

2026 Year End Tax Move Checklist

What to do before December 31, and what's due right after.

01

Know your number

- ☐ Run a tax projection for 2026 before the year closes
- ☐ Fourth quarter estimated payment is due January 15, 2027
- ☐ Clean, current books first. Planning on messy numbers is guessing

03

Retirement

- ☐ 2026 401k employee limit: \$24,500 (\$8,000 catch up at 50+, \$11,250 at ages 60 to 63)
- ☐ Sole proprietors with no employees can still open a Solo 401k after year end, up to the filing deadline
- ☐ IRA limit: \$7,500 (\$1,100 catch up at 50+)

05

January deadlines

- ☐ 1099-NEC goes out for contractor payments of \$2,000 or more made in 2026
- ☐ 1099-NEC and W-2s are due February 1, 2027 (January 31 is a Sunday)

02

Business owners

- ☐ S corp owners: check your salary and get health insurance on your W-2
- ☐ S corp 401k deferrals run through payroll by December 31
- ☐ Equipment and vehicles must be placed in service by December 31 to count this year
- ☐ Collect a W-9 from every contractor now

04

Giving and gifting

- ☐ Itemizers: only charitable gifts above 0.5% of AGI count starting 2026
- ☐ Non itemizers can deduct up to \$1,000 of cash gifts (\$2,000 married filing jointly), not to donor advised funds
- ☐ Gift tax annual exclusion: \$19,000 per person you give to

Good to know: Tax planning happens before December 31. Tax filing happens after.

Questions?

Book a free discovery call: nxtlevelcpa.com

[Or book online directly.](#)