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TAX & ADVISORY

BUSINESS TAX PREPARATION

C Corporation Tax Preparation Checklist

Start with your company records and previous return. You can ask your bookkeeper for help with the detailed reports, and ask us what else is needed.

START HERE

1. Previous corporate returns
2. Year-end financial reports
3. Ownership and payroll changes

Download and save this PDF first. Tick records you have, skip items that do not apply and add questions on the last page. Save again after making changes, or print and write by hand.

Keep ID numbers, PINs and bank details out of this checklist. We will explain how to share sensitive documents securely.

01 Start with your company and owners

- ☐ Gather previous corporate returns, amendments, tax elections and supporting tax schedules, if available.
- ☐ Locate formation documents, your EIN confirmation and the company's tax-year information.
- ☐ Bring a list or chart of owners, shares issued and related companies.
- ☐ Tell us about shares issued or bought back, ownership changes and related agreements.
- ☐ Mention group tax returns, foreign ownership, acquisitions or reorganizations early so we can agree on the work needed.

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02 Your business records

- [ ] Gather your year-end profit and loss report, balance sheet and trial balance, if available, for the same period.
- [ ] Include the detailed transaction report (general ledger) and any unresolved items your bookkeeper has noted.
- [ ] Gather bank, credit-card and payment-platform statements, plus any reports checking them against your books.
- [ ] Bring sales and expense details. Point out refunds, transfers or duplicate entries you already know about.
- [ ] If relevant, include unpaid customer invoices and bills by age, plus inventory counts and cost records.
- [ ] Point out personal spending, money moved to or from owners, and transactions with related businesses.

03 Previous tax schedules and items to review

- [ ] Bring schedules explaining differences between the books and tax returns, plus tax-provision workpapers if available.
- [ ] Gather schedules of losses, credits and other amounts carried forward, along with previous returns.
- [ ] Ask your bookkeeper to flag unpaid amounts, reserves, balances with related businesses and unusual entries.
- [ ] Bring details of charitable donations, interest costs and projects connected with tax incentives or credits.
- [ ] If you have research or development costs, gather project, payroll and vendor records for review.

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04 Payroll, benefits and shareholder payments

- [ ] Gather officer pay details, employee payroll summaries and payroll returns.
- [ ] Bring employee-benefit and retirement-plan contribution records.
- [ ] List dividends, distributions and other shareholder transactions, with dates and approval records.
- [ ] Gather loans involving shareholders or related companies, including terms and payment records.
- [ ] Identify personal or partly personal expenses the company paid for shareholders.
- [ ] Bring employee stock-compensation agreements and the related accounting records, if applicable.

05 Equipment, loans and business changes - if applicable

- [ ] Bring your previous depreciation schedules and a list of business assets you still own.
- [ ] Gather purchase invoices for equipment, vehicles, software and improvements, with the dates you started using them.
- [ ] Include records for assets sold, traded in, disposed of, damaged or lost during the year.
- [ ] Gather loan agreements, year-end balances and statements separating principal repayments from interest.
- [ ] Bring mileage logs and other business-use records. Let us know about any personal use.
- [ ] Tell us about a business purchase, sale, restructure or large one-time transaction, and bring the agreements.

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06 Tax payments and where you do business

- [ ] Gather federal and state payment confirmations, extensions, refunds and records of unused tax credits.
- [ ] List the places where the business, employees and owners worked, including any moves during the year.
- [ ] If you operate in several states, bring sales by state, registrations and a list of previous state filings.
- [ ] Bring payroll, sales-tax, local-tax and information-return records. We will confirm which services are included.
- [ ] Tell us about foreign owners, accounts, investments or transactions so we can discuss any additional review.

07 Before we get started

- [ ] Make a short list of anything missing or being corrected, and when you expect it.
- [ ] Tell us early about tax letters, deadlines or questions from a previous year.
- [ ] We will confirm which returns and states we are handling, including any owner returns or bookkeeping cleanup.
- [ ] Ask us how to share documents securely and confirm who can approve the work.
- [ ] We will explain the next steps for questions, reviewing your return, signatures and filing confirmation.

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Questions and anything still missing

You can contact us before this checklist is complete.

Tax year or period

Questions, missing records or next steps (no sensitive identifiers)

A checked box means you have the record available. This is a general preparation guide; we may ask for additional information for your circumstances. It does not determine tax eligibility or replace individual advice.

Helpful official references

IRS · Business recordkeeping

IRS · Form 1120 instructions

Updated September 27, 2026. Use records and official guidance for the relevant tax year.