

2026 Business Tax Deduction “MEMORY JOGGER”

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BACKGROUND

The expenses listed here are not necessarily deductible by every small or home-based business owner, but ALL of these expenses can be deductible by some people – some of the time – depending on the nature of the business. This is not a complete and exhaustive list due to the endless variety of business activities.

The general rules for deducting business expenses are set forth in Code section 162. They are:

1. The expense must be incurred for the purposes of earning income,
2. The expense must be ordinary and necessary to the success of the business, and
3. The expense must be reasonable given the nature of the business.

Within this context, there is an endless list of potentially deductible expenses. But one of the most common reasons small business owners lose out on tax deductions is by *forgetting to claim them*. To help mitigate this problem, I've prepared a detailed list of expenses that are potentially deductible, depending on the nature of your business.

NOTE: *The tax code changes regularly, and often, multiple times each year. As such, the status of a particular deduction (such as business meals, for example) can and does change. Therefore, you should consult an experienced tax professional to determine which deductions may apply to your particular tax situation.*

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List of Potentially Deductible Business Expenses

Accounting and tax preparation fees
Advertising and promotional costs
Alarm and security systems
Amortization
Attorney's fees and costs
Auto expenses (business use)

Bad debts (in certain cases, and must be uncollectable)
Banking fees and charges
Board meetings
Building permits, fees, licenses, and inspections
Building repairs and maintenance
Business association membership dues
Business licenses, fees, and permits
Business loan fees and interest
Business meals (some)
Business start-up costs (spread over a period of time)
Business travel

Cafeteria health-insurance plan
Cell phones used for business
Charitable business donations
Cleaning and janitorial supplies and services
Collection expenses
Communication tools, equipment, and software
Commissions paid to outside parties
Computers and tech supplies
Computer software and repairs
Conferences, seminars, and conventions
Consulting fees and costs
Continuing education for yourself or employees
Contract labor
Conventions and trade shows
Costs of goods sold
Credit card fees

Depreciation
Dining during business travel
Donations
Dues and subscriptions for business-related groups and publications

Education and training for expenses yourself and your employees
Employee awards
Employee wages, benefits, and bonuses
Equipment purchases
Equipment leases
Equipment repairs and improvement
Exhibits for publicity and trade shows
Family members' wages
Fees and costs for trade shows
Freelancers
Freight and shipping costs
Fringe benefits for employees
Furniture and fixtures used in business

Gifts (\$25 per person limit)
Group insurance (if qualifying)

Health insurance premiums
Health expenses (if not reimbursed)
Home office deductions (based on percentage of business use)

Independent contractors
Interest on business loans, credit cards, etc
Internet subscription, hosting, and related services
Investment advice and fees

Janitorial services

Lease fees and expenses
Legal fees, court costs, and related expenses
License and registration fees
Losses due to theft

Management fees
Marketing, advertising, and promotional costs
Materials
Maintenance
Merchant processing fees
Mortgage interest on business property

Newspapers and magazines

Office supplies, materials, and expenses
Order fulfillment equipment, materials, and services
Outside services for any business function

Payroll fees and taxes for employees
Payment processor fees
Parking and tolls
Pension plans
Postage, shipping, and delivery costs
Printing and publications
Professional development
Professional association dues
Publicity fees and costs
Prizes for contests

Real estate-related expenses
Rebates given on sales
Rent or lease payments
Research and development
Retirement plans
Returns, refunds, and allowances
Royalties

Safe-deposit box
Salaries and compensation generally
Samples for sales promotions
Security and alarm costs
Software and online services
Storage rental fees
Subcontractors

Taxes, including state and local taxes
Tax preparation, compliance, and resolution fees and costs
Telephone
Temporary services
Tools and equipment
Trade journals and magazines
Travel for business

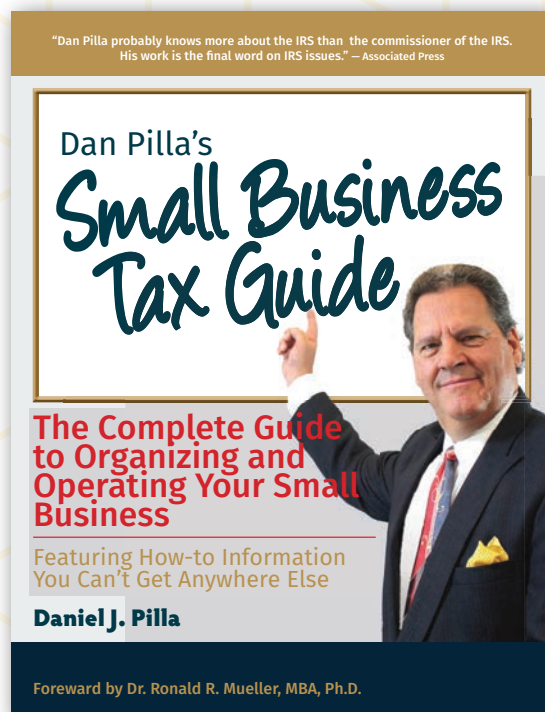
Utilities (other than home office)

Vehicle business-use expenses
Vendor's license
Virtual assistants

Website design and hosting fees
Workers compensation insurance

For more details on business expenses generally, and certain specific expenses, such as home office, business travel and meals, see **Dan Pilla's Small Business Tax Guide**.

You may also consult IRS **Publication 535, Business Expenses**. The publication is available at www.irs.gov.



Order Dan's book [HERE](#) and get a **FREE** consultation with Dan.

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