Tax Preparation Checklist: A Practical Guide to Getting Your Business Tax-Ready

Introduction

Let’s be honest — tax season can be a headache. Whether you’re a seasoned business owner or running your first company, getting your documents in order and knowing what HMRC expects can feel like a juggling act.

The good news? A bit of preparation now saves stress (and potential fines) later. In this checklist, I’ll walk you through exactly what you need to gather and do to make tax time simple, accurate and as pain-free as possible.

Why It Matters

A tidy tax preparation process means:

- Fewer costly mistakes.
- Less time scrambling for missing paperwork.
- More confidence you’re claiming what you’re entitled to.

And, let’s face it — your accountant (that’s me!) will thank you for being organised.

Your Tax Preparation Checklist

Here’s what to pull together before your company year-end or Self-Assessment deadline rolls around:

1. Gather Essential Business Records

Bank Statements: Full statements for all business bank accounts.	☐
Invoices Issued: Sales invoices for all income earned in the tax year.	☐
Receipts: Proof of all business expenses — think utilities, rent, insurance, subscriptions.	☐
Petty Cash Records: Small day-to-day cash purchases.	☐
Mileage Log: If you claim for business travel in your own vehicle.	☐
Credit Card Statements: If you use a business or personal card for business spending.	☐

2. Payroll & Staff Costs

Payroll Records: Payslips, PAYE submissions, and pension contributions.	☐
Subcontractor Payments: If you use CIS subcontractors, gather all statements.	☐
Staff Benefits: Details of any benefits provided, e.g. company cars, medical insurance.	☐

3. Financial Accounts & Loans

Year-End Bank Balances: Reconcile your bank accounts to your bookkeeping.	☐
Loan Statements: Balances and interest paid on any business loans.	☐
Hire Purchase / Lease Agreements: For any vehicles or equipment.	☐

Your Tax Preparation Checklist (cont...)

4. Other Income & Reliefs

Dividends: Dividends paid to shareholders.	☐
Grants or Covid Support: Any government support received.	☐
R&D or Capital Allowances: If you're claiming special reliefs, have details ready.	☐

5. Personal Tax Info (for Directors & Sole Trader

P60 or P45: If you've had other employment.	☐
P11D: Details of benefits in kind.	☐
Dividend Certificates: For dividends from other companies.	☐
Other Income: Rental income, investment income, or foreign income.	☐

Notes

Top Tip: Know Your Key Numbers

If you've read my blog "7 Numbers Every Business Owner Should Know – and Learn to Love!" you'll know your business runs better when you keep an eye on:

- Turnover
- Gross Profit
- Net Profit
- Drawings or Dividends
- Tax Liabilities
- VAT Due
- Cash Flow Position

Staying on top of these figures throughout the year makes tax prep a breeze.

Proactive Prep Pays Off

Being organised is the simplest way to avoid errors and penalties. A few smart habits:

- Keep digital copies of everything — scan receipts and invoices as you go.
- Update your bookkeeping monthly.
- Set calendar reminders for key deadlines.

Need a Hand?

Tax doesn't need to be taxing — if you'd like a friendly chat about getting your accounts in order, or want to hand the whole lot over to an expert, I'm here to help.

[Book a Call with John]