



Switching your payroll software?

Challenges you may face
and how to overcome them



The best time to make the switch

With April in sight, now is the time to research your payroll software choice for the 2025/26 tax year. For most payroll processors, the easiest time to migrate and make the switch as seamless as possible is at the beginning of a new tax year. Switching at the start of a new tax year only requires importing employee details and means you don't have to import across mid-year cumulative pay information.

Rather than diving in head-first, you can use these next few months to dip your toes into the payroll software currently on the market. By signing up for some free trials, you can spend time experiencing other payroll software, and gauge whether they're the right fit for your business. This means you can press go on your new payroll platform,

and start using it from April 6th, making life for you and your staff a whole lot easier.

Payroll software has transformed tremendously over the last ten years. With progressions in technology such as integrations with other software applications and the shift towards cloud capabilities, cutting-edge software has emerged over the last decade to provide a more streamlined experience for payroll processors.

Whether you're a payroll bureau looking to upgrade your systems, or a business owner looking to offer a more automated and streamlined solution for your employees, it can be difficult to know where to start.

In this guide, we've gathered the key challenges payroll processors face when choosing a payroll software, and features to look out for when choosing the right software for your business.



1. Migraine-inducing migration

The thoughts of having to migrate your payroll data from one system to another may have put you off switching providers in the past. As well as being a tedious process, there's the worry of something going wrong. However, with the right payroll provider, migrating your data can be a smooth process that won't take up too much of your time.

To minimise any potential issues when migrating over this data, careful preparation must be taken prior. Planning and preparing for this earlier rather than later can help you find your feet without any significant impact to the workflow in the office.

When making the move to a more automated payroll solution, taking the time to migrate your data now can save you hours of time in the long run. Once it's done, you'll be able to wave goodbye to your old software and start an exciting and more efficient chapter.



It is recommended that you invest in a software that offers free migration support. This ensures that should any issues crop up, you can speak to a migration specialist, who can help you through the process, without the worry of being charged for their assistance.

2. Spoilt for choice

There can sometimes be too many choices when it comes to choosing a payroll software provider. The more options you have, the harder it is to bite the bullet and make a final decision. We recommend making a list of your 'must-have' features when choosing a software provider.

Which software aligns best with your businesses goals? While going for the cheapest option can seem like the easiest solution, it's important to do your homework and consider all possibilities. Think about your business and your employees. If you are an accountant or payroll bureau, think about

your clients. Ask questions like: how many employees does the licence cover? How many payroll processors can access the payroll software? How easy is it to use and is training required? What processes do your staff need to automate to boost their workflow, and what tools would your clients benefit from?



Steps to making a decision

- Take some time out to ask your staff for some insight, and hone in on what features your business would benefit from the most.
- Google it. Look at what users of the software are saying. How long have they been using the software? How does it save them time? How good is the support they've received? Why did they choose this particular software over others?
- Ask for recommendations from friends in the industry, particularly those who have bureaus or businesses of the same size and scope as yours. What do they like the most about their current software provider, and what features do they feel they're missing out on?
- Prioritise value over cost. Different software providers offer different packages. While some might come across initially more cost-efficient than others, there could be certain features and services that cost extra that could end up costing you more in the long run.



3. Run parallel payrolls

Trying to balance switching to a new payroll software provider on top of your regular day-to-day duties can be overwhelming. It's not simply a matter of installing the software and beginning to run payroll; migration can require a small amount of downtime, and your team must be trained to use and make the most out of the new software. This means getting to know the user interface, learning how it functions, and getting comfortable with any unfamiliar features. While you can't slow down operations, you can't afford to process employees' payroll incorrectly either.

So, what's the solution? We recommend testing out a trial of the new payroll software alongside your existing payroll software, before making the switch. This allows staff time to get used to using the new software while providing a blanket of security, knowing that if anything should happen, you still have your existing software to fall back on. Just keep in mind that if you are running parallel pay runs, make sure that only one RTI submission is submitted, from either your old or new system.

4. Slacking support

When selecting a payroll software provider, quality customer support is an area that shouldn't be overlooked. There's nothing worse than spending an hour on the phone with a support agent, only to get slapped with a bill after hanging up. Even if your migration runs smoothly, chances are you'll have a question or query down the line that you will need help with. We believe that support should be something that's available to customers beyond the implementation phase, and that ongoing advice and assistance should be standard practice - without any added expenses.

Read support reviews and ratings on providers' websites, and check for any hidden costs. Keep an eye out for other support tools too – does the software provider host helpful webinars, provide product support guides, are there video tutorials easily available?





5. Legal labyrinth

You may be convinced the software is right for you and your team, but it's equally important the software complies with payroll legislation, HMRC regulations, and how it facilitates GDPR compliance. Take a look at the features offered by each supplier and determine the robustness of its security measures when it comes to making sure payroll data is kept safe and secure. Do they offer automatic data backups? Where are these backups stored? Are they GDPR

compliant, and do they follow best practices when it comes to things like sharing payslips or payroll reports with clients? While these challenges may seem daunting at first, with the right planning, it doesn't have to be.

Features your payroll software should have

Now that you have a list of payroll software providers, here are some features we suggest that you prioritise for your business. While this largely depends on the size and scope of your firm or business, here are some features we believe can make the biggest impact for most bureaux in terms of time efficiency and cost savings, all while helping you stay compliant with GDPR and payroll legislation.

1. Automatic enrolment functionality

Automatic enrolment can be confusing at the best of times. Using a payroll software with full auto enrolment functionality can automate tasks and ensure pension duties are being complied with.

For example, some payroll software providers can automatically assess employees' auto enrolment eligibility each pay period, and notify you when you have auto enrolment duties to perform. Payroll software can also be integrated with your pension provider, meaning pension files can be sent to the pension provider's online platform in just a few clicks.

2. Integration with accounting software

It can be frustrating manually entering the same figures into both your payroll and bookkeeping software. This also leaves room for errors to occur. To eliminate this, we recommend using a payroll software that has direct API integration with your accounting software. This means you don't need to export the payroll journal as a CSV file and upload it manually through your accounting software. Payroll journals can be sent directly to the general ledger in your accounting software, without having to move between the different applications. This provides a much more seamless workflow and reduces the risk of errors.



Did you know?

Bright's cloud payroll software, [BrightPay](#), is integrated with [8 different accounting packages](#), including Sage, Xero and QuickBooks.

3. Batch payroll processing capabilities

If you are an accountant or payroll bureau, processing payroll for single director clients can often feel like a burden. This is because all of the usual payroll tasks need to be completed, but their hours and pay stay the same each pay period. As well as this, as you're processing the payroll for only one person, it can result in little return on investment.

Using a batch payroll processing tool means you can process multiple static payrolls at

the same time, such as your single director clients. We recommend using payroll software that allows you to batch finalise open pay periods, batch send RTI & CIS submissions to HMRC, and batch check for coding notices. This means you can save time on administrative tasks, especially if you have a large number of single director companies on your payroll or payrolls that don't change from week to week.

4. The reputation to back it up

You want to use a software that has the reputation behind it. Make sure to check out each software provider's online reviews and see if they've won any awards over the past few years.

On top of that, it's important to take a look at their support reviews. Is their support free, and more importantly, is it of a high standard? Check out their most recent webinars and see how often they run them. This way you know you'll be kept up to date on the latest payroll news and legislative changes, and can benefit from industry advice. Whether it's auto enrolment, GDPR, or how payroll bureaus can make your payroll services more profitable, you will always be one step ahead.



5. Goes beyond just payroll

Using payroll software that offers complementary features beyond just payroll can provide payroll bureaus with an opportunity to expand their service offering. These added features can also help increase employee satisfaction. For example, HR can often overlap with payroll. There are payroll software providers out there that can offer HR solutions that work alongside the payroll software itself. These could include an online hub where employers and employees can access payslips and other important HR documents, as well as online access to an annual leave management system.

6. A free trial period which offers full functionality

When trialling a new payroll software, it's important you get to use the full functionality of the software and go through the entire payroll process, from start to finish. Repetition is key when learning, so getting to process payroll twice or multiple times within the trial is even better again. This gives both you and your staff the opportunity to use the software to its fullest, without having to make any commitment.

Always ensure that the trial version you use has full functionality with no limitations on any of the features, including auto enrolment, payrolling of benefits, integration with accounting systems and more.



Want to try out a new payroll software?

Bright's payroll software solution, [BrightPay](#), currently offers a 60-day free trial of our cloud-based payroll software which you can [start using today](#).

Why switch to BrightPay?

If you're looking to switch to a new payroll software provider, we recommend you consider Bright's payroll solution, [BrightPay](#). BrightPay is a multi-award-winning payroll software that makes managing payroll quick and easy. With over 30 years of experience in the industry, here are the key reasons we believe you should consider making the switch to BrightPay today.

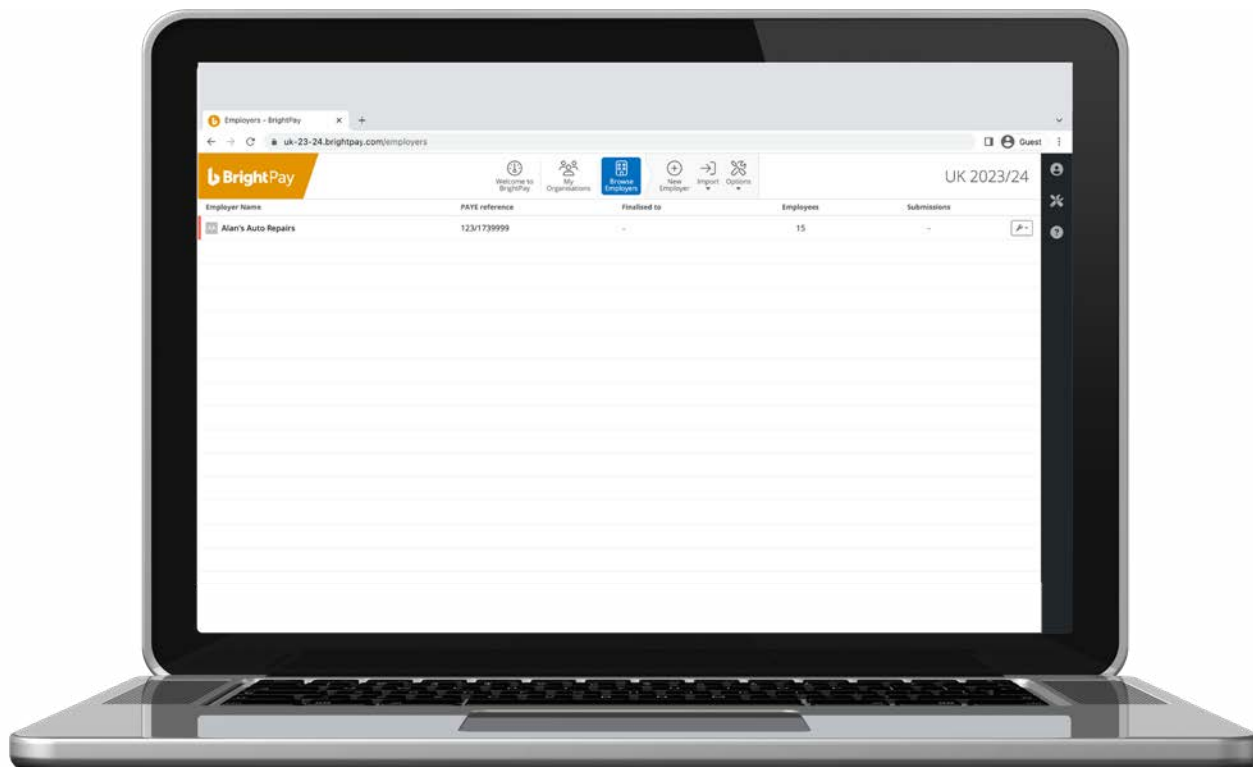
1. Experience the benefits of working on the cloud

[BrightPay's cloud-based payroll software](#) was launched at the start of the 2023/24 tax year, and lets you access the software directly through an internet browser, rather than on the desktop of your computer. Here are some of its benefits:

- Make changes to the payroll in real-time
- Takes multi-user capabilities to the next level, no matter where your colleagues are based, changes anyone makes to the payroll data will be instantly visible

- Accessibility from any device. You'll no longer need to download the application on to multiple PCs; you can now access the payroll on-the-go, no matter where you are

**BrightPay's cloud-based payroll software is currently limited to a maximum of 250 employees (including leavers).*





Discover BrightPay's latest features

Want to know what's new in BrightPay Cloud? [Click here to check it out and see how it compares to BrightPay for Windows.](#)

2. User-friendly interface

If you have experience with BrightPay desktop, then you'll know how easy it is to navigate the software. BrightPay's interface is intuitive, meaning it's hard for things to go wrong, or for you to get lost in the software.

BrightPay's cloud-based software, looks very similar, in terms of user-interface, and has little to no learning curve for those switching from the desktop-based version.

3. Free migration (and ongoing) support

Here at BrightPay, we offer free migration consultations, free migration support, and free ongoing support for all of our customers. Our team is on standby and ready to provide expert assistance throughout your transition journey.

Switching over to new software can seem daunting, which is why you will have your own dedicated account manager when you switch to BrightPay. They'll work with you to help manage your setup process, ensuring a smooth and hassle-free transition to BrightPay. Making the switch could be the start of a new chapter in your payroll services. We also host regular free webinars and have plenty of helpful online resources to help make payroll as hassle-free for you as possible.

The support we offer ranges from free phone and email support from our payroll specialists to [webinars](#), [guides](#), and other documentation. We understand the importance of [customer support](#) both when you're starting out using the software, as well as further down the line. This is why our support has been free for nearly 30 years.

Our powerful software allows users the flexibility of importing data either via CSV file or FPS.



Book your free migration consultation

We have a dedicated team of migration specialists on hand to help you through the set-up and data migration process. [Book your call today.](#)

4. Batch processing tool

With BrightPay's batch payroll processing tool, payroll bureaus can batch process payroll for multiple clients at the same time. This is especially useful for single-director clients or clients with static payrolls. This includes the ability to finalise payslips, check for coding notices, and send outstanding RTI and CIS submissions to HMRC for multiple clients, at the same time.

This feature allows you to save time on manual, repetitive tasks, especially if you have a number of payrolls that don't change from week to week or if you have a large number of single director clients.



5. Self service portals

BrightPay cloud offers an **employee self-service portal**, where employees can submit annual leave requests, view, print or download their payslips, and request changes to their personal details.

BrightPay cloud also offers an **employer self-service portal**. The benefits of this portal include:

- The ability for payroll bureaus to request payroll information from clients through an online portal. This means you won't have to manually add the payroll information or upload a CSV file
- Sending a payroll summary to clients for approval, before the payslips are finalised. This ensures that your clients are accountable for the accuracy of their employees' payroll
- Payslips are sent automatically to clients and employees once the payslips are finalised or at a time of your choosing
- An employer dashboard where employers can view their company leave in a user-friendly calendar format, accept/reject leave requests, access payroll reports, view their employees' payslips, upload important HR documents, and much more

6. Pay employees, subcontractors and HMRC directly through the software

BrightPay's integration with payment platform, Modulr, lets you pay employees, subcontractors and HMRC directly through the payroll software. Payments are processed in under 90 seconds, 365 days a year, 24 hours a day. You can also schedule payments in advance. Using our integration with Modulr gives you the flexibility to make any last-minute changes to the payroll with peace of mind that employees will always be paid on time.

7. Reports

Within BrightPay, you can create your own customised reports, with over 100 data items to choose from. These reports can be viewed, printed or downloaded.

Clients can also run reports themselves online, meaning less back and forth emails and less admin work for both parties.

8. Multi-user remote access

With cloud-based payroll software like BrightPay, you can access your payroll files from an internet browser. That means from any device with an internet connection, you can process the payroll through Chrome, Safari or Firefox, in real-time. Cloud payroll software lets multiple members of your team work on the same client file and changes are visible instantly to any other users.

You will be able to see what users are working on the file, and where in the file they are making changes. This means no more having to manually download the latest changes people have been working on.



9. Integration with accounting and pension systems

BrightPay cloud integrates with 13 accounting, pension, and payment systems, including Xero, QuickBooks, Sage, FreeAgent, Nest, The People's Pension, Smart Pension, Aviva and Modulr.

Our accounting software integrations mean that you can send payroll journals directly to the general ledger from within BrightPay, in seconds. Our pension provider integrations automate your auto enrolment duties by sending employees' pension files directly to the pension provider, at the click of a button.

BrightPay automates auto enrolment duties even further by constantly monitoring employee eligibility and notifying you when an employee becomes eligible to be enrolled or re-enrolled onto a pension scheme. The software also automatically generates customised auto enrolment letters, as well as re-enrolment letters.

10. Multi-award-winning software



BrightPay is a multi-award-winning payroll software, recognised for its excellence and innovation. It has been named Payroll Software of the Year at the prestigious ICB LUCA Awards in 2024, 2023, 2022, 2021, and 2019.



“

I have only just this month started using BrightPay - where was I all these years using other software which is incomparable to BrightPay! I am discovering new things all the time on this fantastic software. It is by far the best I have ever used.

”

- Howard Sherbourne, Numbers R Us Ltd

What next?

Our multi-award-winning, user-friendly and innovative software let users support their clients while profitably running their practices. Want to learn more about our software? Book a quick demo of any of our products below to see them in action.



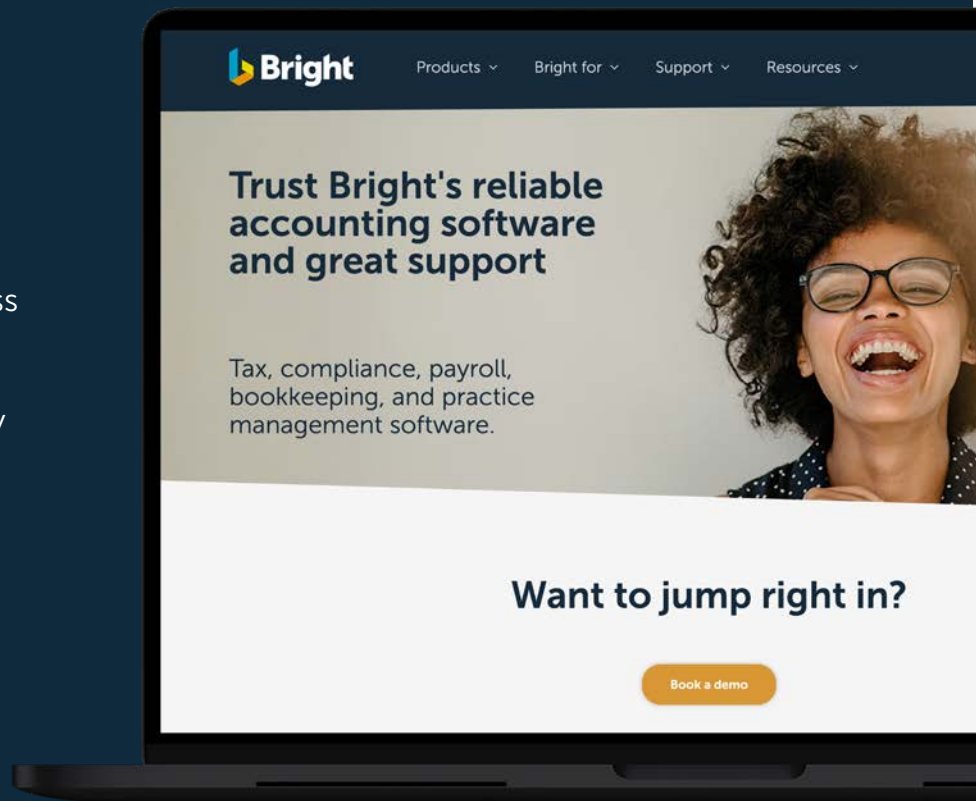
Book a demo

More ways we can help

Bright provides a suite of industry-leading software solutions for accountants and bookkeepers across the UK and Ireland. Find out even more ways Bright is improving the lives of accountants, just like you, by clicking the link below.



Find out more



Simply brilliant software



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