TAXFILINGS
CANADA

FREE CALENDAR GUIDE, PLAIN LANGUAGE

# The CRA
# Deadlines Almanac

One small book that holds every date the CRA is counting on you to forget.

The CRA never forgets a date — and it never phones you the week before. Every deadline in this almanac carries a price for the people who miss it, and the price grows while you are not looking. Pin these four pages where you plan your month, and the most expensive kind of tax surprise stops happening to you.

| The five dates that do the most damage — which ones are yours? | |
|---|---|
| 1 | **April 30.** The country's money date. Personal balances are due — for employees, landlords, investors and the self-employed alike. Most people also file by it. Miss it while owing and the meter starts the next morning. |
| 2 | **June 15.** The self-employed half-deadline. Your return can wait until mid-June; your money could not — it was due April 30. Filing time and paying time are different dates wearing the same season. |
| 3 | **The 15th of the month.** Payroll's drumbeat. What you withheld from staff cheques last month is due now. It is employees' money in transit, and the CRA guards it with its sharpest routine penalties. |
| 4 | **Six months after year-end.** The corporate filing date — but the payment was due three or four months before it. The gap between those two dates is the most expensive misunderstanding in corporate tax. Page 2 closes it. |
| 5 | **The instalment quarters.** March, June, September and December, mid-month. Once your balance at filing time is big enough in more than one recent year, the CRA stops waiting for spring and asks four times a year instead. |

Dates that land on weekends move, thresholds get updated, and this almanac deliberately quotes patterns rather than any single year's calendar. Confirm current dates and figures at canada.ca — or let the tax deadline calculator at taxfilings.ca/tools build your personal list in a minute.

## 01 April 30 and June 15: one wallet, two calendars

### Employees and most filers

Your return and your balance share one date: the end of April. If the money is short, file anyway — the late-filing penalty punishes the missing return, not the missing payment, and it is the one charge you can always dodge for free.

### Self-employed, and their spouses

The CRA gives you until June 15 to file because your paperwork is heavier. It does not wait for the money: any balance was still due April 30. Estimate what you owe, pay that by the April date, and settle the difference when the return goes in.

**THE WEEKEND RULE**

A due date that lands on a Saturday, Sunday or public holiday slides to the next business day. Helpful when it happens — dangerous to guess. Confirm each year's exact calendar at canada.ca instead of trusting the pattern from last year.

## 02 Corporate dates: your year-end starts the clock

A corporation's calendar is private to it. Every deadline counts forward from the fiscal year-end you chose, so a June year-end company and a December one never share a date — and neither matches your personal return.

### Filing — six months after year-end

The T2 return is due six months after the books close, every year, even for a company that did nothing. A no-activity year still needs a return; silence is its own late-filing problem.

### Paying — two or three months after year-end

The balance is due far earlier than the return: two months after year-end for most corporations, three for many small Canadian-controlled ones. Ask your accountant which month is yours and write it down — it is the deadline owners forget most.

**THE PAY-BEFORE-FILE TRAP**

The money is due months before the paperwork. Owners who wait for the accountant to finish the return before sending anything are on time with the filing and late with the cash — and daily interest ran through the whole quiet stretch in between. Pay a sensible estimate at the payment deadline; true it up when the return is done.

**PLANNING TIP**

Give the payment date the respect the filing date gets: put both in the calendar the day you pick a year-end, and book the accountant early enough that your estimate is a calculation, not a hope.

## 03 GST/HST: your cycle writes your calendar

### Monthly and quarterly

Return and payment travel together, due one month after each period ends. The rhythm is relentless — automate it, or it will own your month-ends.

### Annual — corporations

Most annual filers get three months after year-end to file and pay. Grow past a modest net-tax level and the CRA asks for instalments through the year as well.

### Annual — sole proprietors

A December year-end registrant follows the personal season: the return can wait for June 15, but the net tax is due at the end of April.

## 04 Payroll: the 15th is a promise, not a suggestion

Everything you withheld from paycheques last month — tax, CPP, EI — plus your employer share is due by the 15th of this one. That is the starting schedule; as payroll grows, the CRA moves you to faster ones and announces it by letter. Read every envelope with a CRA logo the day it arrives, because a schedule change is easy to miss and expensive to learn about later.

> THE COSTLIEST MISS IN THIS BOOK
>
> Remittances are staff money in transit, and late ones draw harsher penalties than almost anything a late return earns. When cash is tight, this bill jumps the queue: suppliers will negotiate, this date will not.

## 05 Instalments: when one deadline becomes four

Owe more than $3,000 when you file — this year and in either of the two before — and the CRA asks you to pay as you go: quarterly, on the 15th of March, June, September and December. (Confirm the current threshold at canada.ca; it sits lower in Quebec.) Corporations run the same idea monthly, or quarterly once they qualify as small. The instalment checker at taxfilings.ca/tools tells you in a minute whether the pattern has reached you.

> PLANNING TIP
>
> The CRA's reminder letters carry a safe harbour: pay exactly what the letter asks and no instalment interest can touch you, even if the letter guessed low. Paying your own lower estimate can work — but only the letter's number is guaranteed safe.

## 06 The price list for missing

| MYTH | FACT |
| --- | --- |
| "I cannot pay, so filing can wait too." | Filing late while owing triggers a penalty shaped like 5% of the balance plus 1% more for each late month — stacked on top of the debt. File on time with nothing attached and you face interest alone. Current penalty figures live at canada.ca. |
| "A few weeks of interest is pocket change." | Arrears interest compounds every single day, at a rate the CRA resets each quarter, and it keeps running through payment plans, objections and hold music. No grace period exists. |
| "Being late twice costs the same as once." | Miss again within a few years of a formal demand and the penalty comes back bigger and runs longer. The CRA prices habits more harshly than accidents — the late-filing penalty calculator at taxfilings.ca/tools shows the difference. |

## 07 The calendar self-check

Give yourself one point per YES.

| | |
|---|---|
| 1. I can name my filing date and my payment date — and I know they are not always the same day. | YES / NO |
| 2. Every CRA date I own lives in a calendar with reminders, not in my head. | YES / NO |
| 3. If I run a corporation, I know whether my balance is due two or three months after year-end. | YES / NO |
| 4. I know my GST/HST cycle — monthly, quarterly or annual — without checking. | YES / NO |
| 5. If I have staff, the remittance date outranks every other bill in my cash planning. | YES / NO |
| 6. I know whether instalments apply to me this year, not just whether they did last year. | YES / NO |

**6–7 · Green**
Your calendar is doing its job. Re-check it every January, when the CRA publishes the year's dates.

**3–5 · Yellow**
One forgotten date can undo a year of careful work. Spend an hour with this almanac and your calendar app this week.

**0–2 · Red**
You are running on luck, and luck is the one thing the CRA charges interest on. Set the reminders now — or hire someone whose job is watching them.

## 08 One week to a calendar you can trust

**Day 1**
List every hat you wear — filer, self-employed, director, employer, GST/HST registrant. Each hat carries its own dates.

**Day 2–3**
Move every date on pages 2 and 3 that fits your hats into your phone, each with a two-week early warning attached.

**Day 4–5**
Verify this year's exact calendar at canada.ca — weekend shifts included — and run the tax deadline calculator at taxfilings.ca/tools as a cross-check.

**Day 6–7**
Park money against the nearest payment date. A deadline you can already afford is just a Tuesday.

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Institute of Chartered Accountants of India — Member No. 521458 | Malaysian Institute of Accountants — Member No. 44667, C.A.(M) | CPA Canada In-Depth: Tax Program 19 Dec 2023, GST/HST Part I 12 Jul 2022, Part II 5 Jul 2023

Editorial policy. Every guide is researched against primary sources — the Income Tax Act, CRA publications and CPA Canada materials — fact-checked by Udit Gupta, and updated when the rules change.

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