



Winter 2026

As we step into the first month of winter and approach the end of the financial year, attention is turning to the resilience of the economy and households.

May delivered mixed signals for the Australian economy as inflation eased slightly to 4.2% in April from 4.6% in March, although underlying inflation edged higher from 3.3% to 3.4%. The softer-than-expected inflation data reduced expectations of further rate hikes in the near term.

Australian share markets were volatile. The ASX 200 moved within a relatively narrow range through the month, slipping slightly overall despite periods of strength linked to resources and AI-related stocks.

Globally, markets continued to be shaped by Middle East tensions and ongoing inflation concerns. US markets made some big gains with the S&P 500 hitting an all-time high in the final days of May.

Oil prices eased from April highs but remained elevated and volatile with renewed US air attacks in Iran risking high prices still.

Consumer sentiment improved modestly although households remain deeply pessimistic because of high interest rates and cost-of-living pressures. This pessimism is extending to the property market which is showing signs of a broad-based softening.

Belmore

70 Belmore Street
Yarrowonga VIC 3730

50 Belmore Street
YARRAWONGA VIC 3730

134 Melville Street
NUMURKAH VIC 3636

1-7 Albert
MYRTLEFORD VIC 3737

3 Ireland Street
BRIGHT VIC 3741

P 03 5744 1221

E belmore@belmores.com.au

W <https://www.belmores.com.au/>



Get prepared for JUNE

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Tax time is just around the corner, so now is the time to get ahead and find out what strategies may be available to you before 30 June.

Time for a portfolio review

A good first step is to review your investment strategy. With recent market volatility, things may have shifted and your risk tolerance may have changed considerably.

It's also worthwhile checking your capital gains or losses before 30 June, as this allows you to take action where appropriate.

For example, you may consider realising capital losses to offset gains from assets such as shares, property or crypto.

Super contribution strategies

You should also check your super contributions as early as possible. If you have not reached the Super Guarantee (SG) contributions cap of \$30,000, or \$120,000 for non-concessional contributions, you may be eligible to make additional contributions to your super.

If you plan to contribute before 30 June, check when your employer will make their contributions. The introduction of Payday Super means some employers are contributing earlier, which may affect your contribution caps.

You will also need to find out the cut-off date from your super fund, which is generally 25-26 June.

Speak to us about the various ways you could boost your super before the EOFY.

For SMSF members, make sure that:

- All contributions are received by the fund's bank account by 30 June
- Minimum pension payments are made
- Asset valuations are up to date
- Fund records are current

Division 296 super tax

It's also important to note that Division 296 tax comes into effect on 1 July 2026 and applies to investment earnings earned during 2026–27 and the following financial years.

For those whose total super balance exceeds \$3 million on 30 June 2027 there will be a 15 per cent additional tax on the proportion of earnings corresponding to the Total Super Balance (TSB) between \$3 million and \$10 million and an additional 25 per cent tax on the proportion of earnings corresponding to TSBs above \$10 million.

Tax timing strategies

If you have regular deductible expenses, such as investment loan interest or annual costs, it may be useful for some to prepay them before 30 June to claim a deduction for this financial year.

You may also consider the timing of income expected before 30 June. Deferring income until after the end of the financial year may help reduce your tax liability.

Tax rates are also changing for lower income earners. From 1 July 2026, the rate for income between \$18,201 and \$45,000 will reduce from 16 per cent to 15 per cent, with a further reduction to 14 per cent the following year.

Tax returns done right

While planning ahead for the EOFY is key, it's also important to take the time to understand what the ATO is focusing on when it comes to preparing your tax return post June 30.

This year, the ATO will be focusing on work-related deductions and income that's not declared on tax returns.

If you are claiming work-related expenses, ensure they meet the ATO's three golden rules:

1. The expense must be directly related to earning your income
2. You must not have been reimbursed
3. You must have records to support your claim, such as receipts or a logbook.

If you work from home for all or part of the week, you can use either the actual cost method or the fixed rate method.

Don't overlook income

The ATO is also paying close attention to undeclared income. This includes:

- Cash payments
- Interest income
- Rental income
- Earnings from crypto assets.

For those with a side hustle, check whether it may be considered a business. All business income, regardless of amount, is assessable and must be declared.

If you intend to claim deductions for business expenses related to your side hustle, ensure they are directly connected to earning that income and are supported by receipts.

If you'd like to talk to us about ways to boost your super before EOFY or questions about your investment strategies, call today to ensure everything is in place before 30 June.

Source: <https://www.ato.gov.au>

>> TAX ALERT

June 2026

Prepare your business for tax changes and Payday Super

Recent updates from the ATO highlight a mix of proposed tax changes and compliance priorities, with new draft legislation under consideration and practical guidance released ahead of the Payday Super changes starting 1 July 2026.

Check eligibility for tech booster deduction

Small businesses are being encouraged to review their eligibility for the government's proposed Technology Investment Boost, although the legislation is yet to be passed.

Under the original proposal, eligible businesses could claim a bonus tax deduction of up to \$2,000 for technology spending. This applies to investments exceeding \$4,000 in areas such as digital systems, e-commerce platforms, cyber security and online marketing tools.

Businesses with annual turnover of up to \$10 million may qualify, with eligible expenditure incurred between 1 July 2025 and 30 June 2027.

While not yet law, reviewing planned or recent technology spending may help businesses act quickly if the measure is enacted.

Standard \$1,000 deduction proposal

Another proposed measure is the introduction of a standard \$1,000 deduction for work-related expenses, with draft legislation released for consultation.

If implemented from 1 July 2026, the deduction would be available to taxpayers earning employment income. Taxpayers with work-related expenses below \$1,000 could claim the standard deduction without detailed receipts.

Importantly, existing rules will remain available for those with higher expenses, or for individuals earning only business or investment income.

The proposed deduction would sit alongside other claims, meaning taxpayers

could still separately deduct investment expenses, charitable donations, and union or professional association fees.

Preparing for Payday Super

With Payday Super due to get underway on 1 July 2026, the ATO has released checklists and guidance to help employers prepare.

The new regime will require super contributions to be paid at the same time as wages, rather than quarterly. To support the transition, the ATO has published resources covering:

- Key pre-implementation tasks
- Managing pay runs across the June-July transition period
- Single Touch Payroll reporting requirements
- Ongoing compliance under the new system

Employers are encouraged to review payroll systems, processes and cash flow implications now to ensure a smooth transition.

GST reporting thresholds in focus

The ATO is also reminding growing businesses to review their GST reporting obligations as turnover increases.

Businesses that reach \$10 million in GST turnover must move from Simpler BAS to full BAS reporting and adopt a non-cash (accrual) accounting method for GST.

Once turnover reaches \$20 million, GST reporting must shift from quarterly to monthly lodgment.

The ATO says it's noticed some businesses are failing to update reporting methods after crossing these thresholds and they will contact businesses directly.

Fuel tax credit rate changes

Taxpayers claiming fuel tax credits should ensure they are applying the correct rates following changes from 1 April 2026 to temporarily reduce fuel excise by 60.9 per cent.

As fuel tax credits are based on the excise duty payable on fuel, there will be different rates that apply before and after that date.

In addition, the heavy vehicle road user charge has been reduced to zero for the period 1 April to 30 June 2026.

Digital lodgment for partnerships

The ATO continues to expand digital reporting requirements, with all partnerships now required to lodge Statements of Distribution (SODs) electronically.

This applies regardless of the size of the partnership. Lodgment can be completed through standard business reporting-enabled software or via a registered tax agent.

The digital data enables the ATO to cross-check that partners are accurately reporting their share of income in their individual tax returns.

Strengthening business security

Finally, the ATO is encouraging businesses to review access to their online accounts as part of good governance and fraud prevention.

Business owners should:

- Regularly review authorised users in the Relationship Authorisation Manager
- Remove access for staff who have left or changed roles
- Check permissions for sensitive functions within ATO Online Services for Business and the Australian Business Register.

Keeping access controls up to date is a simple but effective way to reduce the risk of unauthorised activity.

Source: <https://www.ato.gov.au>



Finding your flow in thirds: the 3-3-3 productivity hack



If your workday and list of things to do often feels unrelenting, you are not alone. For years, hustle culture glorified long hours, constant motion, and sacrificing rest to prove commitment. It promised success, but left many busy professionals drained, distracted, and stuck in a cycle of busyness without progress.

Structured focus offers a smarter alternative. Instead of working harder, break your day into manageable blocks, and get more done without the chaos. It's simple, practical, and surprisingly effective for those who need to reclaim control over their time.

Why hustle culture is out and thirds are in

Hustle culture teaches that long hours equal achievement and that success comes only through constant activity. Back-to-back meetings, late-night emails, and glorified exhaustion are all symptoms of this mindset. While it may create the illusion of productivity, the reality is often stress, fatigue, and diminishing returns. The resulting lack of productivity is the opposite of what hustle culture was trying to achieve.

Structured focus provides a more appealing alternative to the 'nose to the grindstone' approach and one of the easiest methods to employ is known as '3-3-3'.

The 3-3-3 method divides your day into thirds for focused work, shorter tasks, and maintenance activities, prioritises quality over quantity and focus over frenzy. It allows high-value work, smaller responsibilities, and upkeep to coexist without competing for attention.

The 3-3-3 Method

The 3-3-3 method structures your workday into three intentional blocks: three hours of deep work, three shorter tasks, and three maintenance activities.

3 hours for deep work: The first third

Dedicate the first third of your day to deep work. This is uninterrupted time for the projects that require creativity, strategy, or critical thinking. Turn off notifications, close unrelated tabs, and focus fully. Deep work allows you to tackle complex problems and produce high-quality results, setting a strong foundation for the day.

3 shorter tasks: The middle third

The middle third is for three shorter tasks. These are important but lighter duties like responding to key emails, making brief client calls, or updating your schedule. This block keeps your day moving without encroaching on deep work, offering a sense of progress and momentum.

3 maintenance activities: The final third

The last third focuses on maintenance activities. These are essential tasks that keep your systems running smoothly, such as reviewing finances, checking in with your team, or tidying your workspace. By dedicating time to upkeep, you prevent small issues from becoming bigger problems and end the day feeling organized.

The benefits of working in thirds

Dividing your day into thirds offers several key advantages. It reduces stress by providing clear boundaries between different types of work, improves productivity by dedicating time to high-value tasks, and encourages sustainable performance over the long term. Working in thirds also gives a sense of control, transforming productivity from a stressful race into a deliberate, satisfying practice.

Making the 3-3-3 method work for you

Implementing the 3-3-3 method is simple but you do need a plan. It's important that you stick to your plan. Don't let extra tasks sneak in and steer you off course. Three tasks shouldn't turn in seven. If you finish your three tasks early, take a break, go for a walk or make a cup of tea and think about what you accomplished. If you start adding more tasks, you could begin to feel overwhelmed, which may eventually lead to burnout.

Consistency is key. Practicing this approach day after day turns structured focus into a habit. Adjust the timing to suit your personal rhythm, but keeping the principle of thirds ensures your workday stays organised, productive, and balanced.

Working in thirds transforms the workday from stressful chaos into a structured, rewarding practice. For busy professionals, it is a game changer – a simple, practical way to work with focus, clarity, and calm accomplishment.