

# Check if your employer can make deductions from your wages

If you have not been paid the amount you were expecting, talk to your employer first to check what's happened. It gives your employer the chance to:

- correct a mistake
- explain why a deduction has been made

## When your employer can make deductions

Your employer can only make a deduction from your pay if:

- your contract specifically allows the deduction
- it was agreed in writing beforehand
- they overpaid you by mistake
- it's required by law, for example Income Tax or a court order
- you missed work because you were on strike or taking industrial action

Check any written agreements to see if a deduction is allowed. For example you might have agreed to pay back part of a travel season ticket loan if you leave.

Your employer should let you know if they're about to make a deduction from your pay. They're [allowed to make certain deductions](#) that take your pay below the National Minimum Wage.

## Limits to deductions if you work in retail

Your employer can take a maximum of 10% of your weekly or monthly gross pay (your pay before tax and National Insurance) if you work in retail. This is to cover any mistakes or shortfalls, for example with cash or stock.

This limit does not apply to your final pay if you leave your job.

Your employer must let you know in writing if you owe them money. They must explain how they will claim it back before your next pay day.

## What happens if you're overpaid

Your employer has the right to claim back money if they've overpaid you. They should contact you as soon as they're aware of the mistake.

If it's a simple overpayment included in weekly or monthly pay, they'll normally deduct it from your next pay. You could also agree to pay the money back a different way, for example by bank transfer.

If the overpayment was a long time ago, or overpayments have been going on for several weeks or months, your employer should:

- be flexible and fair claiming the money back
- agree a repayment plan with you if needed

[Speak to an Acas adviser](#) to discuss your options if you:

- cannot agree a repayment plan
- believed you were being paid the correct amount and will struggle to pay the money back

## If you do not agree with a deduction

If you disagree with a deduction you should first try to [resolve it with your employer](#).

If you cannot come to an agreement with your employer, you might be able to [make a claim to an employment tribunal](#).

### How far back you can claim

If your employer only made one deduction, you need to make a claim to an employment tribunal within 3 months of the deduction.

If several deductions were made in a row, you have to claim within 3 months of the last deduction. You can claim up to 2 years back as long as there is not a gap of 3 months or more between deductions.

## Get wages you're owed when your employer is insolvent

If your employer is insolvent, you can contact the Redundancy Payment Service (RPS) to check if you can claim some or all of the money you're owed.

Email RPS on [redundancypaymentsonline@insolvency.gov.uk](mailto:redundancypaymentsonline@insolvency.gov.uk).