TAXSTACHE

The Big Book of Missing Money

125+ Hidden Deductions Your Accountant Might Miss (2026 Edition)

Why We Wrote This

The US Tax Code is not written for you. It is written for people who enjoy reading the terms and conditions on iTunes updates.

But 2025 was a weird year. Congress passed the "One Big Beautiful Bill Act" (OBBBA), which sounds like a prank but is actually the law. It changed the rules. It brought back huge deductions we thought were dead and invented new ones that sound too good to be true.

We read the thousands of pages so you don't have to. We found over 125 places where you might be leaving money on the table.

How to use this list:

- Skim the bold text. That's the money.
- Check the "OBBBA" section first. These are brand new for the tax returns you file in 2026.
- Don't panic. If you missed something last year, you can usually amend your return.

Let's go find your money.

01 The New "OBBBA" Drops

These rules literally did not exist a year ago. If your accountant is operating on auto-pilot, they will miss these. Force them to look.

1. **THE "NO TAX ON TIPS" DEDUCTION.**

   If you work in a service job (waiter, bartender, barber), you can now deduct 100% of your tips from your taxable income, up to $25,000. The Catch: It starts to fade away if you make over $150,000.

2. **THE "NO TAX ON OVERTIME" DEDUCTION.**

   If you burned the midnight oil and got paid time-and-a-half, that extra money is now deductible. You can knock off up to $12,500 (Single) or $25,000 (Married) of overtime pay.

3. **THE CAR LOAN INTEREST WRITE-OFF.**

   Did you buy a new car in 2025? You can deduct the interest on your car loan, up to $10,000 of interest per year. The Catch: The car must be assembled in the U.S. and you can't make over $100,000 (Single).

4. **THE SENIOR BONUS.**

   If you are 65 or older, you get an extra $6,000 deduction on top of the standard deduction. If you are married and both 65+, that's $12,000 off the top.

5. **THE SALT CAP HIKE.**

   Remember when they capped your State and Local Tax deduction at $10,000 and everyone in California and New York cried? The cap is now $40,000 for 2025.

6. **TRUMP ACCOUNTS FOR KIDS.**

   If you had a baby in 2025, the government might put $1,000 into a new savings account for them. You can also contribute tax-free.

01 The New "OBBBA" Drops (CONT.)

7. **100% BONUS DEPRECIATION.**

It's back. If you bought machinery, equipment, or furniture after Jan. 19, 2025, you can write off the entire cost immediately. No waiting years to get your money back.

8. **IMMEDIATE R&D EXPENSING.**

If your business spent money inventing something new (in the U.S.), you can deduct that cost immediately. You don't have to spread it out over five years anymore.

02 The Freelancer's Goldmine

If you are a freelancer, gig worker, or run a business, the IRS essentially expects you to be a wizard. Here are the spells.

9. **THE 1099-K THRESHOLD RESET.**

The law changed again. You will ONLY receive a Form 1099-K from Venmo/PayPal/Etsy if you received over $20,000 AND had more than 200 transactions. If you sold a couch for $600, the IRS doesn't want to hear about it.

10. **SIMPLIFIED HOME OFFICE.**

Deduct $5 per square foot of your home office (up to 300 sqare feet). No math required.

11. **ACTUAL HOME EXPENSES.**

Deduct a percentage of your rent or mortgage interest based on how big your office is.

12. **UTILITIES.**

Electricity, gas, and water. (Business % only. Don't deduct your hot tub heating bill).

13. **HOME INSURANCE.**

Renter's or homeowner's insurance (Business %).

02 The Freelancer's Goldmine (CONT.)

14. **HOA FEES.**
    Yes, even the fees you pay to the neighborhood committee can be partially deducted.
15. **REPAIRS.**
    Did you fix the window in your office? That's 100% deductible.
16. **CLEANING SERVICES.**
    If you pay a cleaner, the portion of time they spend cleaning your office counts.
17. **STANDARD MILEAGE RATE.**
    For 2025, you can deduct 70 cents for every business mile you drove.
18. **PARKING FEES.**
    Parking at a client's office? Deductible.
19. **TOLLS.**
    Toll roads on the way to a gig? Deductible.
20. **CAR WASH.**
    If you use the "Actual Expense" method, keeping the business car clean counts.
21. **REGISTRATION FEES.**
    The tax you pay to get your sticker tags.
22. **LOAN INTEREST (BUSINESS).**
    Interest on a business vehicle loan is fully deductible (unlike personal cars).
23. **BUSINESS MEALS.**
    You can deduct 50% of the cost of meals with clients.
24. **HOTELS & AIRBNBS.**
    100% deductible on business trips.
25. **AIRFARE & TRAINS.**
    100% deductible.
26. **BAGGAGE FEES.**
    Those annoying $35 fees? Write them off.

02 The Freelancer's Goldmine (CONT.)

27. **LAUNDRY ON THE ROAD.**
Dry cleaning while on a business trip is deductible.

28. **PASSPORTS.**
If you need it for a specific business trip, you can expense it.

29. **WEBSITE HOSTING.**
Squarespace, Wix, GoDaddy fees.

30. **DOMAIN NAMES.**
That cool URL you bought and never used? Deductible.

31. **ADVERTISING.**
Facebook ads, Google ads, billboards.

32. **BUSINESS CARDS.**
People still use them, and the IRS still lets you deduct them.

33. **SOFTWARE SUBSCRIPTIONS.**
Adobe Creative Cloud, Zoom, Microsoft Office, Canopy.

34. **CELL PHONE BILL.**
The percentage you use for business is deductible.

35. **INTERNET BILL.**
Same deal. Business percentage only.

03 Medical Expenses

You can only claim these if you itemize and your total medical costs are over 7.5% of your income. But if you had a big surgery year, stack these up.

36. **HEALTH INSURANCE PREMIUMS.**
(If you pay them yourself post-tax).

37. **LONG-TERM CARE INSURANCE.**
Deductible up to age limits. If you're over 70, you can deduct up to $6,020.

03 Medical Expenses (CONT.)

38. **DOCTORS & SURGEONS.**
    Obviously.
39. **DENTISTS.**
    Fillings, root canals, extractions.
40. **FALSE TEETH.**
    Dentures are deductible.
41. **HEARING AIDS & COCHLEAR IMPLANTS**
    Including the batteries and medical visits/treatment.
42. **EYEGLASSES.**
    Frames and prescription lenses.
43. **CONTACT LENSES.**
    Including the saline solution.
44. **LASER EYE SURGERY.**
    LASIK is deductible.
45. **CRUTCHES & WHEELCHAIRS.**
    Buying or renting.
46. **GUIDE DOGS.**
    Buying, training, and feeding them.
47. **ACUPUNCTURE.**
    If used for a medical condition.
48. **CHIROPRACTORS.**
    If you need adjustments or treatment.
49. **PSYCHOLOGISTS & PSYCHIATRISTS.**
    Mental health is health.
50. **DRUG ADDICTION TREATMENT.**
    Inpatient care and meals.
51. **SMOKING CESSATION PROGRAMS.**
    But not the patch (unless prescribed).
52. **WEIGHT LOSS PROGRAMS.**
    If prescribed by a doctor for a specific disease (like obesity).

03 Medical Expenses

(CONT.)

53.**PRESCRIPTION DRUGS.**

Including insulin.

54.**MEDICAL MILES.**

Driving to the doctor? Deduct 21 cents per mile.

55.**LODGING FOR CARE.**

Up to $50 per night if you have to travel for care.

56.**HOME IMPROVEMENTS.**

Ramps, widening doors, support bars (cost minus the increase in home value).

57.**BRAILLE BOOKS.**

The cost difference between regular books and Braille ones.

58.**PREGNANCY TEST KITS.**

Deductible.

59.**VASECTOMIES.**

Fully deductible.

60.**FERTILITY TREATMENTS.**

Including IVF and surgery.

61.**BREAST PUMPS.**

Lactation supplies are medical care.

62.**WIGS.**

If a doctor prescribes it for hair loss due to disease.

63.**OXYGEN EQUIPMENT.**

Tanks and CPAP machines.

04 The “Standard Human” Stash

Deductions for regular people just trying to survive.

64. **EDUCATOR EXPENSES.**
Are you a teacher? You can deduct $300 for supplies you bought (now includes coaches, too!).

65. **STUDENT LOAN INTEREST.**
Deduct up to $2,500 of interest paid, even if you don't itemize.

66. **EMPLOYER STUDENT LOAN PAYMENTS.**
Your boss can pay $5,250 of your student loans tax-free.

67. **ADOPTION CREDIT.**
Up to $17,280 per child. And now, $5,000 of that is refundable cash.

68. **CHILD TAX CREDIT.**
Permanently set at $2,200 per kid.

69. **DEPENDENT CARE FSA.**
You can stash away $7,500 pre-tax for daycare (up from $5,000).

70. **MORTGAGE INTEREST.**
Deduct interest on up to $750,000 of home debt.

71. **MORTGAGE INSURANCE PREMIUMS.**
If you pay PMI, that is deductible again!

72. **STATE & LOCAL TAXES (SALT).**
Property taxes + income taxes. (Remember, cap is now $40,000).

73. **SALES TAX.**
You can deduct sales tax instead of income tax (huge for TX, FL, WA, and TN residents).

74. **GAMBLING LOSSES.**
You can deduct losses up to the amount of your winnings. The new law limits this to 90% of losses starting in 2026.

75. **CHARITABLE CASH DONATIONS.**
Deduct up to 60% of your income.

76. **CHARITABLE GOODS.**
The fair market value of the clothes you dropped at Goodwill.

04 The "Standard Human" Stash (CONT.)

77. **VOLUNTEER MILES.**
Driving for charity? Deduct 14 cents per mile.
78. **JURY DUTY PAY.**
If your employer made you hand over your jury pay, you can deduct it from your income.
79. **HSA CONTRIBUTIONS.**
Pre-tax savings for health. Limit is now $4,300 (Single).
80. **FOREIGN TAX CREDIT.**
Did you pay tax on foreign investments? Claim a credit so you don't pay twice.

05 The "That's Real?" Collection

Specific, niche, and bizarre deductions that are actually in the code.

81. **WHALING CAPTAIN EXPENSES.**
If you are an Indigenous whaling captain in Alaska, you can deduct up to $50,000 for boat repairs and gear. We are not making this up.
82. **MOVING EXPENSES (MILITARY ONLY).**
Only for active duty military with orders. Everyone else lost this deduction years ago.
83. **CLEAN FUEL REFUELING PROPERTY.**
If you installed an EV charger at your house before July 1, 2026, you get a credit of 30% of the cost (up to $1,000).
84. **REFORESTATION COSTS.**
Planting trees for timber? Deduct up to $10,000.

05
The "That's Real?" Collection (CONT.)

85. **DISABLED ACCESS CREDIT.**
Small businesses can get a credit for removing barriers (like installing a ramp).

86. **PONZI SCHEME LOSSES.**
If you lost money to a fraudster, special theft loss rules apply.

87. **CLARINET LESSONS.**
Deductible if prescribed to treat teeth alignment issues (yes, this was an actual Tax Court case).

88. **BODY SCANS.**
Those full-body preventative scans? Deductible medical expense.

89. **LEAD PAINT REMOVAL.**
If you remove it for the safety of a child who has lead poisoning, it's a medical expense.

90. **SWIMMING POOL MAINTENANCE.**
Only if the pool is prescribed by a doctor as medical therapy and not used for recreation (good luck proving that).

91. **BREAST RECONSTRUCTION.**
Surgery after a mastectomy is a deductible medical expense.

92. **SPECIAL EDUCATION.**
Tuition for a school designed for a child with disabilities (if recommended by a doctor).

93. **CONFERENCE FEES.**
If you go to a conference related to your business.

94. **UNION DUES.**
Self-employed/contractor only. W-2 employees can't claim this anymore.

95. **PROFESSIONAL JOURNALS.**
Trade magazines related to your field.

96. **UNIFORMS.**
Only if they are not suitable for everyday wear (e.g., scrubs, theatrical costumes).

97. **SAFETY GEAR.** Hard hats, steel-toed boots.

06 The Rapid-Fire Business 30

These are a handful of Schedule C classics for your business.

98. **Accounting Fees.** Paying your CPA.
99. **Legal Fees.** Paying your lawyer for business matters.
100. **Bank Fees.** Monthly service charges.
101. **Merchant Fees.** Stripe/PayPal processing fees.
102. **Interest on Business Credit Cards.**
103. **Postage.** Stamps and FedEx.
104. **Printing.** Ink and paper.
105. **Office Furniture.** Desks and chairs.
106. **Office Decor.** That rug that ties the room together.
107. **Coffee & Water.** For the office.
108. **Client Gifts.** Up to $25 per client per year.
109. **Contract Labor.** Paying freelancers.
110. **Wages.** Paying employees.
111. **Payroll Taxes.** The employer portion of Social Security/Medicare.
112. **Employee Benefits.** Health insurance for staff.
113. **Company Parties.** 100% deductible for employee morale.
114. **Education.** Classes to maintain your skills.
115. **Certifications.** Professional license fees.
116. **Malpractice Insurance.**
117. **Liability Insurance.**
118. **Start-up Costs.** Deduct up to $5,000 in your first year.
119. **Research Costs.** Developing new products.
120. **Bad Debts.** If a client never paid you.
121. **Moving Machinery.** Costs to move equipment.
122. **Freight.** Shipping costs for inventory.
123. **Cost of Goods Sold.** The raw materials for your product.
124. **Advertising.** Facebook ads, billboards, and sign twirling.
125. **Rent & Leases.** The cost of renting your office space.
126. **Repairs & Maintenance.** Just repairs, not total renovations.
127. **Commissions.** Money you paid someone to sell your stuff.
128. **Business Licenses.** State fees for existing as a business.

***Disclaimer**: We are tax-savvy writers who know our stuff, but we do not replace your lawyer. The "OBBBA" is huge and complex. Before you try to deduct a whaling boat or a swimming pool, please talk to a qualified tax professional.*


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