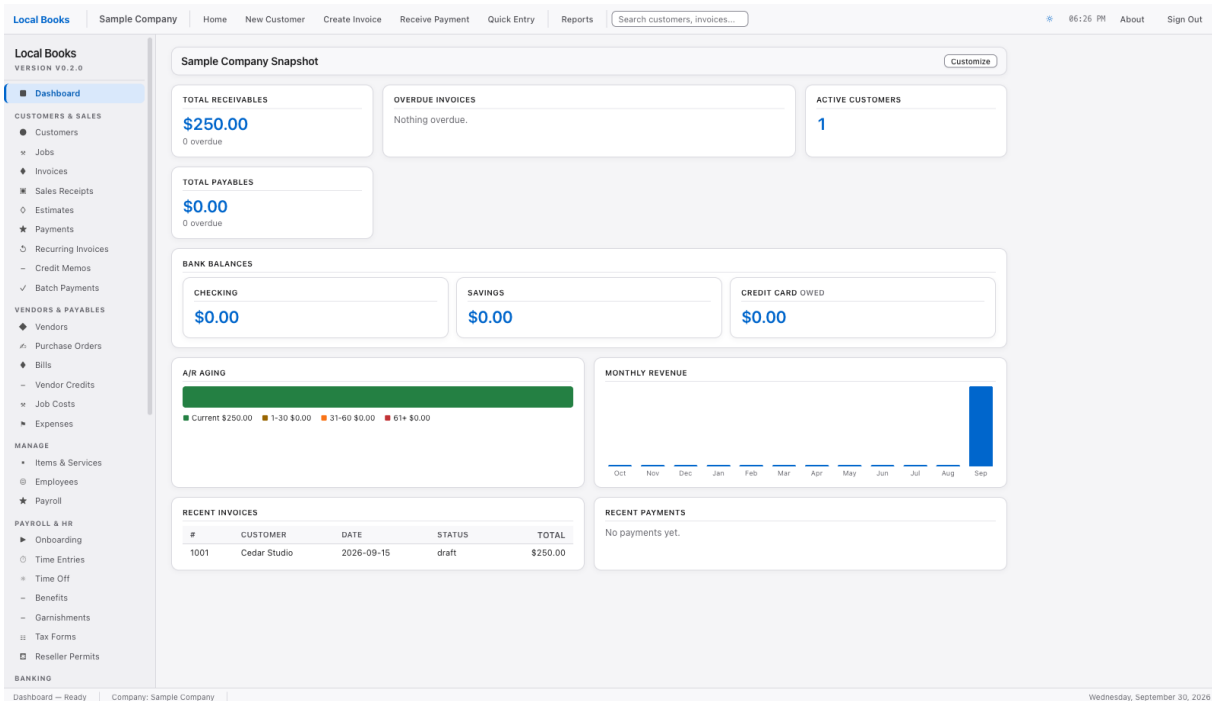




Local Books

Quick Start Guide

Install confidently. Keep your books organized.
Understand what your numbers are telling you.



Illustrations use the supplied Sample Company. Names, balances, and dates are examples, not your business records.

For Local Books 0.2.0

Desktop users and small-office administrators

Manual edition: September 30, 2026

Start with pages 3-6. If you already have books in another program, read pages 14-16 **before importing or entering opening balances**. No GitHub account is needed to use this manual or the Local Books installer.

Find your next step

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How to read this guide

For field-by-field help, use the companion Complete User Manual. **Bold words** identify screens or controls. Settings > AI Insights means open Settings and find that section. Scroll to reveal more controls. PDF bookmarks jump to chapters.

This guide describes the Local Books v0.2.0 interface and features. Screens and third-party services may change. It is operational guidance, not accounting, tax, legal, or security certification. Ask a qualified professional to review your opening balances, payroll, taxes, and migration results.

Install and update

Use the download supplied for Local Books. Installing the app and creating your company data are separate steps.

Computer	Package and requirements
Apple Silicon Mac	LocalBooks-macos-arm64.dmg; macOS 14 or newer. This release is signed and notarized. An Intel Mac cannot use the arm64 app.
Windows PC	LocalBooks-Setup-x64.exe; 64-bit Windows 10 or 11. The Windows release is not currently signed. A portable ZIP is also available.
Linux or Intel Mac	Technical source/Docker deployment, not a native one-click installer. Arrange setup with your administrator; see page 23.

On a Mac

1. Open the DMG, then drag **Local Books** into **Applications**.
2. Eject the mounted disk image. Launch **Applications > Local Books**, not the copy inside the disk image. Complete the first-run company setup.
3. For an update, quit Local Books first, make a backup, and replace the existing app in the same Applications folder. Keep your data folder.

On Windows

1. Run the installer and follow its setup wizard. Launch Local Books from the Start menu. The installer handles the desktop WebView2 requirement.
2. If Windows warns about an unknown publisher, verify that the file came from a trusted source before proceeding. Do not disable antivirus or organization security policies.
3. For the portable ZIP, extract the entire folder before running LocalBooks.exe. WebView2 is required for its native window; the app may offer a browser fallback.

Avoid duplicate copies. A download or mounted DMG is not a second company. Different application locations can also create duplicate launch icons. Use one installed app, and do not delete company data to remove an extra app copy. Signing does not determine whether a replacement prompt appears.

First company and settings

A company is a separate set of books. The company name belongs to your business, church, or organization - not the software publisher.

1. Launch Local Books and create or select the company to open. Complete the first-run setup for company information, operator information, defaults, and password. Store the password securely.
2. Open **Settings**. Review company name, address, contact details, and tax ID where applicable. Upload your own logo if you want it on your documents.
3. Review **Invoice Defaults**: terms, tax rate, numbering and prefixes. Confirm tax treatment with your accountant. Save your changes.
4. Use **Company Type** to select Business or Nonprofit. Nonprofit changes vocabulary and exposes nonprofit workflows; it does not turn existing transactions into a different set of books.

Local Books Sample Company Home New Customer Create Invoice Receive Payment Quick Entry Reports Search customers, invoices... 06:26 PM About Sign Out

Local Books
VERSION V0.2.0

- Dashboard
- CUSTOMERS & SALES
 - Customers
 - Jobs
 - Invoices
 - Sales Receipts
 - Estimates
 - Payments
 - Recurring Invoices
 - Credit Memos
 - Batch Payments
- VENDORS & PAYABLES
 - Vendors
 - Purchase Orders
 - Bills
 - Vendor Credits
 - Job Costs
 - Expenses
- MANAGE
 - Items & Services
 - Employees
 - Payroll
- PAYROLL & HR
 - Onboarding
 - Time Entries
 - Time Off
 - Benefits
 - Garnishments
 - Tax Forms
 - Reseller Permits
- BANKING

Company Settings

Company Information

COMPANY NAME *
Sample Company

ADDRESS LINE 1 ADDRESS LINE 2

CITY STATE

ZIP PHONE

EMAIL WEBSITE

TAX ID / EIN

COMPANY TYPE
Business

Nonprofit shows donors, pledges, donations and funds in place of customers, invoices, sales receipts and classes, and adds the net-asset accounts and statements. Your data does not change; switch back any time.

Company Logo

Choose File No file chosen

PNG, JPG, GIF, WebP, or SVG - max 5 MB - 200x80 px recommended.

Invoice Defaults

DEFAULT TERMS DEFAULT TAX RATE (%)

Net 30 0.0

INVOICE PREFIX NEXT INVOICE #

e.g. INV- 1001

ESTIMATE PREFIX NEXT ESTIMATE #

E- 1001

DEFAULT INVOICE NOTES

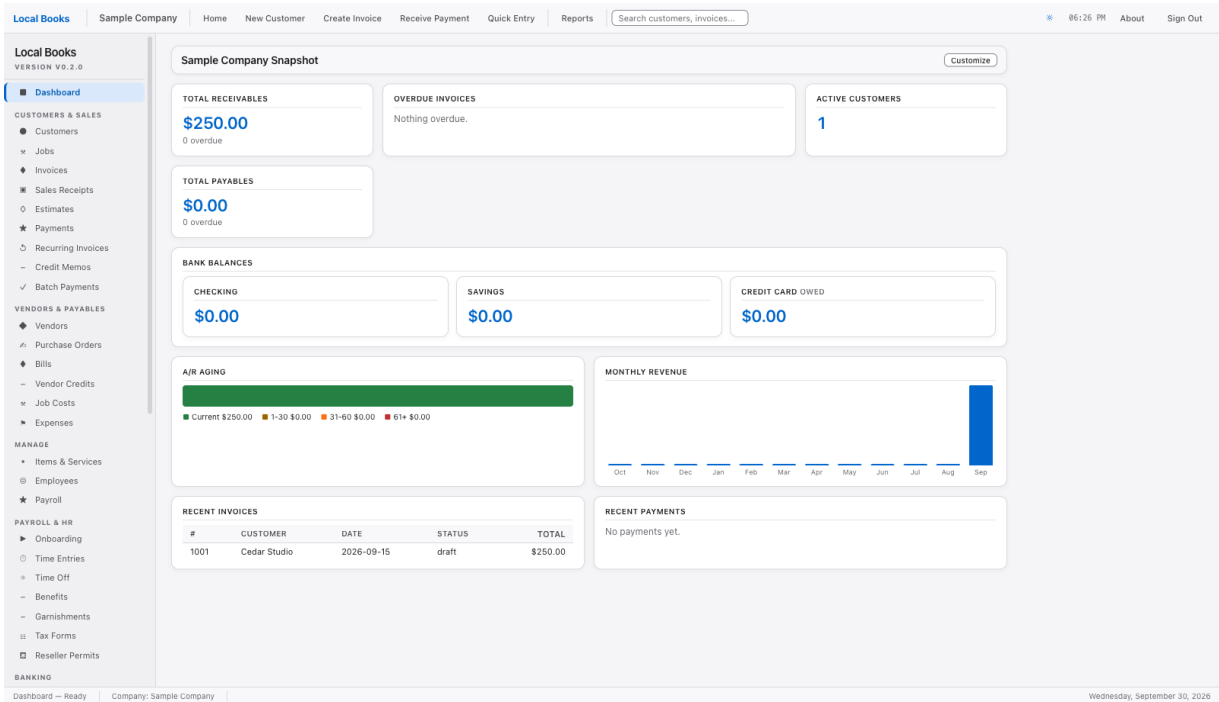
Company Settings — Ready Company: Sample Company Wednesday, September 30, 2026

Settings shows the organization using the books. Bedrock Group LLC is the software publisher; enter your own organization name here.

More than one company? Use **Companies > + New Company**. Close and reopen the desktop app to select another company; the Companies page does not switch the active company live. Always check the company name before entering transactions.

Find your way around

The left navigation groups everyday work. The top bar offers shortcuts and search. Your window may need scrolling to show the full menu.



Dashboard example: receivables are amounts customers owe; payables are amounts you owe vendors. These are not the same as cash in the bank.

Where to go	What you do there
Customers & Sales	Customers, jobs, invoices, sales receipts, estimates, payments, recurring invoices and credits.
Vendors & Payables	Vendors, purchase orders, bills, vendor credits, job costs and expenses.
Banking / Accounting	Registers, feeds, reconciliation, accounts, journals, budgets, reports and analytics.
Import & Export / System	Imports, QuickBooks connections, settings, audit history and company files.

A good first practice: use a separate test company to create a customer, a service item, an invoice, and a payment. Practice there before entering real records. Do not mix sample records into your live books.

Accounts and starting balances

The Chart of Accounts organizes money into assets, liabilities, equity, income, cost of goods sold, and expenses.

Review your chart

Open **Chart of Accounts**. Keep categories meaningful and avoid near-duplicate accounts. Accounts marked **CONTROL** support automatic posting. You may rename them, but their number and account type are protected. Do not try to bypass those protections.

For a cash or bank account, use an asset account with kind **Bank**. For a card, use a liability account with kind **Credit card**. This flag makes the account available in payment and deposit selections.

Choose one starting method

Your situation	Starting approach
Brand-new organization	Begin with genuine initial funding and transactions. Do not invent prior balances.
Keep detailed history	Test a supported migration first (page 14). Check which records are actually imported.
Start at a cutoff date	Use accountant-approved opening balances, retain the old system as an archive, and separately plan outstanding invoices and bills.

Enter opening balances when appropriate

1. Open **Opening Balances**. Set the **As of Date** to your agreed cutoff date and enter a reference.
2. Enter the approved balances for assets, liabilities, and equity. Positive values post to each account's normal side; negative values reverse that side.
3. Review the displayed difference. Use **Auto-balance to** an equity account only when your accountant has approved the offset. Click **Post Opening Balances** once, then verify the resulting reports.

Do not count the same balance twice. A ledger migration, the Opening Balances screen, and a bank feed account's opening balance can all post balances. Choose the appropriate method rather than using all of them for the same money. An A/R or A/P total alone does not create individual unpaid invoices or bills.

Manual journals and closed periods

Use **Journal Entries** for accountant-approved adjustments. Total debits must equal total credits. Ordinary sales and purchases already create their own entries. After review, a **Closing Date** in Settings restricts changes to earlier transactions; do not change it merely to silence an error.

Customers, vendors and items

Set up reusable records before entering a backlog of transactions. Accurate names and defaults save time later.

Customers

1. Open **Customers** and create a customer. Enter the name, contact information, address, and payment terms.
2. Review tax status and any applicable exemption or reseller information. A validation or state lookup is not a substitute for keeping required documentation.
3. Save, then use this same customer for invoices, estimates, receipts and payments. Check possible-duplicate warnings before creating another record.

Vendors

Open **Vendors** and enter the supplier's name and contact details. Set the normal expense account where available. That default helps bill entry, but review each line: a vendor can sell supplies, equipment, and other purchases that need different accounts.

Items & Services

Use **Items & Services** to create reusable products, services, materials, or labor. Review description, sales rate, cost, tax treatment, and the applicable accounts. An item is what you sell or buy; an account is where its financial effect is recorded.

Example	How to think about it
Monthly bookkeeping service	A service item with a sales rate, linked to the appropriate income account.
A stocked replacement part	A product item whose inventory setup and cost treatment need review before use.
Office electricity	Usually an expense category on a bill or expense, not a product you sell.

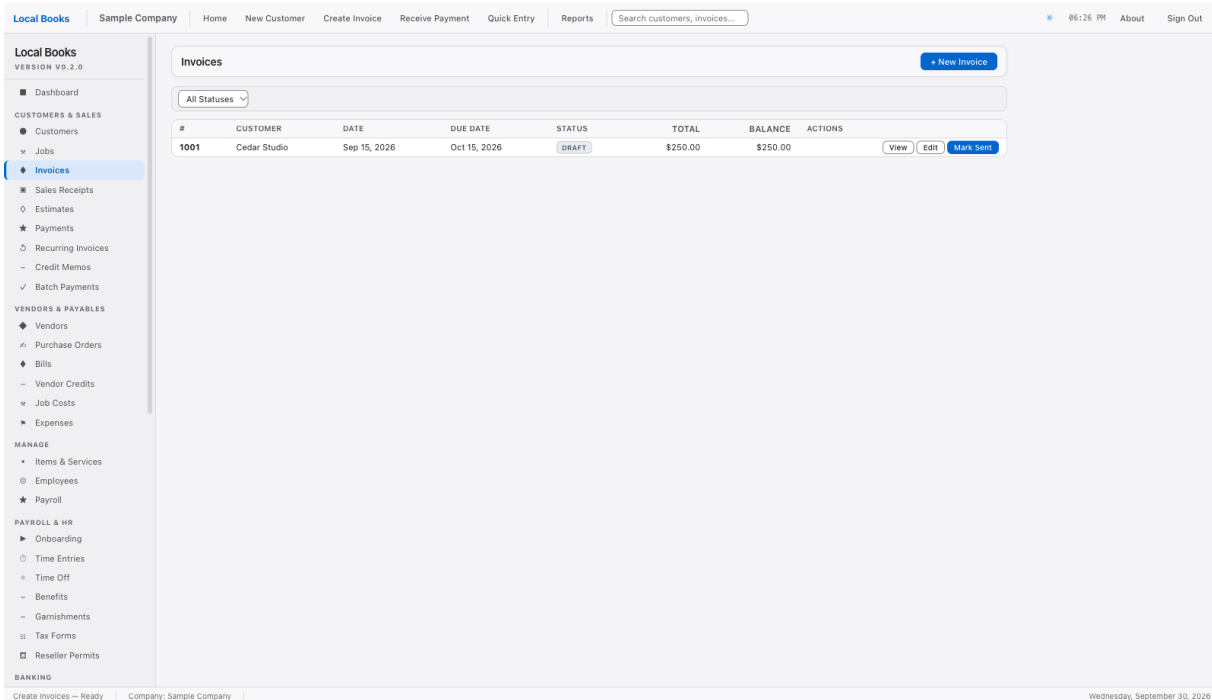
Import existing lists

CSV Import/Export can import customers, vendors and items. See page 15 for the exact header names and duplicate behavior. Keep a copy of your original export before adapting it.

Check before saving: correct company, spelling, tax status, terms, and accounts. Editing a default is not the same as correcting every historical document that used it.

Invoices, estimates and sales receipts

Choose the document that matches what actually happened: a quote, an amount owed, or a sale paid immediately.



The invoice list shows status, total and remaining balance. Use View or Edit on the intended document; filter the list to narrow your search.

1. For a sale on account, open **Invoices > + New Invoice**. Select the customer and check the invoice date, due date, number and terms.
2. Add items or descriptions, quantity and rate. Check line tax flags, tax rate, and the total. Add job/class information if you use it. Save and inspect the invoice.
3. Print or save the PDF. Email requires SMTP setup (page 21). Marking an invoice sent does not mean it has been paid.

Other sales workflows

Estimates: prepare a quote, then use its convert-to-invoice action when approved. Check the resulting invoice instead of entering the same sale again.

Sales Receipts: use for a customer who pays now; it records the sale and payment together. Select the actual payment method and deposit-to account.

Recurring Invoices: configure the schedule and review generated invoices. Desktop users should not assume generation runs while the app is closed; use the available Generate Now action when needed.

Payments, deposits and credits

Recording an invoice, receiving payment, and depositing money can be separate events. Use the correct step so income is not recorded twice.

Receive payment against an invoice

1. Open **Payments** or the top-bar **Receive Payment** shortcut. Select the customer, payment date, amount and method.
2. Allocate the amount to the correct open invoice or invoices. Review the deposit-to account. Save and confirm that the remaining invoice balances are correct.
3. For a partial payment, leave the remaining balance outstanding. Do not change the original invoice total just to make it look paid.

Group several receipts into one bank deposit

If payments were recorded to **Undeposited Funds**, open **Make Deposits**. Select the pending payments that make up the actual deposit, choose the bank account, check the date and total, then create the deposit. Do not also enter the deposit as new sales income.

Example: two customer payments of \$100 and \$150 deposited together should produce one \$250 bank deposit. When the bank feed brings in \$250, match it to that deposit rather than adding another \$250 of income.

Credits and corrections

Credit Memos record customer credits and can be applied to invoices. Use the intended credit or void workflow rather than deleting history to hide an error. Voiding a posting creates reversing accounting entries; it does not erase the fact that the original existed.

Batch Payments supports applying payments across multiple customers and invoices. Verify every allocation before submitting the batch. The app recording a payment does not by itself move funds through your bank.

Check the result

Review the customer's balance, the invoice status, and the destination bank or Undeposited Funds account. A payment that reached the wrong account can make receivables look correct while bank reconciliation still fails.

Bills, expenses and purchasing

Use a bill when you owe a supplier and will pay later. Use an expense or card charge when the purchase has already been paid.

Document	When to use it
Purchase Order	Request or authorize a purchase. It is non-posting; convert to a bill when the vendor bill arrives.
Bill	Record a vendor amount owed, due date, and purchase detail.
Bill Payment	Apply a payment against an existing bill. Do not also record that same payment as a separate expense.
Expense / CC Charge	Record an already-paid purchase with its actual bank or card account.
Vendor Credit	Record a supplier credit and apply it to the appropriate open bills.

Enter and pay a bill

1. Open **Bills** and create a bill for the correct vendor. Enter the date, due date, vendor reference, items or descriptions, and amounts.
2. Review the expense or inventory accounts, job/class allocations, and total. Save the bill and keep its supporting document.
3. Use the bill-payment workflow to select the bill, payment date and actual pay-from account. Apply the amount and check the remaining payable.
4. When its payment appears in the bank review queue, **Match** it to the recorded payment instead of adding another expense.

Scan a receipt

Where a form offers **Scan Receipt**, select an image or PDF. Local OCR can suggest the merchant, date and total. It is not a guaranteed line-by-line transcription. Review every suggested value, tax amount, account and vendor before saving. The source document is attached by the receipt workflow.

Mac and Windows scanning use operating-system services. A native Linux setup may need Tesseract and Poppler. The scan feature is separate from optional cloud AI Insights.

Card payments are transfers. Record the purchase as a card charge; later payment from checking to the card reduces the card liability. Recording both as expenses would overstate spending.

Bank accounts and transaction review

The register shows posted accounting entries. A downloaded bank statement line is a review item until it is matched or added.

1. Confirm the ledger account is flagged Bank or Credit card in **Chart of Accounts**.
2. Open **Bank Accounts** under Banking. Create or review the bank feed identity and link it to the correct ledger account. Do not add a second opening balance if one was already posted.
3. Bring in transactions through SimpleFIN (page 12) or a supported file import: OFX/QFX or the supported Bank of America, Chase, or PayPal CSV layouts. An arbitrary CSV may need reformatting.
4. Open the account's **To review** list. Inspect date, amount, payee, existing match, and suggested category.

Action	Result
Match	Links the statement line to a transaction already in the books; avoids a second posting.
Add	Creates a new accounting entry using the selected category. Use only if it is not already recorded.
Exclude	Removes an irrelevant statement line from review. Restore can bring it back; exclusion is not a substitute for correcting a real posting.
Bank Rules	Suggest categories from payee patterns. Rules do not post transactions by themselves.

Automatic matching looks for a suitable existing ledger entry by amount, side and nearby date. Ambiguous matches wait for review. **Find matches** rechecks the feed; **Add all categorised** posts categorized review lines, so check them first.

Manual register entries and transfers

In the register, **+ Entry** records a date, signed amount, payee/reference and required category. For bank accounts, positive is money in and negative is money out. For cards, negative is a charge and positive is a payment that reduces the amount owed. Use **Transfer** to move money between your bank/card accounts.

Importing the same bank transaction through multiple sources can still require duplicate review. Never assume an automatic match or deduplication rule makes reconciliation unnecessary.

Connect SimpleFIN bank feeds

This optional connection retrieves bank information. It does not authorize Local Books to move money.

What you need

An account with a compatible SimpleFIN bridge, a supported bank connection, and internet access. Any bridge subscription is separate from Local Books. The consumer connection service is **SimpleFIN Bridge**, not the developer-oriented SimpleFIN protocol site.

Open SimpleFIN Bridge: <https://bridge.simplefin.org/>

1. Create or sign in to your Bridge account. Follow that service's instructions to connect your bank and complete any bank verification.
2. Generate a **setup token** in Bridge. Treat it like a password. This is a one-time connection token, not an API key.
3. In Local Books, open **Banking > Bank Feeds (SimpleFIN) > Connect**. Paste the setup token and complete the connection.
4. Map each Bridge account to the correct Local Books bank account. Take extra care with similarly named checking accounts and credit cards.
5. Select **Sync Now**. Open each account's review queue, then Match, Add or Exclude the returned transactions as appropriate.
6. Reconcile against the bank's statement. A successful sync alone does not prove the books agree with the bank.

What to expect

The app exchanges the setup token for an encrypted stored access credential. Desktop sync is an outbound HTTPS connection; you do not need to open an incoming network port. Pending bank transactions are ignored until posted. Available history depends on the service; the first sync requests roughly three months, not your entire banking history.

If the connection stops working

Check the bank connection on the Bridge site and complete reauthorization there if requested. If a setup token has already been consumed, generate a new one. Check account mappings before retrying. Disconnect removes the stored connection and mappings; it does not erase transactions already imported into your books.

Privacy: your bridge and its banking connection providers have their own access terms. Never send a setup token, stored credential, bank password, or screenshot containing one to someone offering support.

Reconcile an account

Reconciliation compares your recorded transactions with a bank or card statement for a specific ending date.

1. Get the official statement. In **Bank Accounts**, open the intended account and select **Reconcile**.
2. Enter the statement ending date and ending balance. For a credit card, enter the amount owed. Confirm the beginning balance agrees with your previous completed reconciliation.
3. Tick only ledger transactions shown on the statement. Feed-matched transactions may already be ticked; still check them against the statement.
4. Investigate the difference. Look for a missing fee or interest item, duplicate posting, incorrect amount/date, wrong account, or deposit that has not yet cleared.
5. Complete only when the difference is **\$0.00** and the cleared items are correct. Completion marks those lines reconciled and locks them.

If the difference will not reach zero

Symptom	Check
Beginning balance differs	Prior reconciliation and opening balances; confirm the same account was selected.
Amount is exactly one transaction	A missing or double-ticked payment, charge, fee, or deposit.
Deposit does not match receipts	Several customer payments may have been combined into one deposit; see page 9.
Card spending seems doubled	The card payment may have been entered as an expense instead of a transfer.
A feed line exists but no entry	The line may still be waiting in To review rather than posted to the ledger.

Do not force a match with an unexplained adjustment. A zero difference is useful only when it reflects the statement correctly. If an earlier reconciled entry is wrong, involve your accountant before changing the closed period.

The app allows one open reconciliation per account. Return to that session instead of starting a duplicate. The **Abandon** action drops the session but keeps its cleared ticks; review them the next time you reconcile.

Move from another accounting system

Migration is a controlled transfer of supported data - not a guaranteed complete clone of another product.

Tool	Scope
Migrate Data	Supported chart-of-accounts and ledger exports from Xero, MYOB, Sage 50, Wave, Zoho Books, and GnuCash; trial balance used for verification where supported.
CSV Import/Export	Separate customer, vendor, and item list imports. See exact headers on page 15.
QuickBooks Files / Online	Specific QuickBooks formats or API entities. See page 16.
Opening Balances	A cutoff-date starting position rather than detailed history. See page 6.

A safe migration sequence

1. Choose a cutoff date and retain a complete archive of the old system, including attachments, tax records and reports. Use a test company first.
2. Export the chart of accounts and general ledger/journals in the source's supported layout. Export a **Trial Balance** too if available, for the matching period/cutoff.
3. Open **Migrate Data**, choose the source, and upload the required files together. Check filenames identify chart/accounts, ledger/journal/transactions, and trial balance as applicable.
4. Run **Dry Run**. Read errors, warnings, counts and account mappings. Import only after it passes and you have a backup.
5. Separately import supported customer/vendor/item lists when needed. Compare reports, bank balances and outstanding customer/vendor detail against the original system. Record any gaps before going live.

For Wave users: the migration reads exported accounts and ledger information. It does not automatically bring over every invoice, bill, payment relationship, attachment or setting. Combining migration with contact/item CSV imports helps, but still does not guarantee a complete transfer.

What is a trial balance? A report listing each ledger account's debit or credit balance. It is not just the cash balance, and you do not enter new money into Wave to make one. Export the report from the old system for comparison. Equal total debits and credits do not, on their own, prove every record transferred correctly.

CSV contact and item imports

Use this for reusable lists. A CSV file is a spreadsheet-like text file; it is not a full company backup.

1. Keep the original export unchanged. In a copy, arrange columns to match the supported header names below; capitalization matters.
2. Open **CSV Import/Export**, choose the import type (customers, vendors, or items), and select the prepared file.
3. Try a small file in a test company first. Review the import result and any skipped/error rows.
4. Inspect several imported records, including names with punctuation and records with optional fields. Then import the verified full list into the intended company after making a backup.

Record type	Accepted column headers
Customers / Vendors	Name (required) Company, Email, Phone, Address, City, State, ZIP, Terms
Items	Name (required) Type, Description, Rate, Cost

Prepare the values

For item **Type**, use product, service, material, or labor. Unrecognized types fall back to service, so inspect this column before importing. **Rate** is the sales rate; **Cost** is the cost value. An item list import is not a substitute for establishing inventory quantities or historical inventory transactions.

For customers and vendors, Terms defaults to Net 30 if not supplied. Use a plain numeric value for rates/costs and preserve postal codes and phone numbers as text in your spreadsheet. Save a CSV copy, not an Excel workbook renamed with a .csv extension.

Duplicates and missing records

Existing exact-name matches are skipped rather than updated. This protects against some duplicate imports, but a spelling variation may still make a new record. If you intended to update an existing customer's email, edit the record instead of expecting an import to overwrite it.

Export and import are not symmetrical. The app can export more record types than this screen can import. Do not assume an invoice CSV export can be fed back in as invoices, or that list imports recreate balances, payments or attachments.

QuickBooks connections

These are two different paths. Pick the one that matches QuickBooks Desktop or QuickBooks Online.

QuickBooks Files: files from Desktop

1. Export supported IIF lists from QuickBooks Desktop and retain your original company backup. Transaction exports may require a suitable additional export tool.
2. In **QuickBooks Files**, select the relevant import workflow and validate the file before importing. Import lists first so referenced accounts, customers, vendors and items can be found.
3. Import supported transactions in a test company, review results, and compare reports before repeating the approved process in your live company.

Supported IIF transaction types include invoices, payments, cash sales, estimates, bills and deposits. A cash sale is represented as a paid invoice plus a payment. Report CSV support is limited to specific layouts such as Deposit Detail, Check Detail and Transaction Detail filtered for Sales Receipts; it is not a general-purpose QuickBooks CSV reader.

QuickBooks Online: a configured API connection

This connection already supports an Intuit sign-in/authorization flow. It requires valid Intuit application credentials, environment selection and a matching redirect URI configured in **Settings > QuickBooks Online**. Have your integration administrator configure and test these first; sandbox credentials are not a live-business connection.

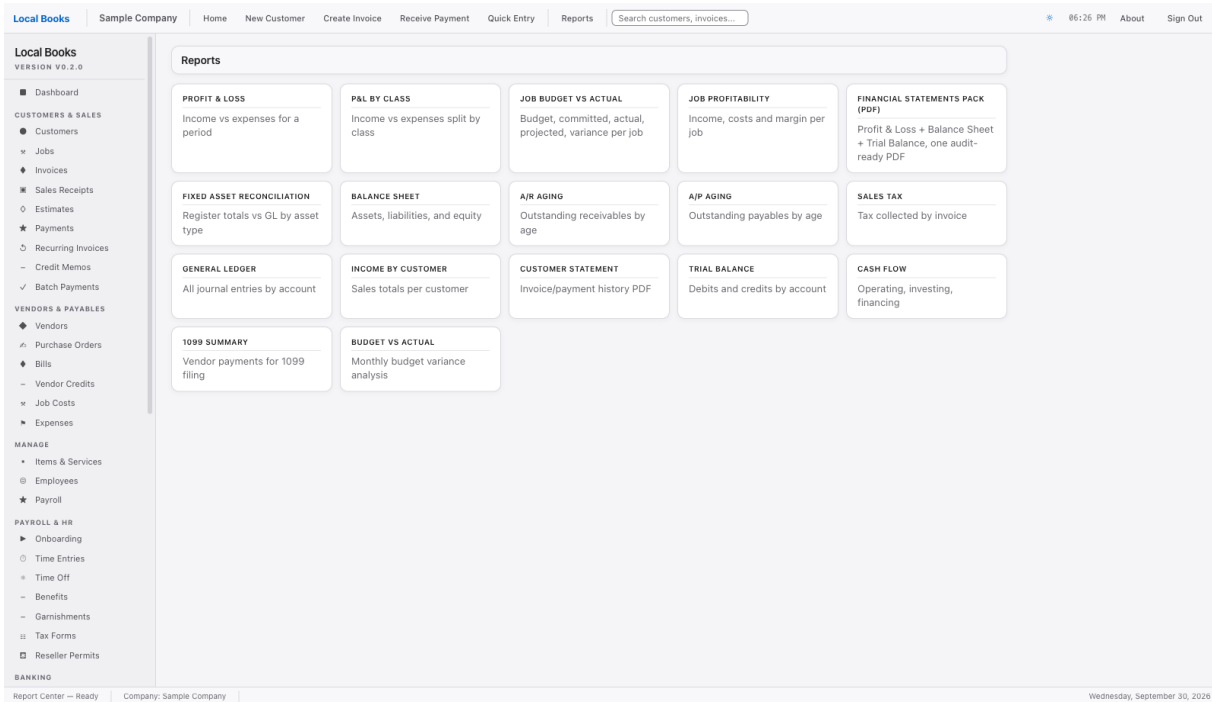
1. Once configured, open **QuickBooks Online** and choose **Connect to QuickBooks**. Sign in with the authorized Intuit account and select the intended company.
2. Choose the supported entities to import or export and review the direction carefully. **Export to QuickBooks Online** writes into that external company.
3. Inspect results, mappings and balances before repeating a sync or transferring more data. Use a backup and a small test first.

"Import All Data" means all supported entities, not everything in the source account. The implemented import covers accounts, customers, vendors, items, invoices, payments and sales receipts. Do not assume payroll, every bill, attachments or all settings migrate through this connection.

The QuickBooks connection is separate from AI provider sign-in. Its presence does not mean AI subscription OAuth or a remote accountant connection is already available.

Reports and month-end review

Use the same dates and reporting assumptions when comparing two reports or comparing Local Books with a previous system.



Open a report card, choose its period or as-of date, and use the available PDF/CSV controls to keep or share a copy.

Report	Question it answers
Profit & Loss	What income and expenses were recorded over this period?
Balance Sheet	What are the assets, liabilities and equity as of this date?
A/R or A/P Aging	Who owes you, or whom do you owe, and how old are those balances?
Trial Balance / General Ledger	What is each account's balance, and which entries explain it?
Cash Flow / Sales Tax	How did cash move, or what sales-tax activity was recorded?

Monthly routine: finish bank review; reconcile bank/card statements; review overdue invoices and bills; inspect unusual account balances; compare P&L and Balance Sheet; save a Financial Statements Pack; create an off-device backup; then consider a closing date with your accountant.

Tax Reports, Schedule C mappings and 1099 summaries are preparation aids. Review classifications, dates and completeness; producing a report is not the same as filing or paying tax.

Analytics and optional AI

The normal Analytics dashboard uses your accounting data. Optional AI sends a financial snapshot or question to the provider you configure.

Use analytics without AI

Open **Analytics & AI**. Review the available measures, trend information and forecasts; refresh or export as needed. Forecasts are estimates, not guaranteed future bank balances. You do not need an AI key for ordinary bookkeeping and reports.

Set up an AI provider

1. Create an API credential with the provider you intend to use. Review its data handling and billing terms. A consumer chat subscription does not automatically supply API access.
2. Open **Settings > AI Insights**. Choose the Provider and Model, then enter the **API Key / Shared Secret**. Supply any provider-specific fields shown.
3. Use **Test**, resolve any reported error, then **Save**. Confirm the saved-key indicator. Leaving the key field blank keeps an existing stored key; Remove deletes it.
4. Return to Analytics and select **AI Insights** when you want analysis. Check its conclusions against the underlying reports before acting.

Available connection choices

The provider choices include xAI Grok, Groq, Cloudflare Workers AI, Anthropic Claude, OpenAI, Google Gemini, a Cloudflare Worker gateway, and a custom OpenAI-compatible endpoint. Model availability and API charges depend on the provider. Cloudflare and gateway options require additional account or endpoint configuration.

Not included in this release: AI subscription OAuth sign-in and direct local-model support. The custom endpoint requires public HTTPS and rejects localhost/private-network addresses. It cannot currently point straight to a model running on your computer or LAN.

Privacy and judgment

The stored key is encrypted, but selected data must still leave the machine for a cloud provider to analyze it. Use AI only when you are authorized to share that information. Insights are requested on demand, not an always-running local model. Do not treat generated explanations as verified accounting or tax advice.

Jobs, inventory and fixed assets

These modules add detail to your normal books. Start with a small test and have the account setup reviewed before posting live activity.

Jobs and job costing

1. Create the customer first, then its job in **Jobs**. Set up the job's budget and identifying details.
2. Assign the job on related sales and purchase documents. Use configured cost codes/types and time or equipment information where applicable.
3. Review **Job Costs**, Job Profitability and Job Budget vs Actual. Missing job tags leave costs outside the intended job report even if the general ledger total is correct.

Inventory

Review product setup under **Items & Services**, including inventory-related accounts, quantity/cost setup and reorder information where available. The inventory engine uses weighted-average cost and posts cost of goods sold from inventory activity. A product name and sales price alone are not a complete stock setup.

Compare physical stock with inventory records regularly. Investigate wrong quantities, duplicate receipts, and incorrect starting costs before making a supported adjustment. Keep purchase and sale dates consistent; do not replace a stock correction with an unexplained general journal.

Fixed assets

1. Use **Fixed Assets** for long-lived equipment and similar assets rather than treating every purchase as an ordinary expense.
2. Review acquisition date, cost, useful life, method and account mappings with your accountant. Record the asset and approved depreciation information.
3. Use the module's depreciation/disposal workflow as appropriate. Compare the **Fixed Asset Reconciliation** report with the general ledger.

Budgets and classes

Budgets supplies planned amounts for comparison with actual activity. Classes provide a way to group activity, and **P&L by Class** helps review those groups. Set a consistent tagging policy so unassigned activity does not make comparisons misleading.

A forecast, budget, purchase order and posted transaction do different jobs. A budget or purchase order is not proof that money has been earned, spent or received.

Payroll, HR and nonprofit use

Optional specialist workflows are available, but they require more setup and review than basic invoicing.

Payroll and HR: before the first live run

1. Have your payroll professional verify current federal/state requirements, employee classifications, tax elections, opening year-to-date amounts, pay rates, deductions and company tax details.
2. Create employee records and review onboarding, time entries, benefits, garnishments and time-off settings as needed. Protect bank details and employee portal access tokens.
3. Review a test payroll calculation before a live run. Check gross pay, deductions, taxes, net pay and the accounts receiving the posting.
4. Save and review pay stubs and payroll reports. Independently confirm that actual payments, tax deposits and required filings are completed.

Important payroll limit: the project describes tax calculations as approximate. The presence of W-2, W-3, 940 or 941 output, or a payment/export feature, is not a guarantee of current tax compliance, accepted filing, or funds delivery. Use professional verification before relying on payroll.

Nonprofit organizations

Choose **Settings > Company Type > Nonprofit**. The interface uses terms such as Donor, Pledge, Donation, Fund and Grant. Reports include Statement of Activities, Statement of Financial Position, Fund Balances and Statement of Functional Expenses.

1. Define funds and any donor restrictions, and assign activity consistently. Review program, management and fundraising function assignments.
2. Record donations, pledge payments and in-kind gifts using the appropriate workflows. Review acknowledgment wording and any goods/services benefit rather than assuming every receipt is fully deductible.
3. Use releases from restriction and functional allocations only when supported by your records and accounting policy. Review fund balances and unassigned costs.
4. Prepare giving statements and acknowledgments after checking donor names, dates, amounts and delivery preferences.

Changing Company Type changes presentation and enables nonprofit workflows; it is not a migration or an automatic correction of prior fund accounting.

Email, online payments and integrations

These optional connections require their own setup. They are not automatically activated by installing Local Books.

Send documents by email

In **Settings > Email (SMTP)**, enter your mail provider's server, port, username, password or approved mail credential, sender details and security settings. Use your provider's instructions. Review the editable Email Templates and send a test document to yourself before contacting customers.

Without SMTP setup, you can still save a PDF and attach it using your normal email application. If delivery fails, check the recipient, credentials, spam folder and provider restrictions; do not assume the invoice was received because it was saved.

Online payment providers

Settings > Online Payments contains payment-provider configuration, including Stripe, PayPal and Square support. These require the relevant merchant account and credentials. Confirm test versus live mode, account ownership, fees and provider-specific setup before sending a payment request.

Hosted checkout keeps card entry with the processor. A payment link and reliable automatic payment confirmation are different pieces: public callback/webhook delivery may require an appropriately hosted, secured endpoint. A desktop-only installation should not be assumed to receive internet callbacks. Confirm the supported desktop recording/reconciliation workflow with your payment integration administrator.

API tokens for another application

An administrator can use **Settings > API Tokens** to create a labeled token with an appropriate role. Copy the full token when it is shown; it is shown only once. Give each integration its own token, use the least privilege it needs, and revoke it when no longer required.

An API token is not a remote connection by itself. A web-based accountant portal cannot reach a desktop app at localhost from the cloud. It needs a separately designed secure bridge or hosted deployment, client authorization and access controls. Do not expose the app by forwarding a router port as a shortcut.

Bookkeeper and read-only roles are distinct from administrator access. Use read-only where an integration only needs to retrieve reports. Never put tokens in a public document, source repository, screenshot or support email.

Backups, recovery and privacy

Your company data is separate from the application. Keep backups somewhere other than the computer that holds your live books.

Create and keep a database backup

1. Open the intended company. Go to **Settings > Backup / Restore** and choose **Create Backup**.
2. Find the new entry in the list and select **Download**. Confirm the file actually saved and note its location.
3. Keep dated copies on protected external or off-device storage. Back up before imports, updates, major corrections and period close. Encrypt off-device copies and restrict access.

A database snapshot is not the entire environment. Uploaded receipts/logos/attachments and encryption settings are separate. For a complete desktop recovery set, close the app and preserve the full LocalBooks folder below, including its hidden .env configuration and data subfolder. Keep encryption secrets private. A downloaded .db alone does not include these files.

Install	Full recovery folder (contains data and configuration)
macOS	~/Library/Application Support/LocalBooks/
Windows	%LOCALAPPDATA%\LocalBooks\
Windows Server Edition	C:\ProgramData\LocalBooks (administrator-managed)

Restore or move to another machine

Despite its heading, the current Settings screen offers Create Backup and Download, **not a Restore button**. Recovery requires administrator-assisted restoration. First preserve the current data and identify the correct company and backup date. Restoring replaces data; it is not a merge and can discard work entered after the backup.

Have the administrator use the supported restore procedure for the database type and preserve associated uploads and encryption keys. Test recovery in a separate safe location before depending on it. Do not paste a backup over an open database or substitute a PostgreSQL backup for a desktop SQLite file.

Protect the computer too

Use an OS login, disk encryption, updated security software and screen locking. Encrypted integration secrets do not mean the entire company database is encrypted. App uninstall/reinstall is not a backup, and signing the app is not a guarantee about the safety of your financial data.

Small-office and technical deployments

For most users, the desktop installer is the simplest option. An administrator should configure these alternatives, including access, security and recovery.

Windows Server Edition

One Windows computer can host the books while other office computers connect with a browser. The host must remain running and reachable. This is not automatically enabled just because several people have installed desktop copies.

1. Have an administrator configure the bundled Server Edition launch/startup and firewall setup on the chosen host. If moving existing books, verify the copied data and encryption keys before use.
2. The administrator supplies the connection address. Use it only over the appropriately secured office connection; do not independently create router port forwarding.
3. In **Settings > Users**, give each person their own login and role. Use administrator only where required, bookkeeper for daily work, and read-only for review.
4. Confirm backups, update responsibility, availability and a tested recovery process. Update the host, not separate copies of the company on each client.

The basic LAN mode serves plain HTTP. It is not an internet-ready secure hosting service. Remote or sensitive deployments need administrator-designed transport protection, authentication and access controls. Payroll/HR details and administration functions are restricted beyond ordinary bookkeeping roles.

Linux, Docker and Intel Mac alternatives

The source archive is a technical distribution, not a native Linux or Intel Mac installer. An administrator can extract it and use the included Docker Compose or native setup instructions. Docker uses PostgreSQL rather than the desktop company-file database.

Required work includes supported runtime dependencies, a non-default encryption secret, persistent database and uploads storage, migrations, backup configuration and network security. Retain the included installation documentation with that deployment. Do not run destructive volume-removal commands when trying to stop or update the service.

Do not open one live SQLite company file from a shared sync folder on several computers. Use one intentionally configured server or work from separate verified copies for testing. A cloud-synced folder is not a substitute for a multi-user database service.

Troubleshooting and glossary

Start by noting the app version, operating system, active company, exact action and complete error message. Never include passwords or financial records unnecessarily.

Problem	First safe check
App is listed twice	Check whether one is a mounted installer, shortcut, or separate app location. Keep the intended installed copy; preserve all data.
Saved PDF/CSV is missing	Read the save notification and use Show in folder if offered. Windows folder protection may cause a fallback into the app's data/Reports folder.
Bank/card is absent from a picker	Check Bank/Credit card kind on the chart account and the bank-feed mapping.
Import fails or looks incomplete	Confirm file layout, required headers and supported entities; read Dry Run and row errors. Do not retry blindly into live books.
AI connection fails	Check provider, model, API permission/billing and required fields. A local HTTP endpoint is not supported.
Receipt scanning fails	Try a clear supported image/PDF and inspect scanning status in Settings. Linux may need additional OCR tools.
App will not open	Preserve data and collect launcher.log from the desktop data folder. Request technical assistance and include the error message.

Plain-language glossary

A/R (receivables): money customers owe you. **A/P (payables):** money you owe suppliers. **Ledger:** the posted accounting record. **Trial balance:** balances of all ledger accounts, with debit and credit totals. **Reconcile:** compare your books with an external statement. **Match:** link a bank line to an existing entry. **Void:** reverse a posting while preserving history. **Opening balance:** the starting amount at a chosen cutoff. **API token:** a credential allowing another program authorized access.

When to ask for help

Stop and seek assistance before restoring over live data, altering a reconciled period, repeating a failed migration, or relying on unverified payroll/tax output. When requesting help, include a redacted screenshot and the error text; provide financial data only through an agreed secure channel.

Keep this guide with the installer and retain the included license/notices.

Accounting controls, tax support & data protection

Local Books includes tools to support organized records, accountable bookkeeping and careful handling of sensitive information.

Built-in capability	What it means for you
Double-entry accounting	Sales, purchases and other supported postings create balanced journal entries. Protected control accounts help keep automatic posting consistent.
Review and period controls	Bank reconciliation compares the ledger with statements. Closing dates restrict changes to earlier activity. The Audit Log records application changes and identifies the user where available.
Tax preparation support	Payroll calculations, W-2/W-3/940/941 reference reports, sales-tax reporting, Schedule C mappings and vendor 1099 summaries help organize tax information.
Traceable tax reports	Generated payroll tax PDFs include an audit ID and a SHA-256 hash of the underlying report data. The stored audit record supports comparison and review; the hash is not a signature over the entire PDF file.
Sensitive-data protections	Employee bank details and stored AI credentials use field-level encryption. Passwords are hashed. User roles and protected employee portal access help limit access.
Local data and recoverability	Desktop company records remain on your computer. Database backups, separate uploads/configuration backups and optional exports support recovery and record retention.

Use these safeguards as part of your normal routine

Reconcile accounts, keep supporting documents, review the Audit Log, limit administrator access and test backups. Protect the computer with disk encryption and a strong login. Optional bank, email, payment and AI services involve external providers; a local app does not make those connections offline.

Tax responsibilities and assurance

These features support your accounting process; they do not certify the app or your business as IRS-approved or compliant with every tax rule. The app labels tax forms as reference outputs and its documentation calls for professional verification of calculations. Confirm current tax-year rules, state/local requirements, actual filing acceptance and tax payments separately. A saved PDF is not a filed return.

The IRS permits recordkeeping systems that clearly show income and expenses, and employers generally remain responsible for their employment-tax duties. Keep a retention policy suited to the records and applicable rules.

Official references: [IRS Recordkeeping](#); [Publication 15, Employer's Tax Guide](#). Reviewed September 19, 2026. Product capabilities checked against Local Books documentation and relevant implementation; no independent compliance certification is asserted.