How to Export a Journal Report from QuickBooks Online

Purpose: This guide walks you through exporting the Journal report from QuickBooks Online as an Excel file, and selecting the fields required for journal entry testing.

Required Fields Checklist

#	Required Field	Available in Standard Report?	QuickBooks Online Field/Column Name
1	**Amount**	**Yes**	Debit / Credit columns
2	**Time**	**Not on Journal report**	See “Getting Time & User” section below
3	**Posting Date**	**Yes (see note below)**	Date
4	**Transaction Date**	**Yes (see note below)**	Date (same field as Posting Date)
5	**Description**	**Yes**	Memo
6	**Account Number**	**Yes, if enabled**	Account (requires “Show account numbers” setting. See Common Issues)
7	**User (Posted By)**	**Not on Journal report**	See “Getting Time & User” section below
8	**Journal Reference**	**Yes**	No. / Journal no.

⚠ Important — Three Things to Know Before You Export

1. Posting Date and Transaction Date will always be identical. Like QuickBooks Desktop, QuickBooks Online journal entries carry only one Date field. There's no separate posting-period date.

2. Time and User (Posted By) are not on the standard Journal report at all. In QuickBooks Online, this data lives in the Audit Log, found under the Settings gear icon, not the Reports menu. See the “Getting Time and User via the Audit Log” section below.

3. The Audit Log is admin-only and only covers 2 years of history. Only Admin or Master Admin users can view it, and QuickBooks Online retains only the most recent 2 years of activity there.

Step-by-Step Export Instructions (Journal Report)

1. Navigate to the Journal Report

- Log in to QuickBooks Online
- Go to Reports → Standard reports
- In the search field, type Journal and select the Journal report

2. Set the Date Range

- Click Customize in the top-right of the report
- Set the Report period to the date range you need to export
- Click Run report

3. Add the Required Columns

- Click Customize again, then expand the Rows/Columns section
- **Ensure the following columns are checked:**
    1. Date
    2. Transaction type
    3. No. (journal/document number)
    4. Name
    5. Memo/Description
    6. Account
    7. Debit
    8. Credit
- Uncheck any columns not required, to keep the export clean
- Click Run report to apply

4. Export to Excel

- With the report open, click the Export icon (usually near the top-right of the report)
- Select Export to Excel
- Save the file to your desired location, then select Enable Editing if Excel opens it in Protected View

5. Confirm Before Sending

Before sending the file, check that:

☐ The date range matches the requested period

☐ Account column shows account numbers, not just names (see Common Issues if not)

☐ The Name column is populated for all applicable rows (see Common Issues if not)

☐ No filters are hiding transactions (check the Filter section in Customize)

☐ The file is saved as .xlsx (not .csv, unless otherwise agreed)

Getting Time and User via the Audit Log

QuickBooks Online tracks who made each change and when, but only exposes this in the Audit Log, a separate area from the standard Journal report, found under Settings rather than Reports.

1. Navigate to the Audit Log

- Click the Settings (gear) icon
- Under Tools, select Audit Log
- (Alternatively, some company files show this under Reports → Standard reports → Business overview → Audit Log)

2. Filter to the Relevant Period and Entries

- Select Filter
- Set the Date Changed range to match the period of your main Journal report export
- Use the Events filter to narrow results to journal entries, if available, to reduce clutter from unrelated activity
- Click Apply

3. Review the Results

- The Audit Log displays columns for Date (which includes both date and time in a single timestamp), User, Event, and History
- The Event column shows a text description (e.g., "Added Journal Entry #1234") rather than a separate structured reference number column

4. Export or Record the Results

- Look for an Export to CSV button in the top-right of the Audit Log screen
- If available, export and save as .csv, then open in Excel
- If no export option is available, use Print and save as PDF instead (see Common Issues below)

5. Combine with the Main Export

- Match rows between the two exports using the journal entry number referenced in the Event column's text description
- Split the combined Date/Time timestamp into separate Date and Time values if your client requires them as distinct fields
- Merge Time and User alongside the other required fields in one final spreadsheet

Note for Non-Technical Users

Because the Audit Log records events as text descriptions rather than a clean per-transaction table, matching entries back to the Journal report is more manual in QuickBooks Online than in QuickBooks Desktop's Audit Trail. For a large volume of journal entries, budget extra time for this step.

Common Issues

Issue	Likely Cause	Fix
Account column shows no numbers, only names	The “Show account numbers” setting is turned off for this company	Go to Settings → Account and settings → Advanced → Chart of accounts, turn on “Enable account numbers” and “Show account numbers,” then re-run the report
Posting Date and Transaction Date columns are identical	This is expected. QuickBooks Online journal entries have only one Date field, the same as QuickBooks Desktop	No fix needed. Let the client know both fields will always match in QuickBooks Online exports
Name column appears blank even though it was added to the report	Some QuickBooks Online company files show a known display issue where the Name column doesn't populate on the Journal report	If this happens, check the individual journal entry directly, or ask the client's QuickBooks support for the current status of this issue
Can't find or access the Audit Log	The Audit Log is only visible to Admin or Master Admin users	Ask the client to have an admin user pull this data, or grant your contact temporary admin access
Audit Log doesn't have an Export/CSV option	Export availability has varied by QuickBooks Online version; some older interfaces only support printing	If no export option appears, use the Print option and save as PDF, or ask the client to check for an “Export to CSV” button in the top-right of the Audit Log screen
Audit Log is missing entries older than 2 years	QuickBooks Online only retains Audit Log history for 2 years	If the client needs older Time/User data, confirm with them whether it's still retrievable through QuickBooks support

This guide covers QuickBooks Online’s standard Journal report and Audit Log as of August 2026. Menu paths and available features may vary by QuickBooks Online subscription tier (Simple Start, Essentials, Plus, Advanced) and may change as QuickBooks Online is updated.