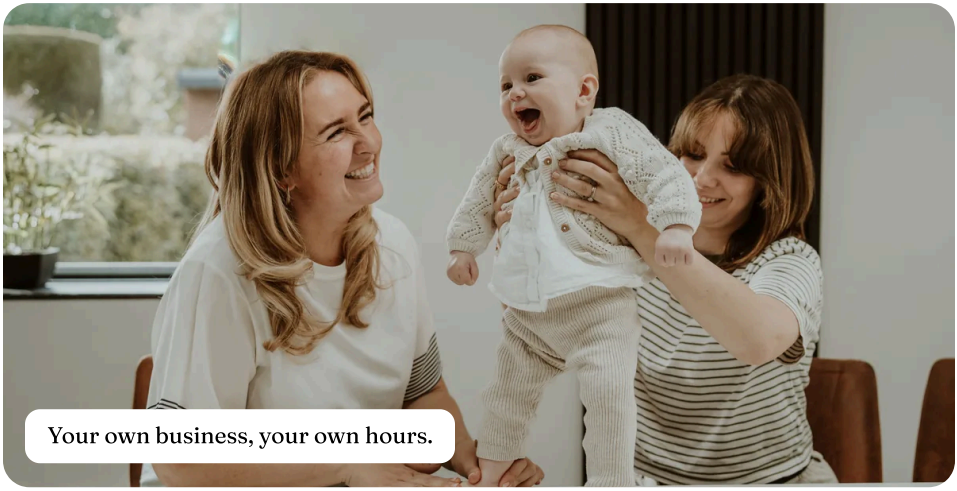
Going self-employed

Every Memory Catcher™ runs her own business, so you're self-employed from day one. It sounds bigger than it is. Here's what to sort out, in plain English.



BEFORE YOUR FIRST SESSION

- ○ **Register with HMRC as self-employed.** It's free online. The deadline is 5 October after the end of the tax year you start in, but it's easiest to do it straight away.
- ○ **Open a separate bank account** for the business. Not a legal must for a sole trader, but it makes the paperwork far easier.
- ○ **Get public liability insurance,** and check your car insurance covers driving to work. Our insurance guide explains both.

MONEY IN, MONEY OUT

Keeping track

What counts as your income

Your monthly commission statements from us, plus any call-out fees you charge for home visits. Keep every statement: together they're most of your income records already.

Costs you can claim

Things you buy to run the business come off your profit before tax, for example:

- ○ Print kits for your sessions
- ○ Travel to sessions and visits. HMRC's simple mileage rate is 45p a mile for the first 10,000 business miles.
- ○ The business share of your phone and data
- ○ Insurance, marketing and printing
- ○ Venue or stall fees, and an accountant if you use one

Keep it simple. A notes app or a spreadsheet with the date, what it was and how much is enough. Keep receipts and statements for at least five years after the tax return they belong to.

TAX AND NATIONAL INSURANCE

What you'll pay, roughly

Tax is worked out on your profit for the year (what you earned, less your costs), not on each payment. Commission is paid to you in full, so you set money aside yourself. For 2026/27:

Personal allowance (tax-free)	**£12,570**
Income tax above that, basic rate	**20%**
Class 4 National Insurance on profits £12,570 to £50,270	**6%**

FRANCHISE EXAMPLE

about £180

a month to set aside, on a steady month of about £1,750 after costs for about 82 hours (roughly **£21 an hour**), if it's your only income.

PART-TIME EXAMPLE

about £100

a month if you also have a job. About £500 a month after costs for about 39 hours (roughly **£13 an hour**). With no other income, it's under the tax-free allowance.

The dates that matter

Your online tax return and the tax for it are due by 31 January after the tax year ends. Once your bill passes £1,000, HMRC also asks for payments towards next year in advance. From April 2028, people whose self-employed income is over £20,000 keep digital records and send quarterly updates (Making Tax Digital).

GOOD TO KNOW

The other bits

Customer details

Once a family uploads their prints, we look after their details. Anything you collect yourself, like a booking for a home visit, is yours to keep safe. Most small businesses that hold customer details pay the Information Commissioner's Office a small yearly data protection fee; their website has a quick check.

Benefits

Self-employed income can affect benefits. If you get Universal Credit, tell them you've started a business and report your earnings each month.

Do I need an accountant?

Not at first. Plenty of sole traders do their own return online. HMRC runs free webinars for the newly self-employed, and an accountant becomes worth it as you grow.

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Evenings are fine

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Ashley

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This guide is general information as at November 2026, not tax or financial advice. Rates change each April; check HMRC's website or ask an accountant about your own situation. The Bespoke Foil Company Ltd · 2nd Floor, Pier House, Wallgate, Wigan WN3 4AL · Company no. 12941845