

Musicians and Music Instructors

Business deductions are relevant to musicians who use Schedule C on their taxes, which you need to do unless all your income is from wages on W2 forms. Remember that you need receipts for everything, to back up your claims.

MILEAGE: You can't deduct mileage if you're "commuting" (employee going to and from work or an office/studio away from home). But if you drive from your primary place of work, you can deduct mileage as you drive to various locations for any business purposes. The catch is that you have to keep a written log of your odometer readings, dates and destinations.

HOME OFFICE: you can deduct utilities and other expenses for maintaining a home office space based on what percentage of the home it is, only if it is a space you regularly and exclusively use to meet with students or do only business work; it doesn't have to be a separate room or have a separate entrance.

MEALS: meals where you meet with an interview subject, agent, editor, manager, lawyer, accountant, tax professional or with colleagues and discuss your work. Work must be the primary reason for the meal. Also meals while away from home overnight are deductible.

ADVERTISING —

- promotional photos and videos
- brochures, mailers, flyers
- newspaper, magazine, TV, radio ads
- fees for listing services, PR services
- website creation and hosting expenses
- promotional giveaways such as CDs (deduct your cost)
- signs, banners, bumper stickers
- stationery
- ads on the web and Social Media
- marketing emails or direct mail
- costs for promotional events
- business cards

SUPPLIES —

- music stands, cases, gig bags, transportation carts
- reeds, picks, oil, strings
- sheet music, music paper, notebooks
- tuners, effects pedals, metronomes
- mutes, mouthpieces, microphones
- books for a curriculum
- monitors, amplifiers, speakers
- blank media, CDs, recorders, memory cards
- cords, cables
- music filing envelopes and boxes
- reference books, study guides
- pens, pencils, paper, paper clips, tape, staples, staplers
- printer supplies
- whiteboard, markers
- stamps, labels, envelopes, mailers
- software for keeping track of billing and expenses

OFFICE —

- pickup and delivery services
- costs for backing up data

DUES, LICENSES AND FEES —

- copyright fees
- union dues
- social security, medicare and unemployment taxes
- professional license fees
- fees for professional organizations