can be traced back to real records.

Choose the start date first

Pick a clear conversion date before entering transactions. Keep the final statements and reports from the old system. Opening balances should tie to that date, and later backfilling can change them.

1. Company and access

- [ ] Confirm the legal business name, tax classification, tax ID, address, fiscal year, and accounting method with current records.
- [ ] Use separate named user access. Do not share the primary administrator password or multifactor codes.
- [ ] Give each user only the access needed for their role and review the audit log after setup.
- [ ] Confirm invoice terms, estimate settings, customer communications, and payment options before sending live forms.

2. Chart of accounts

- [ ] Start with the accounts the business actually needs. Avoid duplicate or overly detailed categories.
- [ ] Use appropriate account types and detail types because they control financial statement placement.
- [ ] Make unused accounts inactive only after checking history, integrations, products, payroll, and recurring transactions.
- [ ] Do not delete history or combine accounts until the reporting effect is understood and documented.

3. Connected accounts and apps

- [ ] Connect each bank and credit card to the correct chart-of-accounts account.
- [ ] Choose the first import date so it does not overlap transactions already entered.
- [ ] Map PayPal, Stripe, Square, and other processors as clearing workflows when gross sales, fees, refunds, and payouts need to be separated.
- [ ] Test one payout from sale through bank deposit before importing a full history.
- [ ] Create narrow bank rules, test them, and keep auto-add off until the results are reliable.

Tie the file to source records

A clean setup has a documented starting point and a successful first reconciliation.

4. Opening balances

- ☐ Enter each bank, credit card, loan, and equity opening balance from the supporting statement or conversion trial balance.
- ☐ Enter open customer invoices and vendor bills as the original open items when appropriate, not as one undifferentiated balance.
- ☐ Tie accounts receivable, accounts payable, sales tax, payroll liabilities, loans, and equity to supporting schedules.
- ☐ Clear Opening Balance Equity only after every offset has been identified and approved.

5. Products, services, payroll, and sales tax

- ☐ Map products and services to the intended income, expense, inventory, and sales-tax settings.
- ☐ Confirm payroll accounts and opening payroll liabilities to provider reports before the first payroll posts.
- ☐ Confirm where the business is registered and which items and customers are taxable. Software settings do not determine legal filing obligations.
- ☐ Test invoices, sales receipts, refunds, vendor bills, payroll, and payments before using the file live.

6. First-month quality check

- ☐ Reconcile every bank and credit card account to the first statement after the start date.
- ☐ Compare the balance sheet and profit and loss to the old system or conversion records.
- ☐ Review uncategorized accounts, duplicate income, negative balances, and unexpected equity activity.
- ☐ Save a setup memo with the start date, connected apps, opening-balance sources, decisions, and unresolved items.

Primary references

- QuickBooks Online opening balances
- QuickBooks Online automated sales tax

Need a second set of eyes?

If your books or crypto records do not tie out, start with a short fit check. Contact Bugaboo Bookkeeping. This resource is general information, not legal or tax advice.