

Self Assessment Pay Your Bill Checklist

£ PayToolkit

Deadlines, payments on account, ways to pay and what late payment costs

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Your Self Assessment bill is usually due in two or three payments rather than one. This checklist lays out the dates, who has to make payments on account, the ways to pay HMRC, and the penalties for paying late.

1. Key dates for the 2025/26 tax year

Date	What is due
31 October 2026	Paper tax return for 2025/26 (online filers have until 31 January)
31 January 2027	Online return for 2025/26, balancing payment for 2025/26 and first payment on account for 2026/27
31 July 2027	Second payment on account for 2026/27

2. Payments on account

Each payment on account is 50% of your previous year's Self Assessment bill. You normally make them if your last bill was more than £1,000 and less than 80% of your tax was collected at source (for example through PAYE). If your income has fallen you can ask HMRC to reduce them.

3. Ways to pay

Method	Notes
Online or telephone banking	Faster Payments is usually same day or next day
Debit card online	No fee for debit cards
Direct Debit	Set it up well before the deadline
CHAPS, Bacs or cheque	Slower: allow several working days for the money to arrive

Credit cards are not accepted for HMRC tax payments. Your payment reference is your 10-digit UTR followed by the letter K: check GOV.UK for current bank details.

4. If you pay late

What	Cost
Late return	A £100 penalty even if you owe no tax, rising the longer it is left
Late payment	Interest from the day after the due date, plus penalties of 5% at 30 days, 6 months and 12 months
Cannot pay in full	Ask HMRC about a Time to Pay arrangement before the deadline

Quick action checklist

- Work out your bill early with the sole trader tax calculator at paytoolkit.co.uk
- Set money aside every month using the tax set-aside calculator
- Pay at least three working days early if you use a method that is not same-day
- Keep proof of payment for every instalment

This document is general information, not tax advice. Figures are for the 2026/27 tax year and can change: always check GOV.UK for your own situation. Full guide: paytoolkit.co.uk/downloads/self-assessment-pay-your-bill-checklist/