

# Can You Claim Back the VAT?

*This is an extra resource to go along with the original article:*

[9 Mistakes to Avoid When Filing VAT](#)

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Like other forms of tax, there are some instances where businesses can claim back VAT paid. Here are some possibilities for your business to look into...

- **Business entertaining** - This is a classic example of an area where VAT is often mistakenly claimed. In most instances, you can't claim back VAT from entertaining clients, however you *can* claim for staff entertainment, such as the annual Christmas party. If you are entertaining both staff and customers, you may be able to make a partial claim for the staff portion.
- **Lunch** - Can you claim back your lunch expenses? Well, as a general rule, you may be able to if that expense can be included as a "subsistence" expense, meaning that the reason you are buying lunch is because you are working a considerable distance away from your main place of work. The general rule tends to be 5 miles or more away.
- **Subcontractor expenses** - If you are having work done by a subcontractor and agree to pay expenses, such as their petrol, this can usually be claimed.
- **Where VAT doesn't show on the bill** - Sorry, you won't be able to claim on this! In order to claim back VAT, it must clearly be shown on your invoice.
- **When you've purchased goods or services for your business** - In most cases, the VAT is claimable on things purchased for your business.
- **Insurance, salary or wages, postage, interest paid to your bank** - Sorry, no, no, no and no. VAT is not charged on any of these so can't be claimed.
- **Fuel used** - If petrol is used for business purposes, there are a few options available in terms of claiming (or not paying) VAT. You will need to check the rules in your state of residence, but here are the [UK guidelines](#).