

# MTD for Income Tax: quarterly update checklist

From the Quidtrail team · [quidtrail.co.uk](https://quidtrail.co.uk) · Based on GOV.UK guidance checked 18 October 2026  
· General information, not tax advice

## A. Before each quarterly update

- ☐ **I'm using compatible software** for this income source, or bridging software linked to my spreadsheet<sup>[1]</sup>.
- ☐ **Every transaction for the period is recorded digitally**, with the **amount**, the **date** and the **category**<sup>[2]</sup>.
- ☐ **Categories match the Self Assessment categories**. If turnover for that business is under £90,000, I can use simpler categorisation, for example income or expense for a sole trader<sup>[2]</sup>.
- ☐ **Residential landlords**: finance costs (such as mortgage interest) are recorded so they can be identified<sup>[2]</sup>.
- ☐ **Each business has its own records**: each sole-trade business separately, all UK property as one business, and foreign property as another. Foreign property needs records for each property<sup>[2]</sup>.
- ☐ **Joint lets**: I've recorded only my share. I've decided whether to include income **and** expenses, or income **only**, in my quarterly updates. If I leave expenses out, I add them by resending my fourth update before submitting my tax return<sup>[3]</sup>.
- ☐ **Spreadsheet users**: my spreadsheet and bridging software are **digitally linked**. Nothing has been retyped or copied and pasted after being sent to HMRC<sup>[2]</sup>.
- ☐ **Bank feed users**: I've checked that nothing is missing or miscategorised<sup>[2]</sup>.
- ☐ **Mistakes from earlier quarters** are corrected in my records, so they go into this update<sup>[2]</sup>.
- ☐ **Supporting documents** (receipts, invoices, statements) are kept. Records are kept for at least 5 years after the 31 January deadline<sup>[2]</sup>.

## B. Send it

- ☐ **One update for each income source**, sent from my software<sup>[3]</sup>.
- ☐ **Sent by the deadline** (see table). Updates are cumulative: each one covers from the start of the tax year to the end of the update period<sup>[3]</sup>.
- ☐ **Confirmation saved** (screenshot or reference from the software).

## C. Deadlines

| Standard update period | Deadline                      |
|------------------------|-------------------------------|
| 6 April to 5 July      | 7 August                      |
| 6 April to 5 October   | 7 November                    |
| 6 April to 5 January   | 7 February                    |
| 6 April to 5 April     | 7 May (following tax year)    |
| Tax return and payment | 31 January after the tax year |

Source: see note <sup>[3]</sup>. HMRC says to use **calendar update periods** "if your accounting period is from 1 April to 31 March". The deadlines are the same, and you select this in your software before your first update. See our [deadlines page](#).

**Penalties:** in 2026 to 2027 you get no penalty points for missing a quarterly update deadline, but you still have to send every update before you can submit your tax return. A late **tax return** still earns a point in 2026 to 2027. From 2027 to 2028, each missed quarterly update deadline earns a point too, and you only get one point per deadline, however many businesses you have. At 4 points there's a £200 penalty, and another £200 for each further missed deadline. Late payment penalties are separate from points. If you're volunteering, different rules apply<sup>[4]</sup><sup>[6]</sup>.

#### D. Tick-off grid

| Income source             | Q1 (7 Aug)               | Q2 (7 Nov)               | Q3 (7 Feb)               | Q4 (7 May)               | Tax return (31 Jan)      |
|---------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| Self-employment:<br>_____ | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| UK property               | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Foreign property          | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |

#### E. After the fourth update: year-end

- ☐ Resend the fourth update if I need to correct records or add joint-let expenses<sup>[3]</sup>.
- ☐ Make year-end tax adjustments, such as allowances and reliefs, in my software.
- ☐ Add my other income (for example savings, dividends, employment, pensions) if it's not already in the software.
- ☐ Submit my tax return through compatible software by **31 January**, and pay any tax due<sup>[5]</sup>.

*This checklist is a summary of HMRC guidance, not tax advice. Rules can change, so check GOV.UK or ask an accountant. Last checked 18 October 2026.*

#### Sources

1. <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/choose-the-right-software-for-making-tax-digital-for-income-tax>
2. <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/use-making-tax-digital-for-income-tax/create-digital-records>
3. <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/use-making-tax-digital-for-income-tax/send-quarterly-updates>
4. <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/penalties-for-making-tax-digital-for-income-tax>
5. <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/use-making-tax-digital-for-income-tax/submit-your-tax-return>
6. <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/penalties-for-income-tax-self-assessment-volunteers>