



Month-End Close Checklist

A practical 48-hour guide for startups

Use this checklist to keep your close organized, reconcile your accounts, review your financials, and finish each month with confidence.

01 PRE-CLOSE PREPARATION

TASK	WHAT TO CHECK
☐ Gather financial documents	Collect bank and credit card statements, invoices, receipts, payroll records, and expense reports.
☐ Confirm transactions are recorded	Make sure revenue, expenses, payments, reimbursements, and other monthly transactions are captured.
☐ Review outstanding items	Identify missing invoices, unreconciled transactions, pending payments, and other close blockers.
☐ Assign close owners and deadlines	Define who owns reconciliations, AP, AR, payroll, journal entries, reporting, and final review.
☐ Confirm the close calendar	Set deadlines and communicate the close timeline to everyone involved.

02 DAY 1 — RECONCILE & RECORD

TASK	WHAT TO CHECK
☐ Reconcile bank accounts	Compare bank activity with the accounting records and investigate discrepancies.
☐ Reconcile credit cards	Match transactions, payments, and balances to the accounting records.
☐ Review accounts receivable	Confirm customer invoices and payments are recorded and review overdue receivables.
☐ Review accounts payable	Confirm vendor bills are recorded and expenses are assigned to the correct period.
☐ Review payroll and employee expenses	Verify payroll, benefits, taxes, reimbursements, and employee expenses.
☐ Record accruals and adjusting entries	Capture expenses incurred but not yet invoiced or paid, plus depreciation and amortization.
☐ Review recurring transactions	Check subscriptions, rent, insurance, software, and other recurring expenses.
☐ Complete journal entries	Review and document manual and recurring journal entries.

03 DAY 2 – REVIEW & REPORT

TASK	WHAT TO CHECK
☐ Review the income statement	Analyze revenue, expenses, gross profit, and operating income.
☐ Review the balance sheet	Check cash, receivables, payables, debt, fixed assets, and equity.
☐ Review cash flow	Understand how operating, investing, and financing activities affected cash.
☐ Investigate significant variances	Identify unexpected changes and document the reasons.
☐ Complete final reconciliation review	Confirm key accounts are reconciled and discrepancies are resolved or documented.
☐ Prepare management reporting	Summarize financial performance, trends, risks, and opportunities.
☐ Get final approval	Have the appropriate finance leader, CFO, or founder review and approve the financials.

04 POST-CLOSE

TASK	WHAT TO CHECK
☐ Document unresolved items	Carry forward unresolved issues and assign an owner.
☐ Review the close process	Identify recurring bottlenecks, manual tasks, and sources of errors.
☐ Update the checklist	Improve the process based on what happened during the current close.
☐ Prepare for next month	Confirm recurring tasks, deadlines, owners, and required documentation.

48-Hour Close: Quick Reference

TIMING	FOCUS	KEY OUTCOMES
Pre-close	Prepare	Documents collected, owners assigned, blockers identified
Day 1	Reconcile & record	Accounts reconciled, AP/AR reviewed, adjustments posted
Day 2	Review & report	Financial statements reviewed, variances explained, reporting prepared
Post-close	Improve	Open items documented and next close prepared

How to Close Faster

Keep your books current

Record transactions regularly instead of leaving a large cleanup for month-end.

Automate transaction collection

Connect banks, cards, payroll, and expense systems to reduce manual work.

Reconcile throughout the month

Resolve discrepancies before they become close-day blockers.

Standardize recurring entries

Use a consistent process for accruals, depreciation, amortization, and other adjustments.

Assign clear owners

Every close task should have an owner and deadline.

Standardize financial review

Use the same statements and variance checks each month.



Close Your Books With Confidence

Zeni combines AI-powered accounting technology with dedicated finance professionals to help businesses reduce manual accounting work and maintain accurate, up-to-date financials.

See how Zeni can help streamline your month-end close.

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