SOFTWARE & TECH

How To Find My Abn

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Introduction: Why Knowing How to Find My ABN Matters

If you run a business, work as a sole trader, or are a contractor in Australia, your **Australian Business Number (ABN)** is one of the most important identifiers you will ever use. It links you to the Australian Taxation Office (ATO), allows you to issue tax invoices, claim Goods and Services Tax (GST) credits, and conduct business with other entities. But what happens when you misplace that number? Whether you have changed computers, lost your business documents, or simply never wrote it down, the question "**how to find my ABN**" can become an urgent one. This article provides a complete, step-by-step guide to locating your ABN quickly, using official government resources, your personal records, and online tools. By the end, you will know exactly where to look and what to do if you cannot find your ABN anywhere.

Understanding the Australian Business Number (ABN)

Before diving into the search process, it helps to understand what an ABN is and how it is structured. An ABN is a unique 11-digit identifier issued by the Australian Business Register (ABR) and the ATO. It is used by businesses and individuals to interact with the government and other businesses. Unlike a Tax File Number (TFN), an ABN is publicly available information, meaning anyone can look up your business details if they have your ABN or your business name. However, you still need to know how to find your own ABN for your own records, tax lodgments, and contracts.

Why You Might Need to Find Your ABN

There are many scenarios where you might ask yourself, "How do I find my ABN?" Common reasons include:

- You are starting a new contract and the client asks for your ABN on a tax invoice.
- You need to lodge your Business Activity Statement (BAS) but cannot remember the number.
- You are applying for an Australian Business Number for the first time and want to check if you already have one.
- You have changed your business structure or name and need to update your registration details.
- You are working with a new accountant or bookkeeper who requires your ABN for their records.

No matter the reason, the good news is that finding your ABN is usually straightforward if you know where to look.

Method 1: Check Your Business Documents and Correspondence

The simplest way to find your ABN is to look through your existing business records. When you first registered for an ABN, the ATO or ABR sent you a confirmation letter or email. This document contains your ABN, the date of registration, and your business name. Check the following places:

- Email inbox – Search for "ABN registration" or "Australian Business Register" in your email.

- Paper files – Look for any printed letters from the ATO or ABR.
- Tax returns and BAS statements – Your ABN is often printed on these documents.
- Invoices you have issued – Your ABN should appear on every valid tax invoice.
- Business registration certificates – Some third-party registration services provide a certificate with your ABN.

If you cannot find any of these, do not worry. There are several other reliable methods to retrieve your ABN.

Method 2: Use the Australian Business Register (ABR) Online Lookup

The Australian Business Register runs a public **ABN Lookup** tool at **abr.business.gov.au**. This is the quickest way to find your ABN if you know your business name or your own name (if you are a sole trader). The lookup works for any Australian business, and it is completely free. Follow these steps:

1. Go to the ABN Lookup website.
2. Enter your business name, trading name, or your personal name (if you are a sole trader).
3. Click "Search".
4. Review the search results – your ABN, entity name, and registration status will appear.
5. If you see your business, click on it to view full details, including the ABN.

Important: The public ABN Lookup only shows active registrations. If your ABN has been cancelled or is inactive, it may not appear. However, for most active businesses, this method works instantly.

What If Your Business Name Is Common?

If your business name is very common, you may see multiple results. To narrow it down, use additional filters such as your Australian state or territory, or your business location. You can also search by your Australian Company Number (ACN) if you have one, or by your Australian Registered Body Number (ARBN) for other entity types.

Method 3: Log Into the Australian Business Register Portal

If you want a more secure method that does not rely on public records, you can log into the ABR portal using your myGovID or AUSkey. The ABR portal is the official government website for managing your ABN details. Here is how to find your ABN through the portal:

1. Visit the ABR website and click on "Log in to ABR" (or "ABR Portal").
2. Sign in using your myGovID (the government's identity verification app) or your AUSkey (if you still have one).
3. Once logged in, your dashboard will show your business name, ABN, and registration status.
4. If you have multiple ABNs (for different businesses), they will all be listed.

This method is especially useful if you need to update your ABN details, such as your address or contact information. It also confirms that the ABN you found via public lookup is indeed yours.

Method 4: Use Your myGov Account

Many individuals link their ABN to their myGov account, especially if they are sole traders or have a business that interacts with the ATO. If you have linked your business to myGov, you can find your ABN there. Follow these steps:

1. Log into myGov (my.gov.au) using your username and password.
2. Go to "Services" or "Linked services".
3. Look for the Australian Taxation Office (ATO) service. Click on it.
4. Once inside the ATO online services, navigate to "Business" or "Profile".

5. Your ABN should be displayed along with your business details.

If you have not yet linked your ABN to myGov, you can do so by selecting "Add a service" and following the prompts. This is a convenient way to keep all your tax and business information in one place.

Method 5: Check Your Accounting or Invoicing Software

If you use accounting software such as Xero, QuickBooks, MYOB, or Wave, your ABN is likely stored in your company profile. Open the software, go to "Settings" or "My Account", and look for the business details section. Many platforms also display your ABN on every invoice you generate, so you can simply open a previous invoice and copy the number from there.

Additionally, if you have ever registered for a business bank account, the bank may have a record of your ABN. However, banks generally do not allow you to retrieve your ABN directly from their website – you may need to call customer service. This is less efficient than the online methods above, but it is a backup option.

Method 6: Call the ATO or ABR Customer Support

If all else fails – for example, if you cannot remember your business name, you have changed names, or your business is no longer active – you can contact the Australian Business Register directly. The ABR customer service line is **13 92 26**(within Australia). When you call, have your personal details ready, such as your full name, date of birth, Tax File Number (TFN), and the business name you used when registering. The operator can verify your identity and provide your ABN over the phone or via email.

Alternatively, you can contact the ATO general business enquiries line at **13 28 66**. Be prepared to answer security questions about your identity and your business.

What To Do If You Cannot Find Your ABN Anywhere

It is rare to completely lose your ABN, but it can happen if you never had any documents and the public lookup does not return results. This may indicate that your ABN has been cancelled, or that you never actually registered. To resolve this:

- Check the ABR Lookup with different search terms. Perhaps your business name is slightly different (e.g., "Smith Plumbing" vs. "Smith's Plumbing"). Try variations.
- Search using your personal name as a sole trader. Many sole traders register under their own name.
- Consider whether you registered under a different entity type, such as a company, trust, or partnership. You may need to search using the company name or trustee name.
- If absolutely no record exists, you may need to apply for a new ABN. Visit the Australian Business Register website and complete the online application. However, be cautious – if you already have an ABN, applying for a second one can cause complications. It is better to call the ABR first to confirm your status.

Common Issues When Trying to Find Your ABN

Some people run into problems during the search. Here are a few common pitfalls and how to overcome them:

- ABN Lookup returns "No results": This often means the ABN has been cancelled due to inactivity or failure to lodge BAS statements. Contact the ABR to reinstate it if needed.
- You cannot log into the ABR Portal: Ensure you have a myGovID set up. The myGovID is an app on your smartphone, not a password. If you have trouble, the ABR help desk can assist.
- You do not remember which email or phone number you used for registration: Use the ABN Lookup with your personal name and address. If that fails, call the ABR and they can verify your identity through other means, such as your TFN.

• Your business is a trust or super fund: These entity types may have different identifiers. The ABN for a trust is often linked to the trustee's details. Search using the trustee's name.

How to Keep Your ABN Safe for Future Reference

Once you have successfully answered the question "how to find my ABN", the next step is to store it in a safe and accessible place so you never need to search for it again. Here are suggestions:

- Write it down in a secure password manager or a dedicated business document folder.
- Save the confirmation email from the ABR to your cloud storage (e.g., Google Drive, Dropbox) with a clear file name.
- Add your ABN to your email signature or your digital business card.
- If you use accounting software, ensure that your business profile is complete and backed up.
- Print a copy and place it with your other important business papers, such as your insurance certificates.

Also, remember that you can always access your ABN via the ABR Portal or myGov – these accounts are usually accessible as long as you maintain your login credentials.

Conclusion

Losing track of your Australian Business Number can be frustrating, but as this guide shows, finding it is rarely difficult. Whether you check your old invoices, use the public ABN Lookup, log into the ABR portal, or call customer support, you have multiple reliable pathways to retrieve your ABN. By following the

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