



# Doctor, specialist and other medical professionals - income and work-related deductions

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- <https://www.ato.gov.au/Individuals/Income-and-deductions/In-detail/Occupation-and-industry-specific-guides/Doctor,-specialist-and-other-medical-professionals---income-and-work-related-deductions/> (<https://www.ato.gov.au/Individuals/Income-and-deductions/In-detail/Occupation-and-industry-specific-guides/Doctor,-specialist-and-other-medical-professionals---income-and-work-related-deductions/>).
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## Doctor, specialist or other medical professionals – income and work-related deductions

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If you earn your income as a doctor, specialist or other medical professional, this information will help you to work out what:

- income and allowances to report
- you can and can't claim as a work-related deduction
- records you need to keep.

### **Find out about doctor, specialist and other medical professionals':**

- [Income – salary and allowances](#)
- [Deductions](#)
- [Record keeping](#)

## Income – salary and allowances

Your employer will provide either an income statement or a payment summary that shows all your salary, wages and allowances for the financial year.

Include all of the income you received during the financial year in your tax return, regardless of when you earned it, including:

- salary and wages
- allowances

Don't include reimbursements.

## Salary and wages

You must include your salary and wages as income in your tax return. Include any bonuses.

### See also:

- [Employment income \(/individuals/income-and-deductions/income-you-must-declare/employment-income/\)](#).

## Allowances

Include all allowances shown on your income statement or payment summary as income in your tax return.

You may receive an allowance to:

- compensate you for an aspect of your work, for example, carrying out unpleasant tasks
- help you to pay for certain expenses such as meals when you're travelling.

If your employer pays you:

- an amount based on an estimate of what you might spend, such as paying cents per kilometre if you use your car for work, then it's an allowance
- for the actual amount of the expense (either before or after you incur the expense), such as paying for the petrol you use if you use your car for work, it's a reimbursement.

## Allowances on your income statement or payment summary

You may receive allowances:

- for work that may be unpleasant, special or dangerous
- in recognition of holding special skills, such as a first-aid certificate
- to compensate for industry peculiarities, such as working on public holidays or a rostered day off.

These payments don't cover you for expenses you might incur. Include these allowances as income in your tax return.

If you receive an allowance from your employer, you aren't always entitled to a deduction – it depends on the situation, see [Deductions](#).

## Allowances not on your income statement or payment summary

Your employer may not include some allowances on your income statement or payment summary. This can apply to travel allowances and overtime meal allowances paid under an industrial law, award or agreement. You can see these allowances on your payslips.

If the allowance isn't on your income statement or payment summary, and you:

- spent the whole amount on deductible expenses
  - don't include it as income in your tax return
  - you can't claim any deductions for these expenses
- spent more than your allowance
  - include the allowance as income in your tax return
  - claim a deduction for your expense, if you're eligible, see [Deductions](#).

### See also:

- [Allowances and other employment income \(/individuals/income-and-deductions/income-you-must-declare/employment-income/#Allowancesandotheremploymentincome1\)](#).
- [Employment income \(/individuals/income-and-deductions/income-you-must-declare/employment-income/\)](#).

## Reimbursements

If your employer pays you the exact amount for expenses you incur (either before or after you have incurred them), the payment is a reimbursement. We don't consider a reimbursement to be an allowance.

If you're reimbursed for expenses you incur:

- don't include the reimbursement as income in your tax return
- you can't claim a deduction for them.

### Find out about doctor, specialist and other medical professionals':

- [Deductions](#)
- [Record keeping](#)

# Deductions

- <https://www.ato.gov.au/Individuals/Income-and-deductions/In-detail/Occupation-and-industry-specific-guides/Doctor,-specialist-and-other-medical-professionals---income-and-work-related-deductions/?page=2> (<https://www.ato.gov.au/Individuals/Income-and-deductions/In-detail/Occupation-and-industry-specific-guides/Doctor,-specialist-and-other-medical-professionals---income-and-work-related-deductions/?page=2>).
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You may be able to claim deductions for your work-related expenses. Work-related expenses are expenses you incur on items used to earn your income as a doctor, specialist or other medical professional.

To claim a deduction for a work-related expense:

- you must have spent the money yourself and weren't reimbursed
- it must directly relate to earning your income
- you must have a record to prove it (usually a receipt).

You can only claim the work-related part of expenses. You can't claim a deduction for any part of the expense that relates to personal use.

You can use the [myDeductions \(/General/Online-services/ATO-app/myDeductions/\)](#) tool in the ATO app to help keep track of your work-related expenses. It's an easy way to capture information on-the-go and makes tax time quicker by uploading your deductions to your tax return. If you use a tax agent they can access your uploaded data through their practice management software or you can email a copy to them from the app.

For a summary of common deductions for doctors, specialists or other medical professionals, see [Doctor, specialist or other medical professional deductions \(PDF, 253KB\)](#).  
([/uploadedFiles/Content/IND/Downloads/doctors-specialist-or-other-medical-professional.pdf](#)).

For a detailed list to help you work out if your expense is deductible, and how much you can claim, see:

- A–F
  - [AMA or other medical professional association membership fees](#)
  - [Annual practising certificate fees](#)
  - [Car expenses](#)
  - [Child care](#)
  - [Clothing expenses \(including footwear\)](#)
  - [Driver's licence](#)
  - [Entertainment and social functions](#)

- Fines
- First aid courses
- G–O
  - Glasses, contact lenses and anti-glare glasses
  - Grooming
  - Laundry and maintenance
  - Meal and snack expenses
  - Overtime meal expenses
- P–S
  - Parking fees and tolls
  - Phone and internet expenses
  - Professional indemnity insurance
  - Repairs to tools and equipment
  - Self-education and study expenses
  - Self-education and study and training support loans
  - Seminars, conferences and training courses
- T–W
  - Technical or professional publications
  - Tools and equipment
  - Travel expenses
  - Watches and timepieces
  - Working from home

**See also:**

- [Employees guide for work expenses \(/law/view/document?DocID=SAV/EGWE/00001&PiT=99991231235958\).](#)

**Common expenses A–F**

- [https://www.ato.gov.au/Individuals/Income-and-deductions/In-detail/Occupation-and-industry-specific-guides/Doctor,-specialist-and-other-medical-professionals---income-and-work-related-deductions/?page=3 \(https://www.ato.gov.au/Individuals/Income-and-deductions/In-detail/Occupation-and-industry-specific-guides/Doctor,-specialist-and-other-medical-professionals---income-and-work-related-deductions/?page=3\).](#)
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Details on claiming common doctor, specialist or other medical professional expenses for:

- [AMA or other medical professional association membership fees](#)
- [Annual practising certificate fees](#)
- [Car expenses](#)
- [Child care](#)
- [Clothing expenses \(including footwear\)](#)
- [Driver's licence](#)
- [Entertainment and social functions](#)
- [Fines](#)
- [First aid courses](#)

### AMA or other medical professional association membership fees

You can claim a deduction for the cost of purchasing a membership with the Australian Medical Association (AMA) or other medical professional associations.

If the amount you paid is shown on your income statement or payment summary, you can use it to prove your claim.

#### See also:

- [Union fees, subscriptions to associations and bargaining agents fees \(/Individuals/Income-and-deductions/Deductions-you-can-claim/Other-work-related-deductions/Union-fees,-subscriptions-to-associations-and-bargaining-agents-fees/\)](#)

### Annual practising certificate fees

You can claim a deduction for the cost of renewing your annual practising certificate.

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#### Example: ongoing expense

Brenden needs an annual practicing certificate to work as a doctor. He can claim a deduction for the cost of renewing his practising certificate each year as he incurs the expense in earning his employment income.

### Car expenses

You can't claim a deduction for the normal trips between your home and work, even if you live a long way from your usual workplace or have to work outside normal business hours (for example, weekend or early morning shifts). These are private expenses.

In limited circumstances you can claim the cost of trips between home and work, such as where you carry bulky tools or equipment for work. You can claim a deduction for the cost of these trips if all of the following conditions are met:

- the tools or equipment are essential for the performance of your employment duties
- the equipment is bulky, meaning that because of its size or weight it is awkward to transport and can only be transported conveniently by motor vehicle
- there is no secure storage for such items at the workplace.

It will not be sufficient if you transport the tools or equipment merely as a matter of choice. For example, if your employer provides reasonably secure storage, your decision to transport items home will be a matter of choice.

You can claim a deduction for the cost of using a car you own, lease or hire (under a hire-purchase agreement) when you drive:

- between separate jobs on the same day – for example, travelling from the medical practice to your second job as a university lecturer
- to and from an alternate workplace for the same employer on the same day – for example, on your way into the hospital you stop off at a retirement home to complete your morning rounds.

To claim a deduction you must keep records of your car use. You can choose between the cents per kilometre method or the logbook method to calculate your deduction.

If you use the logbook method, you need to keep a valid logbook to help you determine the percentage of work-related use along with evidence of your car expenses.

If you use the cents per kilometre method, you need to provide a calculation of your work-related kilometres. You must be able to show that the kilometres travelled were work-related.

The [Work-related car expenses calculator \(/Calculators-and-tools/Work-related-car-expenses/\)](/Calculators-and-tools/Work-related-car-expenses/) helps calculate the amount you can claim as a deduction for car expenses.

If you own a motorcycle, or a vehicle with a carrying capacity of one tonne or more, or nine passengers or more you can deduct the actual expenses related to your work travel.

### See also:

- [Car expenses \(/individuals/income-and-deductions/Deductions-you-can-claim/Vehicle-and-travel-expenses/car-expenses/\)](/individuals/income-and-deductions/Deductions-you-can-claim/Vehicle-and-travel-expenses/car-expenses/).
- [Travel between home and work and between workplaces \(/individuals/income-and-deductions/deductions-you-can-claim/vehicle-and-travel-expenses/travel-between-home-and-work-and-between-workplaces/\)](/individuals/income-and-deductions/deductions-you-can-claim/vehicle-and-travel-expenses/travel-between-home-and-work-and-between-workplaces/).

## Child care

You can't claim a deduction for child care when you're working. It's a private expense.

## Clothing expenses (including footwear)

You can claim a deduction for the cost you incur when you buy, hire, repair or replace clothing, uniforms and footwear you wear at work if it's:

- protective
- occupation specific (and not a conventional, everyday piece of clothing)
- a compulsory uniform that identifies you as an employee of an organisation with a strictly enforced policy that makes it compulsory for you to wear the uniform while you're at work
- a non-compulsory uniform, if your employer has registered the design with AusIndustry.

Clothing in a specific colour or brand isn't enough to classify it as a uniform. For example, a shirt with the corporate logo on it that your employer strictly requires you to wear when you work is a compulsory uniform, so you can claim a deduction for buying and repairing it.

You can claim clothing and footwear that you wear to protect yourself from the risk of illness or injury posed by your income-earning activities or the environment in which you carry them out. To be considered protective, the items must provide a sufficient degree of protection against that risk, for example, non-slip shoes.

You can't claim a deduction for the cost of buying plain clothing, such as black trousers, plain shirts or black shoes worn at work, even if:

- you only wear it to work
- your employer tells you to wear it.

You can't claim a deduction if your employer buys, repairs or replaces your clothing.

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### Example: compulsory uniform with logo

Mike has to buy and wear shirts with his employer's company logo embroidered on it. As part of his uniform, he also has to wear black pants and black non-slip shoes.

Mike can claim a deduction for the cost of buying and laundering the shirts as they are:

- distinctive items with the employer's logo
- compulsory for him to wear at work.

Mike can also claim a deduction for the cost of his non-slip shoes as they are required for his safety and protection from slipping over while working.

However, he can't claim the cost of purchasing or cleaning his black pants as they are items of a conventional nature.



**See also:**

- Doctor, specialist or other medical professionals' [Laundry and maintenance](#)
- [Clothing, laundry and dry-cleaning expenses \(/Individuals/Income-and-deductions/Deductions-you-can-claim/Clothing,-laundry-and-dry-cleaning-expenses/\)](#).

## Driver's licence

You can't claim a deduction for obtaining or renewing your driver's licence, even if you must have it as a condition of employment. This is a private expense.

## Entertainment and social functions

You can't claim a deduction for the cost of any entertainment. This includes the cost of business lunches and attendance at sporting events, gala or social nights, concerts or other similar types of functions or events. This applies even if you discuss business matters at the occasion.

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### **Example: entertainment costs**

Rachael attends a social breakfast organised by the AMA. These breakfasts are held every other month to encourage medical professionals to meet socially with colleagues. Rachael isn't entitled to a deduction for the cost of attending the breakfast.

## Fines

You can't claim a deduction for any fines you get when you work. Fines may include parking and speeding fines.

## First aid courses

You can claim a deduction for the cost of first aid training courses if you, as a designated first aid person, are required to undertake first aid training to assist in emergency work situations.

You can't claim a deduction if your employer pays for or reimburses you for the cost of the course.

### **For more doctor, specialist or other medical professionals' expenses, see:**

- common expenses [G–O](#)
- common expenses [P–S](#)
- common expenses [T–W](#)

## Common expenses G–O

- <https://www.ato.gov.au/Individuals/Income-and-deductions/In-detail/Occupation-and-industry-specific-guides/Doctor,-specialist-and-other-medical-professionals---income-and-work-related-deductions/?page=4> (<https://www.ato.gov.au/Individuals/Income-and-deductions/In-detail/Occupation-and-industry-specific-guides/Doctor,-specialist-and-other-medical-professionals---income-and-work-related-deductions/?page=4>).
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Details on claiming common doctor, specialist or other medical professional expenses for:

- [Glasses, contact lenses and anti-glare glasses](#)
- [Grooming](#)
- [Laundry and maintenance](#)
- [Meal and snack expenses](#)
- [Overtime meal expenses](#)

### Glasses, contact lenses and anti-glare glasses

You can't claim a deduction for prescription glasses or contact lenses. These are private expenses.

#### See also:

- [Glasses, contact lenses and protective glasses \(/Individuals/Income-and-deductions/Deductions-you-can-claim/Other-work-related-deductions/Glasses,-contact-lenses-and-protective-glasses/\)](#).

### Grooming

You can't claim a deduction for hairdressing, cosmetics, or hair and skin care products, even though you may be paid an allowance for grooming and be expected to be well groomed. All grooming products are private expenses.

### Laundry and maintenance

You can claim a deduction for the cost of washing, drying and ironing clothing you wear at work if it's:

- protective
- occupation specific (and not a conventional, everyday piece of clothing)
- a uniform (non-compulsory registered with AusIndustry and compulsory).

This also includes laundromat and dry cleaning expenses.

If your laundry claim is \$150 or less, you don't need to keep records but you will still need to be able to explain how you calculated your claim. This isn't an automatic deduction.

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### **Example: work clothing laundered and maintained by employer**

Nathan is required to wear scrubs when consulting the hospital surgeon on the treatment of his patients. Nathan's scrubs are provided by the hospital and he leaves them in the used scrubs hamper when he changes back into his own clothes to leave the hospital.

As Nathan doesn't incur any costs for buying, maintaining or cleaning the scrubs he is required to wear, he can't claim a deduction.

### **See also:**

- Doctor, specialist or other medical professionals' [Clothing expenses \(including footwear\)](#).
- [Clothing, laundry and dry-cleaning expenses \(/Individuals/Income-and-deductions/Deductions-you-can-claim/Clothing,-laundry-and-dry-cleaning-expenses/\)](#).

### **Meal and snack expenses**

You can't claim a deduction for the cost of food, drink or snacks you consume in the course of your normal working hours, even if you receive a meal allowance. These are private expenses.

You may be able to claim a deduction for meals when you travel for work – see doctor, specialist or other medical professionals' [Travel expenses](#).

You may be able to claim a deduction for meals when you work overtime – see doctor, specialist or other medical professionals' [Overtime meal expenses](#).

### **Medical equipment**

You can claim a deduction for the cost of medical equipment and the cost of insurance for that equipment. For example, you can claim a deduction for the cost of stethoscopes and scales.

### **Overtime meal expenses**

You can claim a deduction for the cost of a meal you buy and eat when you work overtime, if you receive an overtime meal allowance under an industrial law, award or enterprise agreement and it's included in your assessable income.

You can't claim a deduction if your overtime meal allowance is rolled into your salary and wages and not included as a separate allowance on your income statement or payment summary.

You are generally required to get and keep written evidence, such as receipts, when you claim a deduction for overtime meal expenses. However, each year we set a reasonable amount you can claim for overtime meal expenses without receipts. If you received an overtime meal allowance, are claiming a deduction and spent:

- up to the reasonable amount, you don't have to get and keep receipts
- more than the reasonable amount, you must get and keep receipts for all your expenses.

In all cases, you need to be able to show:

- you spent the money
- how you calculated your claim.

### See also:

- [Overtime meals \(/Individuals/Income-and-deductions/Deductions-you-can-claim/Other-work-related-deductions/Overtime-meals/\)](#).
- [TD 2019/11 \(/law/view/document?DocID=TXD/TD201911/NAT/ATO/00001&PiT=20191127000000\)](#). *Income tax: what are the reasonable travel and overtime amounts for the 2019–20 income year?*

### For more doctor, specialist or other medical professionals' expenses, see:

- common expenses [A–F](#)
- common expenses [P–S](#)
- common expenses [T–W](#)

## Common expenses P–S

- <https://www.ato.gov.au/Individuals/Income-and-deductions/In-detail/Occupation-and-industry-specific-guides/Doctor,-specialist-and-other-medical-professionals---income-and-work-related-deductions/?page=5> (<https://www.ato.gov.au/Individuals/Income-and-deductions/In-detail/Occupation-and-industry-specific-guides/Doctor,-specialist-and-other-medical-professionals---income-and-work-related-deductions/?page=5>).
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Details on claiming common doctor, specialist or other medical professional expenses for:

- [Parking fees and tolls](#)
- [Phone and internet expenses](#)
- [Professional indemnity insurance](#)
- [Repairs to tools and equipment](#)

- Self-education and study expenses
- Self-education and study and training support loans
- Seminars, conferences and training courses

## Parking fees and tolls

You can claim a deduction for parking fees and tolls on work-related trips between two separate places of work.

You may not have to get and keep written evidence for these expenses if they are small or hard to get, for example, if you pay cash in a roadside parking meter.

You can't get a deduction for parking at or near a regular place of employment. This is a private expense.

## Phone and internet expenses

You can claim a deduction for the phone and internet costs associated with the work-related use of your own phone or electronic devices.

You need to keep records to show your work use if you claim more than \$50 on phone and internet expenses.

You can't claim a deduction if your employer provides you with a phone for work and pays for the usage, or if your employer reimburses you for the costs.

You can't claim a deduction for any phone calls to family and friends, even while travelling for work. This is because they aren't work-related calls.

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### Example: calculating phone expenses

Sebastian uses his mobile phone for work purposes. He is on a set plan of \$49 each month and rarely exceeds the plan cap.

He receives an itemised account from his phone provider each month that includes details of his individual calls.

At least once a year, Sebastian prints his account and highlights the work-related calls he made. He makes notes on his account for the first month about who he is calling for work, such as his manager and his patients.

Of the 300 calls he has made in a four-week period, Sebastian works out that 90 (30%) of the individual call expenses billed to him are for work. He applies that percentage to his cap amount of \$49 a month.

Sebastian calculates his calls for work purposes as follows:

- $\text{Total work calls} \div \text{Total number of calls} = \text{Work use percentage for calls}$   
 $(90 \div 300 = 30\%)$
- Sebastian can claim 30% of the total bill of \$49 for each month for work purposes  
 $(\$49 \times 0.30) = \$14.70$

Since Sebastian was only at work for 46 weeks of the year (10.6 months), he calculates his work-related mobile phone expense deduction as follows:

- $10.6 \text{ months} \times \$14.70 = \$155.82$

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### Example: work and private use

Sylvette uses her computer and personal internet account at home to access her work emails and manage her appointments. Sylvette uses her computer and the internet for work and private purposes.

Sylvette's internet use diary showed 20% of her internet time was for work-related activities and 80% was for private use. As her internet service provider charge for the year was \$1,200 she can claim:

- $\$1,200 \times 20\% = \$240$  as work-related internet use.

### See also:

- [Claiming mobile phone, internet and home phone expenses \(/Individuals/Income-and-deductions/Deductions-you-can-claim/Other-work-related-deductions/Claiming-mobile-phone,-internet-and-home-phone-expenses/\)](#).

### Professional indemnity insurance

You can claim a deduction for the cost of professional indemnity insurance related to your work activities.

### Repairs to tools and equipment

You can claim a deduction for repairs to tools and equipment you use for work. If you also use them for private purposes, you can only claim the work-related portion.

## Self-education and study expenses

You can claim a deduction for self-education and study expenses if it's directly related to your current employment as a doctor, specialist or other medical professional and it:

- maintains or improves the skills and knowledge you need for your current duties
- results in or is likely to result in an increase in your income from your current employment.

You can't claim a deduction if the education is only related in a general way or designed to:

- enable you to get employment
- obtain new employment
- open up a new income-earning activity.

Self-education expenses include fees, travel expenses (for example, attending a conference interstate), transport costs, books and equipment. You usually have to reduce your self-education expenses by \$250 – that is, the first \$250 of expenses for self-education aren't deductible.

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### **Example: study directly relevant to employment**

Dennis is a general practitioner who participates in continuing professional development to maintain his medical registrations.

Although Dennis is required to participate in continuing professional development to maintain his medical registrations, Dennis can claim a deduction for his study expenses because the continual professional development improves and maintains his skills and knowledge.

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### **Example: study to improve knowledge and skills in current job**

Nadia is a dentist undertaking postgraduate study in dental surgery.

Nadia is eligible to claim a deduction for her study expenses because her study is improving her dentistry skills. It is clearly relevant to her employment.

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### **Example: study to upgrade qualifications**

Joe is a general practitioner in a rural area of Australia. Joe undertakes training in mental health disorders with a specialised focus on rural and remote Australia. The training will improve Joe's skills in educating his patients about mental health.

Joe is eligible to claim self-education expenses because his study will upgrade his qualifications and will improve his skills in his work activities as a general practitioner.

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### **Example: can't claim due to limited use in current role**

Yui is a psychologist working part-time for a private practice while studying to become a paramedic. The study will primarily provide skills for a new position, which means she will have to seek new employment.

Yui isn't eligible and can't claim her self-education expenses because her specialised study has only limited use in her current work and therefore lacks sufficient connection to the duties performed.

### **See also:**

- [Self-education expenses \(/Individuals/Income-and-deductions/Deductions-you-can-claim/Self-education-expenses/\)](#).

### **Self-education and study and training support loans**

You can't claim the repayment of loans you receive to help pay for your self-education or study expenses. This includes:

- Higher Education Loan Program (HELP) loans
- VET Student Loans (VETSL)
- Student Financial Supplement Scheme (SFSS)
- Student Start-up Loan
- Trade Support Loan Program.



You may be able to claim a deduction for course or tuition fees where the self-education expenses are directly related to your current employment as an employee doctor, specialist or other medical professional.

**See also:**

- [Self-education expenses \(/Individuals/Income-and-deductions/Deductions-you-can-claim/Self-education-expenses/\)](#).

## Seminars, conferences and training courses

You can claim for the cost of seminars and conferences and training courses that relate to your work as a doctor, specialist or other medical professional.

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**Example: conference where dominant purpose is work-related**

Mary, an orthodontist, attends an eight-day work-related conference in Vancouver on modern cosmetic dentistry. One day of the conference involves a sight-seeing tour of the city, and a networking game of golf. A dinner is held on the final afternoon of the conference.

As her main purpose in attending the conference is work-related, Mary can deduct the total cost of the conference which includes her airfares, accommodation and meals.

**For more doctor, specialist or other medical professionals' expenses, see:**

- common expenses [A–F](#)
- common expenses [G–Q](#)
- common expenses [T–W](#)

**Common expenses T–W**

- <https://www.ato.gov.au/Individuals/Income-and-deductions/In-detail/Occupation-and-industry-specific-guides/Doctor,-specialist-and-other-medical-professionals---income-and-work-related-deductions/?page=6> (<https://www.ato.gov.au/Individuals/Income-and-deductions/In-detail/Occupation-and-industry-specific-guides/Doctor,-specialist-and-other-medical-professionals---income-and-work-related-deductions/?page=6>).
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Details on claiming common doctor, specialist or other medical professional expenses for:

- Technical or professional publications
- Tools and equipment
- Travel expenses
- Watches and timepieces
- Working from home

### Technical or professional publications

You can claim a deduction for the cost of journals, periodicals and magazines that have content sufficiently connected to your employment as a doctor, specialist or other medical professional.

### Tools and equipment

You can claim a deduction for tools and equipment if you use them to perform your duties as a doctor, specialist or other medical professional.

If a tool or item of equipment cost you \$300 or less, and you only use it for work, you can claim a deduction for the whole cost in the year you purchased it. Otherwise, you can claim a deduction for the cost over the life of the item (that is; depreciation).

If the item is part of a set that together cost more than \$300, you can claim a deduction for the set over the life of the asset.

If you also use the tool or item of equipment for private purposes, you can only claim the work-related portion.

If you bought the tool or item of equipment part way through the year, you can only claim a deduction for the portion of the year that you owned it.

You can also claim a deduction for the cost of repairs to tools and equipment.

You can't claim a deduction for tools and equipment that are supplied by your employer or another person.

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### **Example: equipment for work-related use**

Adam is a psychologist in a rehabilitation centre. Adam's job requires him to complete his case reports at home.

Adam carries his work laptop and patient documents between his office and his home to complete the case reports. He purchased a briefcase with laptop compartment to carrying his laptop and documents for \$275. Adam only uses the briefcase to transport work items.

As Adam's briefcase is suitable to carry all the items necessary for him to transport, he can claim a deduction for the whole cost of the bag.

### See also:

- [Depreciation and capital allowances tool \(/Calculators-and-tools/Depreciation-and-capital-allowances-tool/\)](#).
- [Depreciation and capital expenses and allowances \(/business/depreciation-and-capital-expenses-and-allowances/\)](#).

### Travel expenses

You can claim a deduction for the costs you incur on accommodation, meals and incidentals when you travel for work and sleep away from your home overnight in the course of performing your employment duties.

You can't claim a deduction for accommodation where you have not incurred any accommodation expenses, because you:

- sleep in accommodation provided by your employer
- are reimbursed for any costs by your employer.

Receiving an allowance from your employer doesn't automatically entitle you to a deduction. In all cases, you need to be able to show:

- you were away overnight
- you spent the money
- the allowance was included in your assessable income
- the travel was directly related to earning your employment income
- how you calculated your claim.

Each year, we set a reasonable amount for travel expenses. Generally, you are required to get and keep written evidence, such as receipts, when you claim a deduction for travel expenses. However, if you spent and are claiming:

- a deduction up to the reasonable amount, you don't have to get and keep receipts
- more than the reasonable amount, you must get and keep receipts for all your expenses.

## Example: dual purpose

Megan is a general practitioner based in the outer suburbs of Sydney. The practice she works in provides support to a rural practice in Menindee allowing the practitioner based in this location time off. Her employer requires each practitioner in the practice to take this position at some time during their employment.

Megan flies to Menindee for a 14-day locum position to fill this role. Her employer pays her a travel allowance.

Megan can claim a deduction for the expenses she incurs such as airfares, accommodation and meals.

Megan stays over for an extra five days to do some sightseeing in the NSW outback on each trip. As the sightseeing isn't work-related, Megan can only claim the work-related portion of the airfares (14 days) and the accommodation and meals for the 14 days she attends work at the local practice. Megan can't claim the cost of accommodation and meals for the five days of private travel.

## See also:

- [TD 2019/11 \(/law/view/document?DocID=TXD/TD201911/NAT/ATO/00001&PiT=20191127000000\)](#). *Income tax: what are the reasonable travel and overtime amounts for the 2019–20 income year?*
- [Other travel expenses \(/Individuals/Income-and-deductions/Deductions-you-can-claim/Vehicle-and-travel-expenses/Other-travel-expenses/\)](#).

## Watches and timepieces

You can't claim a deduction for the cost of purchasing and repairing an ordinary wristwatch, including waterproof watches. However, if your watch has special characteristics which you use for work or if you have a fob watch or stopwatch, you can claim a deduction for a decline in value (depreciation).

You can claim deductions for the cost of repairs, batteries and watchbands for special watches but your claim must be apportioned between private and work-related use.

## Working from home

You can claim a deduction for the additional running expenses of an office or a study at home that you use to earn your income as a doctor, specialist or other medical professional.

Running expenses include:

- decline in value of home office equipment
- the cost of repairs to your home office furniture and fittings
- heating, cooling, lighting and cleaning expenses.

If you are working from home as a result of COVID-19, we have specific information about expenses – see [Working from home during COVID-19 \(/General/COVID-19/Support-for-individuals-and-employees/Employees-working-from-home/\)](/General/COVID-19/Support-for-individuals-and-employees/Employees-working-from-home/).

You can't claim occupancy expenses, such as rent, rates, mortgage interest and house insurance premiums.

In limited circumstances, you may be able to claim a deduction if your home office is considered to be a 'place of business'. If your only income is paid to you as an employee, you aren't considered to be carrying on a business.

Diary records noting the time the home office was used for work are acceptable evidence of a connection between the use of a home office and your work. You'll need to keep diary records during a representative four-week period.

The [Home office expenses calculator \(/calculators-and-tools/home-office-expenses-calculator/\)](/calculators-and-tools/home-office-expenses-calculator/) helps calculate the amount you can claim as a deduction for home office expenses.

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### **Example: home office running expenses**

Gerri works for a small medical practice and often reviews client files and completes administrative tasks at home. She uses her laptop to complete these tasks in a room of her house that she has dedicated as her home office.

Gerri can claim the work-related portion of her actual running costs, such as, heating, cooling, lighting stationery and the decline in value of her office equipment. She keeps a record of these costs and the hours of work at home in a diary over the financial year.

Gerri uses her diary notes to show that she works at home for eight hours a week for 40 weeks of the year. To work out her deduction for running costs Gerri uses the fixed rate of 52 cents.

She works out her claim as  $\$0.52 \times 8 \times 40 = \$166.40$ .

Gerri can claim a deduction for home office running expenses of \$166.40.

### **See also:**

- [Home office expenses \(/Individuals/Income-and-deductions/Deductions-you-can-claim/Home-office-expenses/\)](#).
- [Law Administration Practice Statement PS LA 2001/6 \(/law/view/document?DocID=PSR/PS20016/NAT/ATO/00001\)](#). *Verification approaches for home office running expenses and electronic device expenses*
- [Taxation Ruling TR 93/30 \(/law/view/document?DocID=TXR/TR9330/NAT/ATO/00001\)](#). *Income tax: deductions for home office expenses*

**For more doctor, specialist or other medical professionals' expenses, see:**

- common expenses [A–F](#)
- common expenses [G–O](#)
- common expenses [P–S](#)

**Find out about medical professionals':**

- [Income – salary and allowances](#)
- [Record keeping](#)

## Record keeping

- <https://www.ato.gov.au/Individuals/Income-and-deductions/In-detail/Occupation-and-industry-specific-guides/Doctor,-specialist-and-other-medical-professionals---income-and-work-related-deductions/?page=7> (<https://www.ato.gov.au/Individuals/Income-and-deductions/In-detail/Occupation-and-industry-specific-guides/Doctor,-specialist-and-other-medical-professionals---income-and-work-related-deductions/?page=7>).
- Last modified: 01 May 2020
- QC 56091

You need to get and keep records of your expenses for which you want to claim deductions. This is usually a receipt but can be another form of written evidence (such as an invoice).

Records can be electronic (for example, you can take a photo of your receipt, or use an app). The [myDeductions \(/General/Online-services/ATO-app/myDeductions/\)](#) tool in the ATO app, can help you to keep track of your work-related expenses. It's an easy way to capture information on-the-go, making tax time quicker by uploading your deductions to your tax return. If you use a tax agent they can access your uploaded data through their practice management software or you can email a copy to them from the app.

Records must show what you purchased, when, where, and how much you spent. They must be in English.

There are a few exceptions to this rule:

- [Small expense receipts](#)
- [Hard to get receipts](#)
- [Overtime meal expense receipts](#)
- [Travel and meal expense receipts](#)

## Small expense receipts

You don't have to get and keep a receipt for work-related expenses that are \$10 or less, as long as your total claim for small expenses is \$200 or less.

If you don't get a receipt for small expenses you can still claim a deduction as long as you make a record of the small expenses. For example, you can make a record by writing in your diary.

Your record should show what you purchased, when, where, and how much you spent. It must be in English. You can use this to show how you calculated your deduction if we request this information from you.

## Hard to get receipts

If you can't get a receipt for a work-related expense, you can still claim a deduction as long as you make a record. For example, you can make a record by writing in your diary.

Your record should show what you purchased, when, where, and how much you spent. It must be in English. You can use this to show how you calculated your deduction if we request this information from you.

## Overtime meal expense receipts

You can claim a deduction for your overtime meal expenses (food and drink) without keeping all your receipts if you:

- undertake overtime
- receive an overtime meal allowance paid under an industrial law or award
- spent money on meals (food and drink) you consumed during your overtime meal break
- are not claiming more than the reasonable amount we set – see doctor, specialist or other medical professionals' [Overtime meal expenses](#).

Even if you aren't required to get and keep receipts for your overtime meal expenses, we may check your tax return and ask you to show how you calculated your claim. If we ask, you'll need to provide documentation showing:

- when you did overtime
- you purchased a meal

- you correctly declared the overtime meal allowance as income in your tax return.

If you don't receive an overtime meal allowance paid under an industrial law, award, or are claiming a deduction for more than the reasonable amount, you need to get and keep your receipts for your overtime meal expenses.

You claim what you actually spent, not the reasonable amount.

### See also:

- [Overtime meals \(/Individuals/Income-and-deductions/Deductions-you-can-claim/Other-work-related-deductions/Overtime-meals/\)](#).
- [TD 2019/11 \(/law/view/document?DocID=TXD/TD201911/NAT/ATO/00001&PiT=20191127000000\)](#). *Income tax: what are the reasonable travel and overtime amounts for the 2019–20 income year?*

## Travel and meal expense receipts

You can claim a deduction for your accommodation, meal (food and drink) and incidental expenses without keeping all your receipts if your travel is for six nights or less and you:

- receive a travel allowance that's expected to cover your accommodation, meals and incidental expenses when travelling (a token amount you receive as a travel allowance isn't accepted as covering such costs)
- are required to travel for work and sleep away from home overnight
- spent money on accommodation, meals (food and drink) and incidentals while travelling for work
- are not claiming more than the reasonable amount set – see doctor, specialist or other medical professionals' [Travel expenses](#).

Even if you aren't required to get and keep receipts for your accommodation, meals and incidentals when travelling for work, we may check your tax return and ask you to show how you calculated your claim. If we ask, you'll need to provide documentation showing:

- when you were travelling for work (including start and finish times)
- you paid for accommodation, meals and incidentals and the amount you spent
- you correctly declared the travel allowance as income in your tax return.

You will need to maintain and keep all of your records for travel expenses if you're in one of the following situations:

- you didn't get a travel allowance
- you received a travel allowance and your claim exceeds the reasonable allowance amount

The records you need to keep for fares, accommodation, food, drink and incidentals depend on the length of your trip and if it is domestic or international.



If you travel for six or more nights in a row, you may need to keep a travel diary in which you record the dates, places, times and duration of your activities and travel.

You don't need to keep a travel diary if your travel away from home is less than six nights in a row.

If you are required to maintain and keep records, the records you keep may include:

- income statement, payment summary or payslips to show the travel allowances you received
- a travel diary, or documentation that shows the days you travelled for work, including
  - start and finish times
  - where you travelled
  - when you stopped for meals
- all receipts, invoices or documentation for accommodation, meals and incidental expenses showing the
  - name of the supplier
  - amount you spent
  - nature of the good or service
  - date you spent the money
  - creation date of the receipt or other written evidence
- written evidence, such as a bank statement, to show that you were the one who spent the money.

You claim what you actually spent, not the reasonable amount.

### See also:

- [Keeping travel expense records \(/Individuals/Income-and-deductions/Deductions-you-can-claim/Vehicle-and-travel-expenses/Keeping-travel-expense-records/#Travelexpenses\)](#).
- [Exceptions for keeping travel expense records \(/Individuals/Income-and-deductions/Deductions-you-can-claim/Vehicle-and-travel-expenses/Exceptions-for-keeping-travel-expense-records/\)](#).
- [TD 2019/11 \(/law/view/document?DocID=TXD/TD201911/NAT/ATO/00001&PiT=20191127000000\)](#). *Income tax: what are the reasonable travel and overtime amounts for the 2019–20 income year?*
- General information on [Income and deductions \(/Individuals/Income-and-deductions\)](#).

### Find out about doctor, specialist and other medical professionals':

- [Income – salary and allowances](#)
- [Deductions](#)

## Our commitment to you

We are committed to providing you with accurate, consistent and clear information to help you understand your rights and entitlements and meet your obligations.

If you follow our information and it turns out to be incorrect, or it is misleading and you make a mistake as a result, we will take that into account when determining what action, if any, we should take.

Some of the information on this website applies to a specific financial year. This is clearly marked. Make sure you have the information for the right year before making decisions based on that information.

If you feel that our information does not fully cover your circumstances, or you are unsure how it applies to you, contact us or seek professional advice.

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