Small Business Expense Tracking Starter Checklist

Use this as a simple monthly recordkeeping guide before your receipts, notes, bank exports, and owner funding details get scattered. This is an organization aid, not tax, legal, bookkeeping, or accounting advice.

1. Common categories to set up

- [ ] Income / sales
- [ ] Advertising and marketing
- [ ] Software and subscriptions
- [ ] Supplies and materials
- [ ] Contractors and professional services
- [ ] Mileage / vehicle notes
- [ ] Shipping and merchant fees
- [ ] Education, tools, and business purchases
- [ ] Owner contribution or reimbursement
- [ ] Other / needs review

2. Records to keep with each transaction

- [ ] Date, vendor, and amount
- [ ] Category
- [ ] Business purpose note
- [ ] Payment account or card
- [ ] Receipt, invoice, or confirmation
- [ ] Refund or adjustment note
- [ ] Owner-paid vs business-paid marker

3. Receipt organization habits

- [ ] Create one folder per month
- [ ] Rename files with date + vendor + amount
- [ ] Keep email receipts in one label/folder
- [ ] Add notes while the purchase is still fresh
- [ ] Export a backup after each monthly review

4. Monthly review steps

- [ ] Import or enter new transactions

- [ ] Categorize uncategorized records
- [ ] Review unusual spending
- [ ] Check owner contributions/reimbursements
- [ ] Export cleaned records and backup JSON
- [ ] Write down questions for your bookkeeper or tax professional

5. Questions to prepare for a professional

- [ ] Which categories should I track differently?
- [ ] Which receipts or invoices are missing?
- [ ] Should owner-paid purchases be reimbursed or recorded another way?
- [ ] What reports should I keep for tax season?
- [ ] What does my business need before payroll, sales tax, or inventory tracking?

Want the structured tool?

Private Business Ledger is a private browser-based income and expense ledger with CSV import, dashboard review, owner funding tracking, recurring expense planning, and backup/export tools. Get it on Etsy. Prefer Gumroad? Buy securely on Gumroad.