Tax Estimator

Intuit
Joanna Redmond - Sr Content Designer

The team and stakeholders

My partners:

Designers: UX and Content

Design manager

Content manager

Project manager

Legal

Production

My role and goals:

As a content designer, I have a goal of clear, concise, and consistent copy that is on-brand and inclusive. I also want content that is simple and easy to understand.

We're confident helpers, but we also know when to shut up.

How can I align design goals with business and PM goals? How can I collaborate while also meeting goals?

Customer problem and additional context

I am a self-employed tax filer

Trying to get an understanding of how my business will be impacted by taxes, and my total tax liability

But, I have no clue how to calculate what I owe

Because I am unsure how my business income and expenses translate into what I will owe

Which makes me feel apprehensive at tax time.

This project only pertains to sole-proprietors

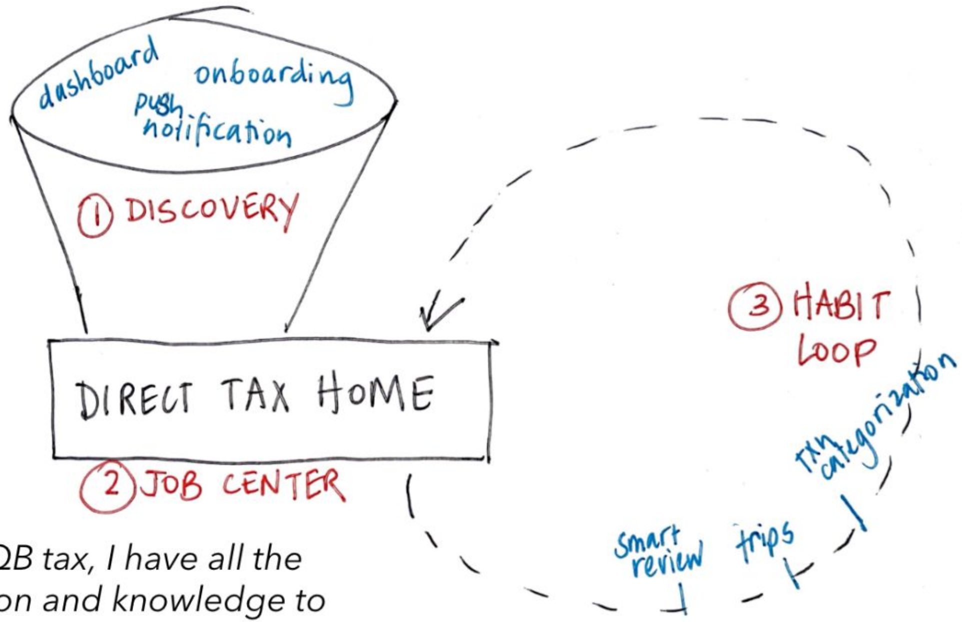
Business goals:

Helping customers get organized year-round and be successful during tax time.

Getting them into the tax habit loop.

Solutions designed for differing customer problems

1 - I know that QB can help me get organized for tax time.

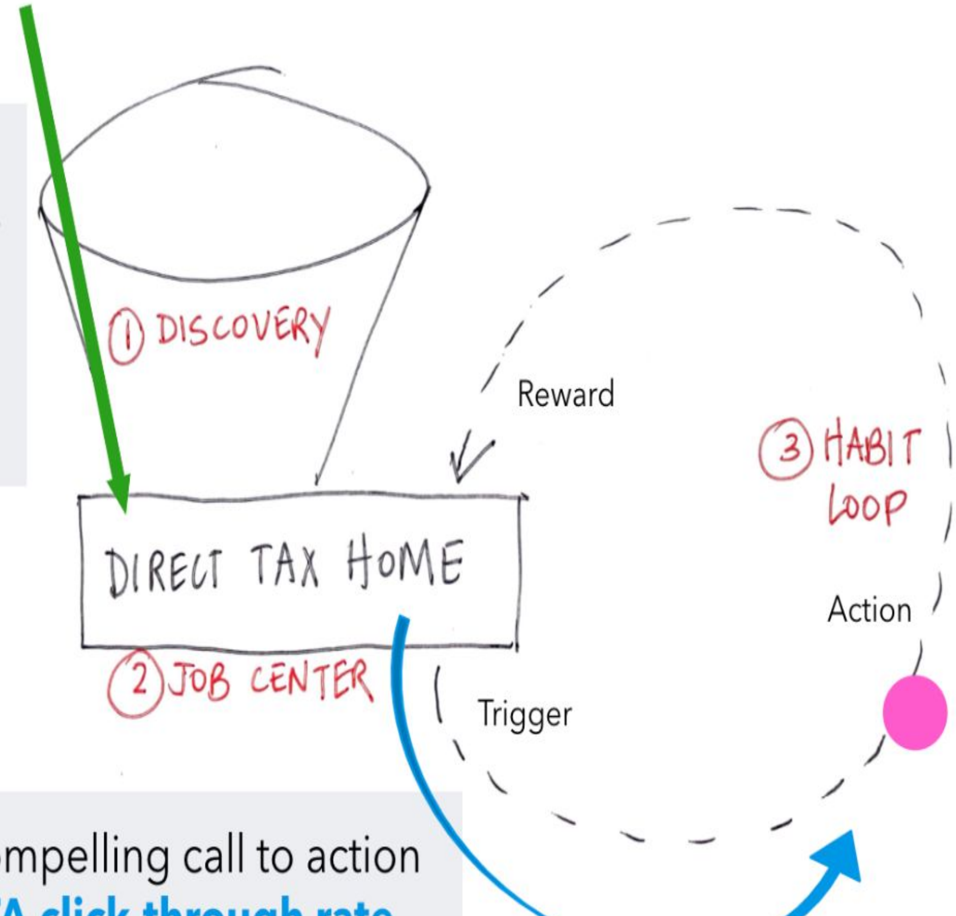


3 - I want to know my potential deductions & how much I owe in taxes at any given point in time.

2 - With QB tax, I have all the information and knowledge to maximize my deductions by myself.

motivated customer will be propelled through the flow

Tax-interested customers discover the functionality
Direct Tax Page Views



Motivated to do the work
 # txn added first 31d

Compelling call to action
CTA click through rate

1st round design goals: What we want to learn and hypothesis

Help users get started in the tax tab.

Prioritize education and guide customers to categorize their transactions.

What do users think about taxes they may owe?

What existing knowledge do they have?

Where do they need help the most?

How can we best lend a hand?

Do QuickBook tax filers understand how their tax bill is calculated and what goes into this calculation?

Self-employed tax filers are interested in seeing how different income and deduction amounts affect their tax bill.

Seeing an interactive change between different values makes taxes more approachable and illustrates the relationship between all tax-related elements.

If we allow users to add known upcoming transactions, they can make more accurate predictions for income and expenses. (Flag sellers make more in June/July, which they can add and get a more accurate projection)

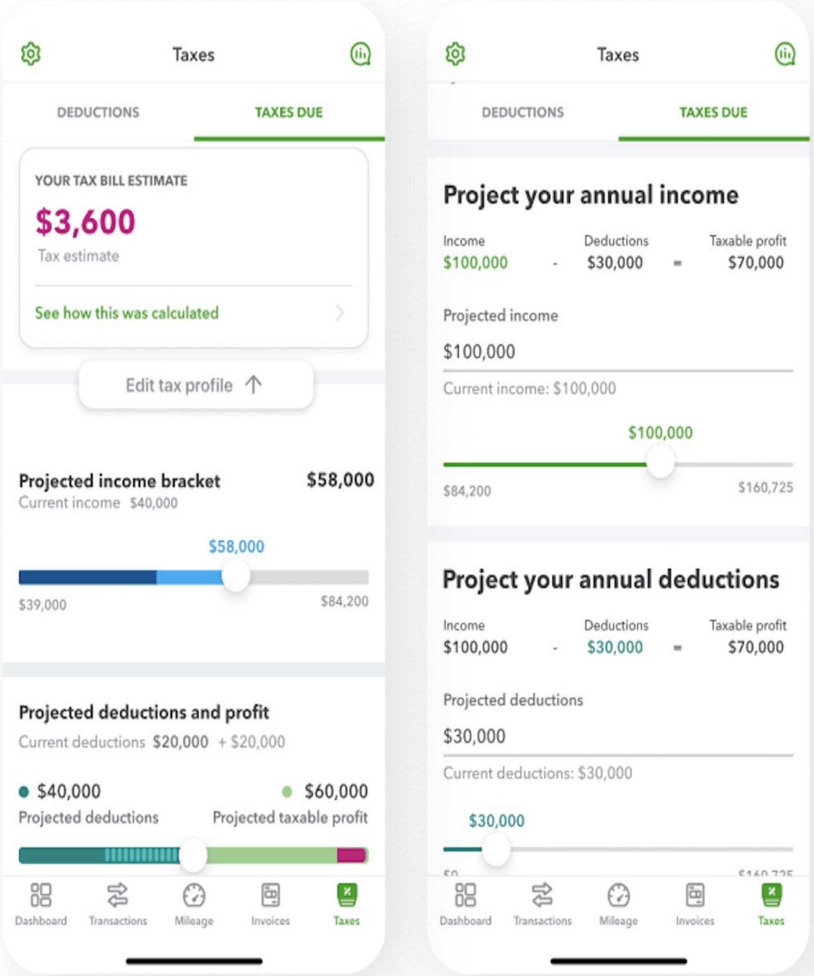
Customer interviews

Testing “playground” concept

Mobile 1st design

RITE - Rapid Interactive Testing and Evaluation (RITE)

Usertesting task oriented testing (mobile)



Discovering where we went wrong

We explored different concepts using sliders to help users better understand the correlation between future income and deductions and their tax bill.

Customers had difficulty projecting future amounts when they didn’t have a solid understanding of current/past amounts.

Users don’t see planned projections as accurate.

“I don’t want to play around with fake numbers. For projecting deductions, that’s something I expect the software to tell me.”

“I’m hoping this system will walk me through this projection.”

“I don’t like thinking about something that is not actually in my bank account - until it is, it’s not real to me.”

Users do not want to deal with theoretical numbers when calculating their taxes.

Most participants did not feel comfortable or confident enough to make their projections and preferred QuickBooks to make projections for them.

Users found it difficult to differentiate between projected transactions and planned ones.

People don’t view planned transactions (flag sales) as “real,” Therefore, there’s some cognitive dissonance between what’s in their books and their planned transactions.

They like real-time data. When users were allowed to project upcoming transactions, they expected these transactions to be in their books (which was not our intention)

Users saw the “playground” as a waste of time when it was not real.

They wanted the software to do the work for them.

Another insight: The real problem uncovered

After doing this round of research, we discovered the real problem: Users see QuickBooks as a place to run their business, but their taxes are highly personal.

Personal information such as tax filing status and other sources of income were being ignored. But these factors can significantly change their tax bill.

Customers were not seeing how this data was factored in.

Iterations made based on insights: AKA Pivot!

Because we saw that users wanted QuickBooks to make projections for them, we iterated to bring more transparency into the QuickBooks projections and what's happening on the backend.

We saw that the more playful we made these tools, the more users were confused about how their estimated tax bill was calculated.

We decided to move away from this feature completely.

Back to the drawing board - with a new goal!

How can we better help customers better understand their tax bill estimate?

Our new goal:

Increase transparency of the back-end calculation to strengthen users’ perception of accuracy, usefulness, and trust.

New customer problem

I am a small business owner

Trying to understand how much I might owe in taxes

But, I’m unsure of the tax numbers I’m seeing

Because it’s difficult to comprehend tax laws

Which makes me feel like I’m not in control of my fiances

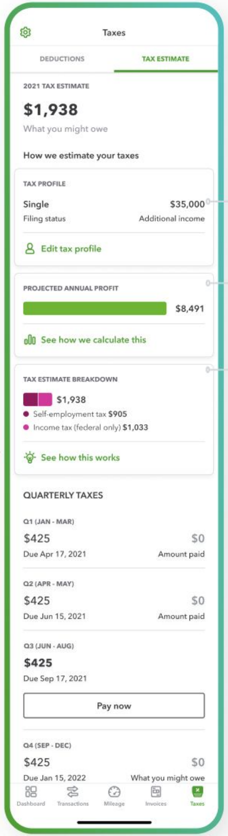
Transparency is the key

Our customers really want more transparency around how QuickBooks uses their information to get estimates.

We want to show them that we understand their tax needs, without complicating it with everything happening in the background.

ESTIMATES LANDING PAGE

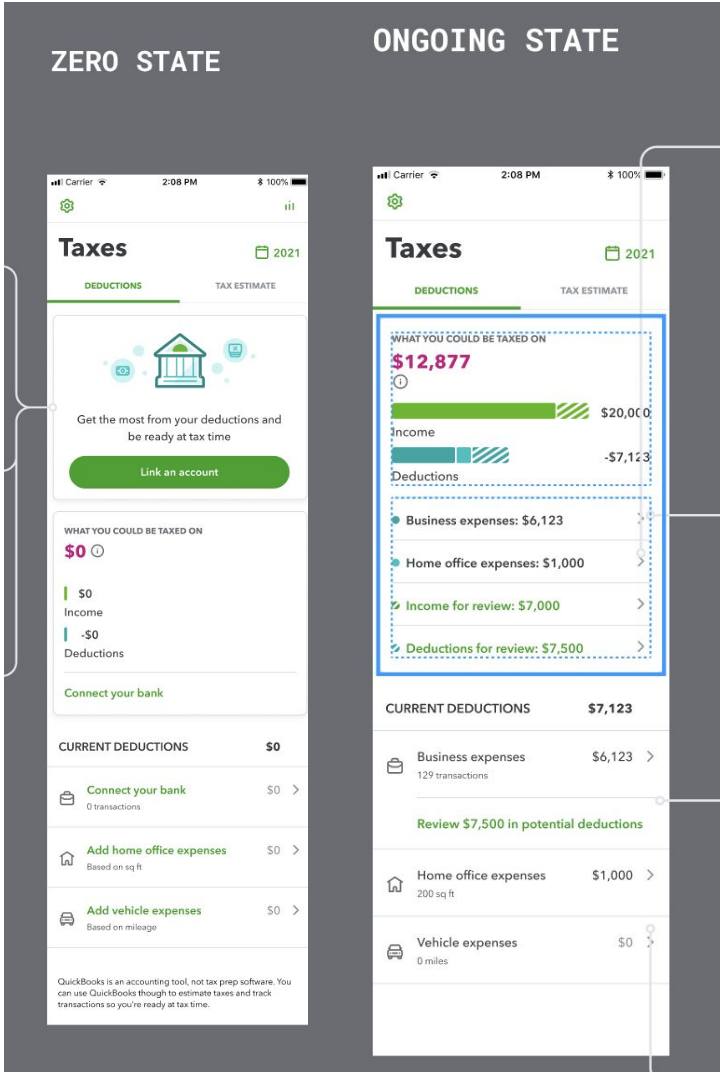
DEFAULT/ONGOING STATE:



New design approach

Because tax calculations use mostly data from a user's personal information, we focused on the redesign of the tax profile flow.

We created screens showing the back-end work being done in a user-friendly way, that allows them to see how projections and estimates work.



The PM ask

Getting users to complete their tax profile was a massive push from the PM because measuring users' habits while completing their tax profile is how we will drive success metrics.

How can we help drive the ask?

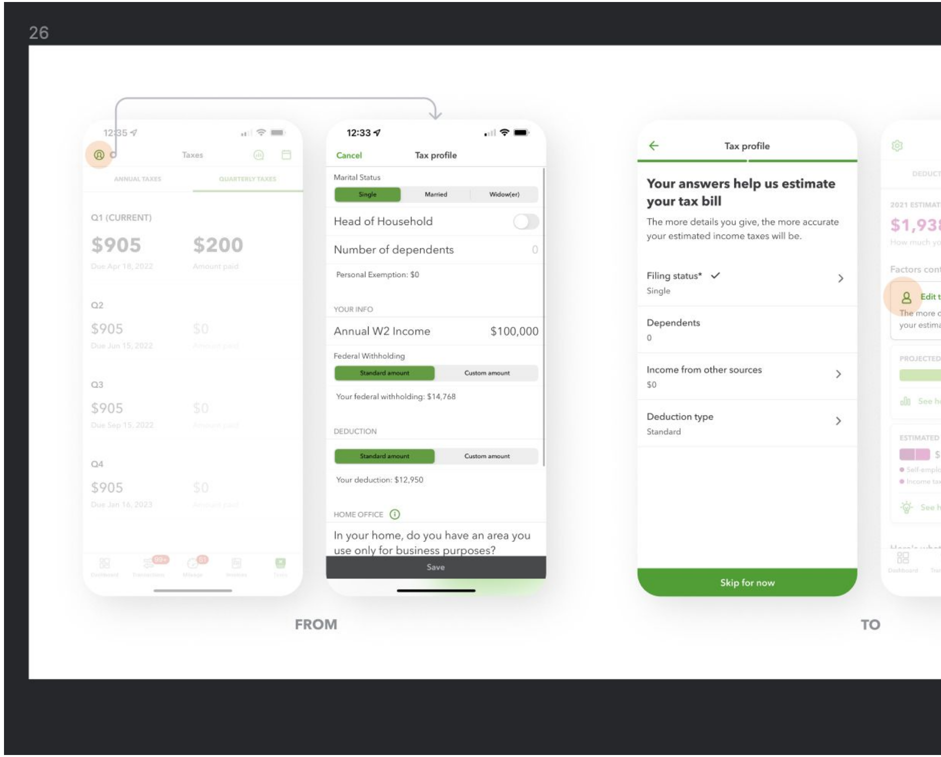
Solving for discoverability

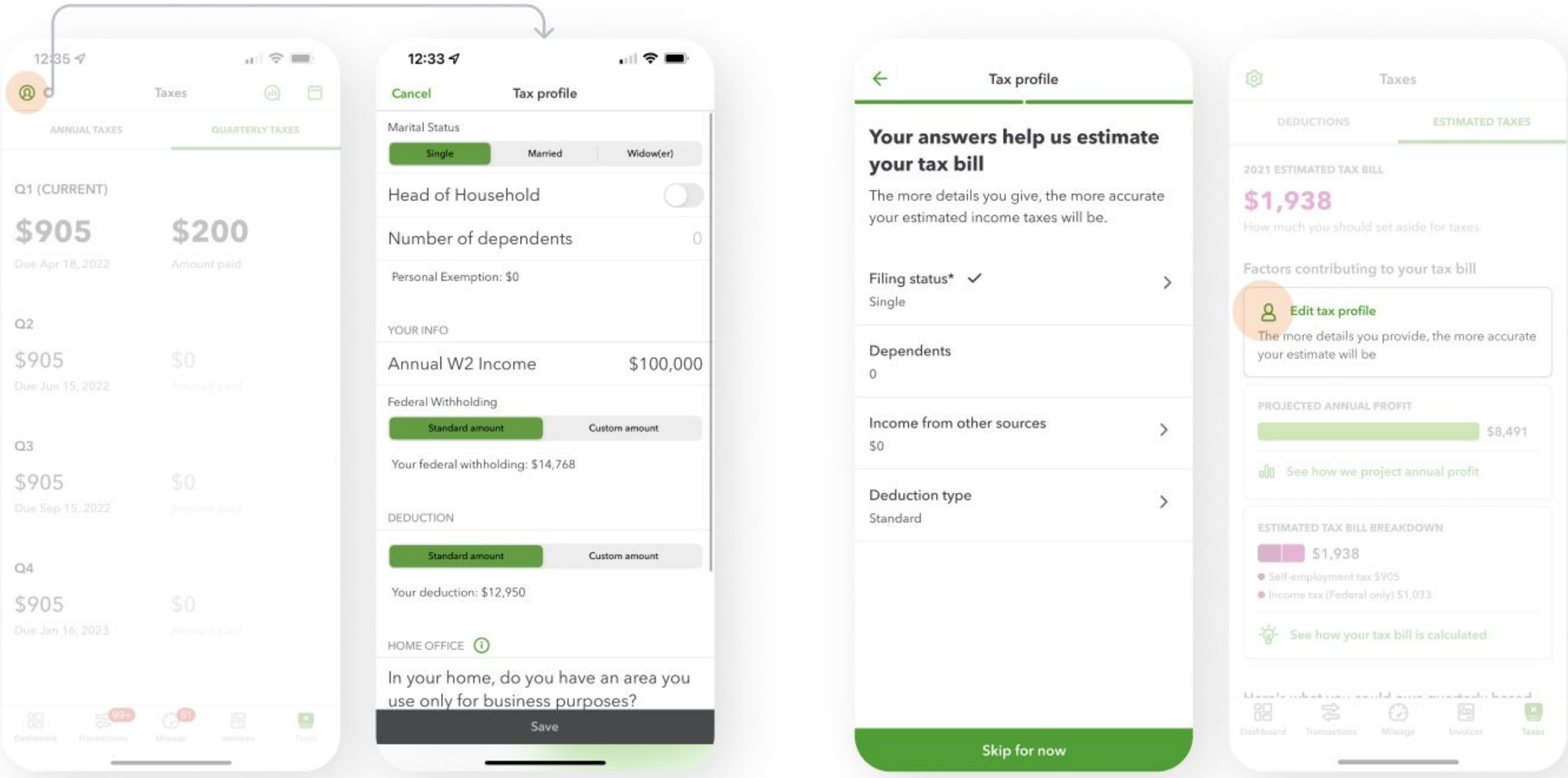
The tax profile was buried under the top left corner, and it takes users to their settings, and users then have to click Tax profile, which is also hard to follow, and the benefit of filling it out is unclear.

There's no link between the tax profile and what a user is asked to fill out.

I wanted to redesign the tax profile to clarify exactly how their data was being used to calculate their bill.

The purpose of filling out the tax profile is to get your estimate, so I made the tax profile a call to action within the estimated tax page.

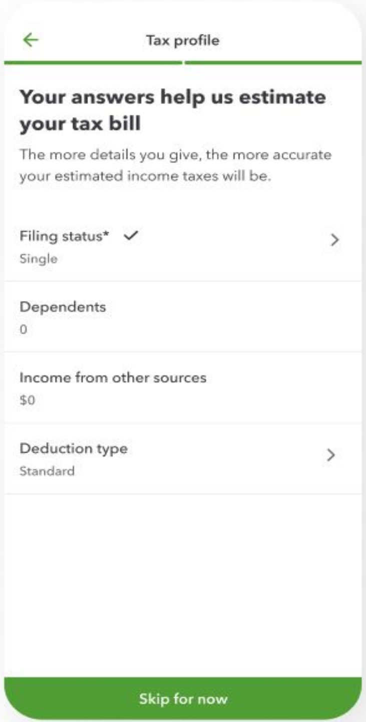




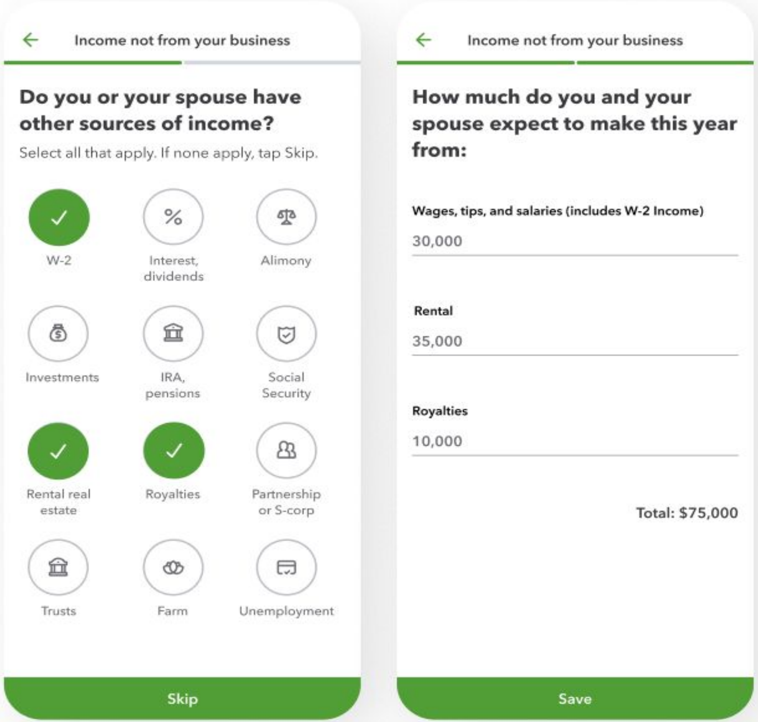
12:35
Taxes
ANNUAL TAXES
QUARTERLY TAXES
Q1 (CURRENT)
$905
$200
Due Apr 18, 2022
Amount paid
Q2
$905
$0
Due Jun 15, 2022
Q3
$905
$0
Due Sep 15, 2022
Q4
$905
$0
Due Jan 16, 2023
12:33
Cancel
Tax profile
Marital Status
Single
Married
Widow(er)
Head of Household
Number of dependents
0
Personal Exemption: $0
YOUR INFO
Annual W2 Income
$100,000
Federal Withholding
Standard amount
Custom amount
Your federal withholding: $14,768
DEDUCTION
Standard amount
Custom amount
Your deduction: $12,950
HOME OFFICE
In your home, do you have an area you use only for business purposes?
Save
Tax profile
Your answers help us estimate your tax bill
The more details you give, the more accurate your estimated income taxes will be.
Filing status*
Single
Dependents
0
Income from other sources
$0
Deduction type
Standard
Skip for now
Taxes
DEDUCTIONS
ESTIMATED TAXES
2021 ESTIMATED TAX BILL
$1,938
How much you should set aside for taxes
Factors contributing to your tax bill
Edit tax profile
The more details you provide, the more accurate your estimate will be
PROJECTED ANNUAL PROFIT
$8,491
See how we project annual profit
ESTIMATED TAX BILL BREAKDOWN
$1,938
Self-employment tax $905
Income tax (Federal only) $1,033
See how your tax bill is calculated

FROM

TO


Tax profile
Your answers help us estimate your tax bill
The more details you give, the more accurate your estimated income taxes will be.
Filing status*
Single
Dependents
0
Income from other sources
$0
Deduction type
Standard
Skip for now

MVP

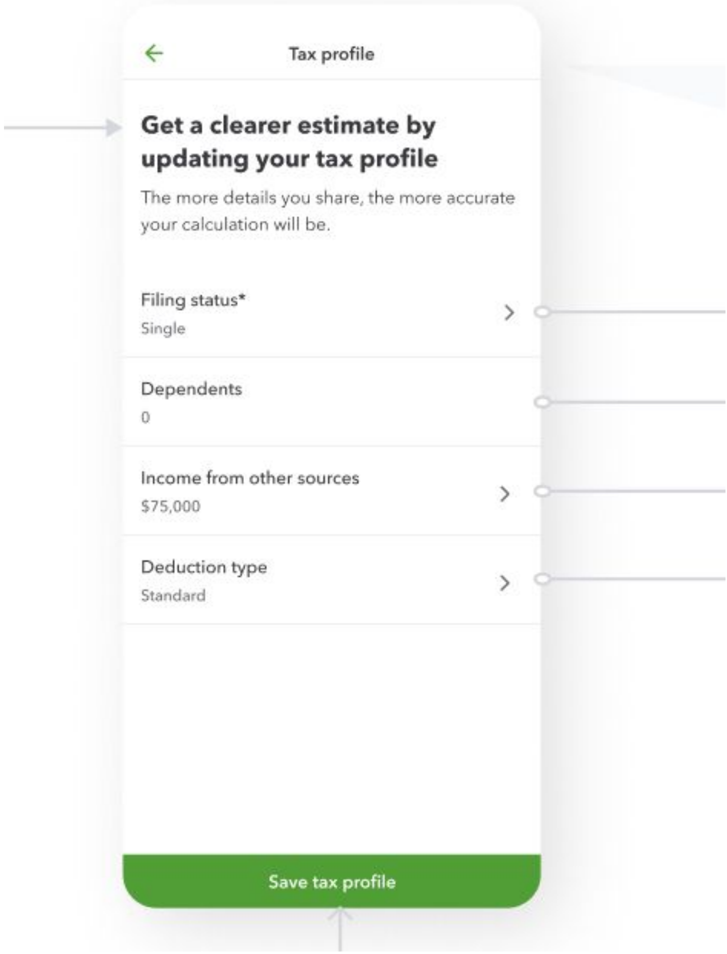

Income not from your business
Do you or your spouse have other sources of income?
Select all that apply. If none apply, tap Skip.
W-2
Interest, dividends
Alimony
Investments
IRA, pensions
Social Security
Rental real estate
Royalties
Partnership or S-corp
Trusts
Farm
Unemployment
Skip
Income not from your business
How much do you and your spouse expect to make this year from:
Wages, tips, and salaries (includes W-2 Income)
30,000
Rental
35,000
Royalties
10,000
Total: $75,000
Save

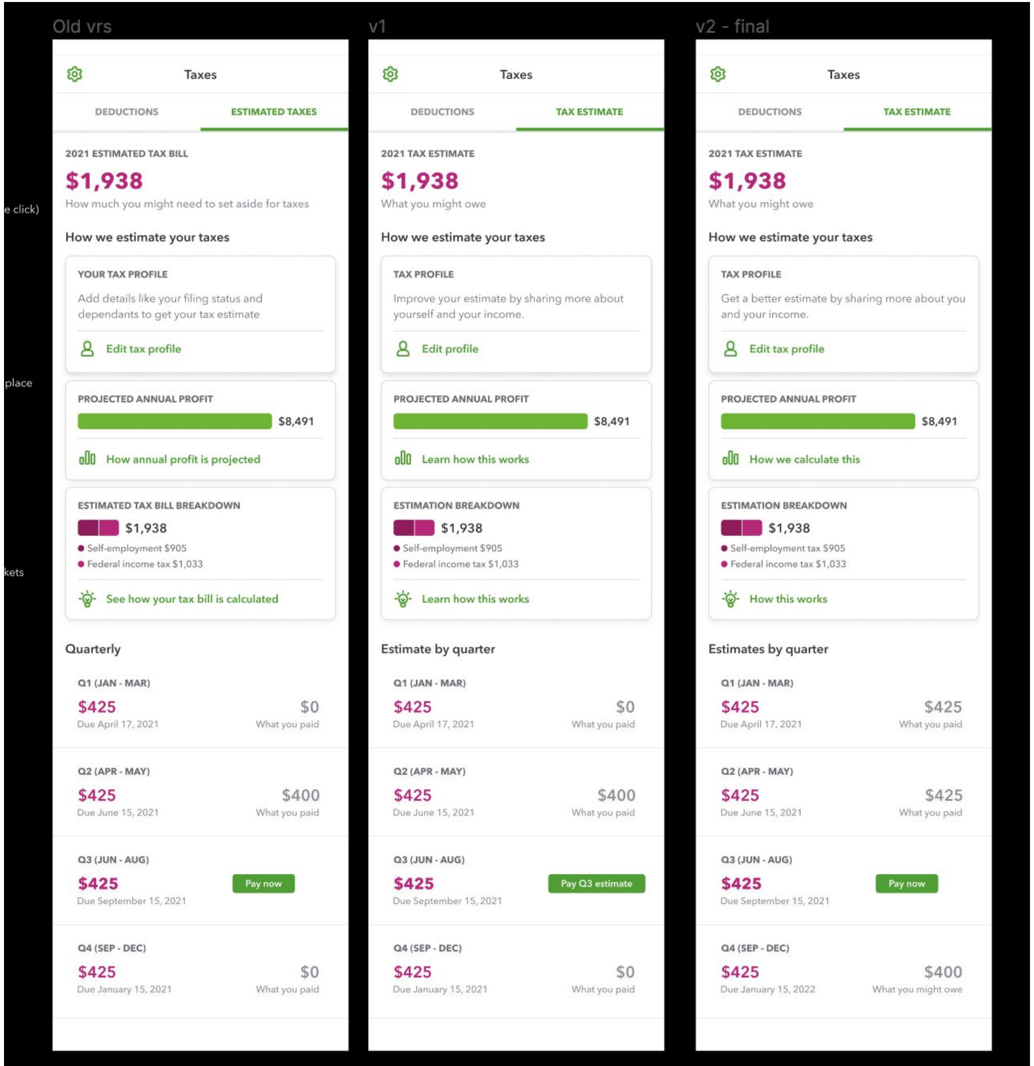
IDEAL

Making Tax Profile comprehensive - and easy to follow/use

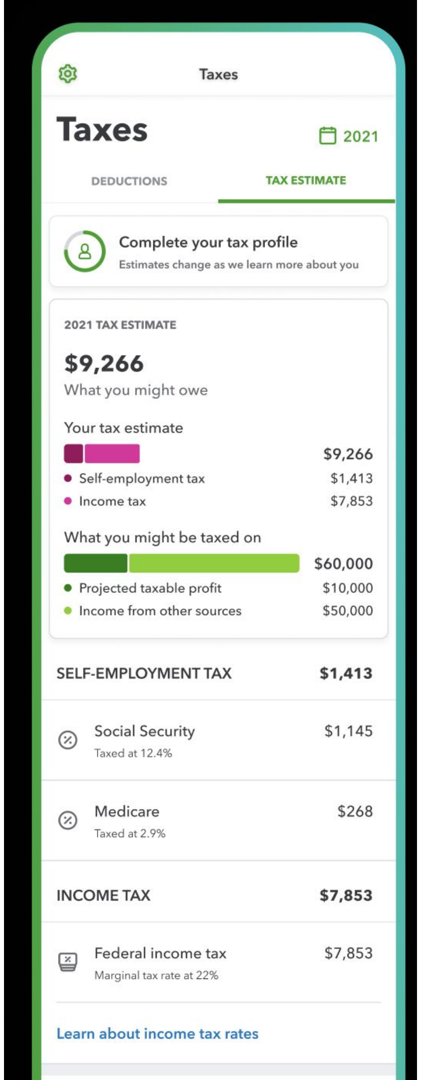
After updating the tax profile and more testing, we saw that users are more confident that the tax estimate is accurate and personalized.

TAX PROFILE





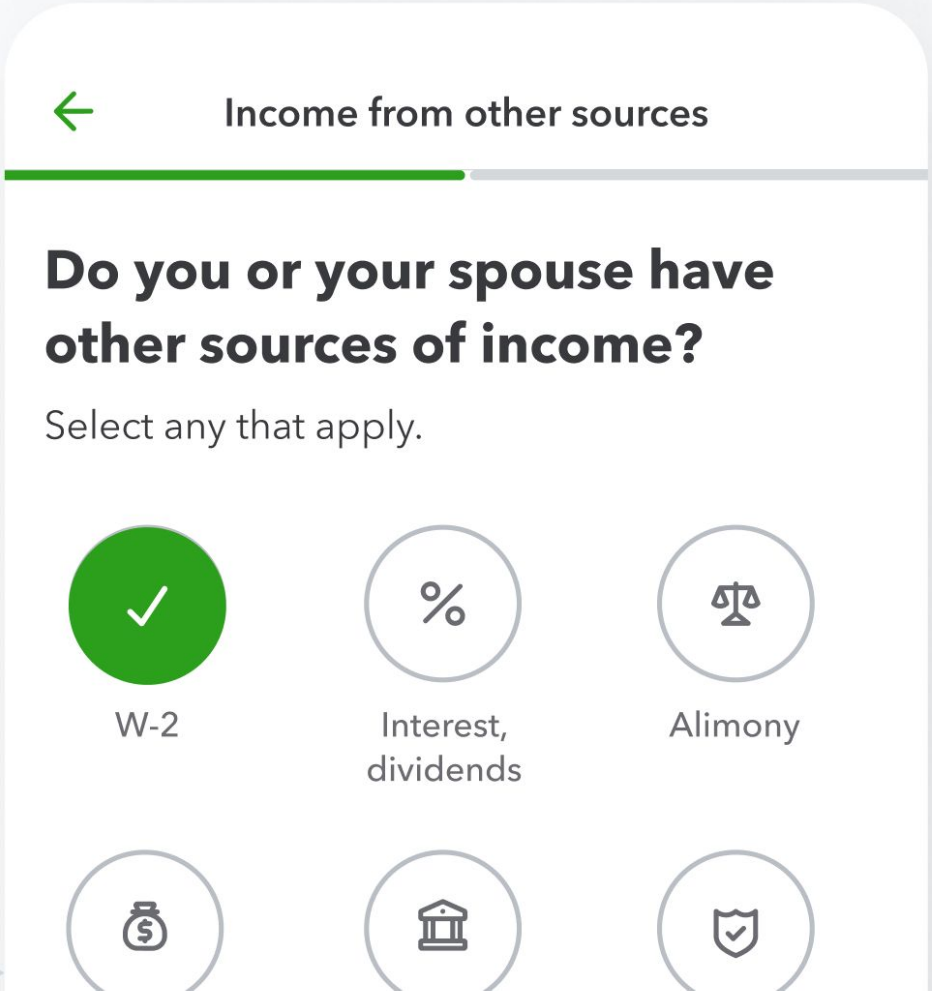
Old vrs
v1
v2 - final
e click)
place
kets
Taxes
DEDUCTIONS
ESTIMATED TAXES
2021 ESTIMATED TAX BILL
$1,938
How much you might need to set aside for taxes
How we estimate your taxes
YOUR TAX PROFILE
Add details like your filing status and dependants to get your tax estimate
Edit tax profile
PROJECTED ANNUAL PROFIT
$8,491
How annual profit is projected
ESTIMATED TAX BILL BREAKDOWN
$1,938
Self-employment $905
Federal income tax $1,033
See how your tax bill is calculated
Quarterly
Q1 (JAN - MAR)
$425
Due April 17, 2021
$0
What you paid
Q2 (APR - MAY)
$425
Due June 15, 2021
$400
What you paid
Q3 (JUN - AUG)
$425
Due September 15, 2021
Pay now
Q4 (SEP - DEC)
$425
Due January 15, 2021
$0
What you paid
Taxes
DEDUCTIONS
TAX ESTIMATE
2021 TAX ESTIMATE
$1,938
What you might owe
How we estimate your taxes
TAX PROFILE
Improve your estimate by sharing more about yourself and your income.
Edit profile
PROJECTED ANNUAL PROFIT
$8,491
Learn how this works
ESTIMATION BREAKDOWN
$1,938
Self-employment $905
Federal income tax $1,033
Learn how this works
Estimate by quarter
Q1 (JAN - MAR)
$425
Due April 17, 2021
$0
What you paid
Q2 (APR - MAY)
$425
Due June 15, 2021
$400
What you paid
Q3 (JUN - AUG)
$425
Due September 15, 2021
Pay Q3 estimate
Q4 (SEP - DEC)
$425
Due January 15, 2021
$0
What you paid
Taxes
DEDUCTIONS
TAX ESTIMATE
2021 TAX ESTIMATE
$1,938
What you might owe
How we estimate your taxes
TAX PROFILE
Get a better estimate by sharing more about you and your income.
Edit tax profile
PROJECTED ANNUAL PROFIT
$8,491
How we calculate this
ESTIMATION BREAKDOWN
$1,938
Self-employment tax $905
Federal income tax $1,033
How this works
Estimates by quarter
Q1 (JAN - MAR)
$425
Due April 17, 2021
$425
What you paid
Q2 (APR - MAY)
$425
Due June 15, 2021
$425
What you paid
Q3 (JUN - AUG)
$425
Due September 15, 2021
Pay now
Q4 (SEP - DEC)
$425
Due January 15, 2022
$400
What you might owe



Taxes
Taxes
2021
DEDUCTIONS
TAX ESTIMATE
Complete your tax profile
Estimates change as we learn more about you
2021 TAX ESTIMATE
$9,266
What you might owe
Your tax estimate
$9,266
Self-employment tax $1,413
Income tax $7,853
What you might be taxed on
$60,000
Projected taxable profit $10,000
Income from other sources $50,000
SELF-EMPLOYMENT TAX $1,413
Social Security $1,145
Taxed at 12.4%
Medicare $268
Taxed at 2.9%
INCOME TAX $7,853
Federal income tax $7,853
Marginal tax rate at 22%
Learn about income tax rates

4/25

- Title
  - Income not from your business -> Income from other sources
  - Consistency with button on previous screen
- Body
  - Select all that apply. If none apply, tap Skip. -> Select any that apply.
  - Removes need to call out the CTA for an edge case user. “Any” is inclusive to imply that none is a valid choice.
- CTA
  - Skip (if none) -> Next (for all use cases)
  - Next as the consistent CTA for users with/without other sources of income. Skip implies no other sources of income is not a valid choice (they didn’t “complete” the step)



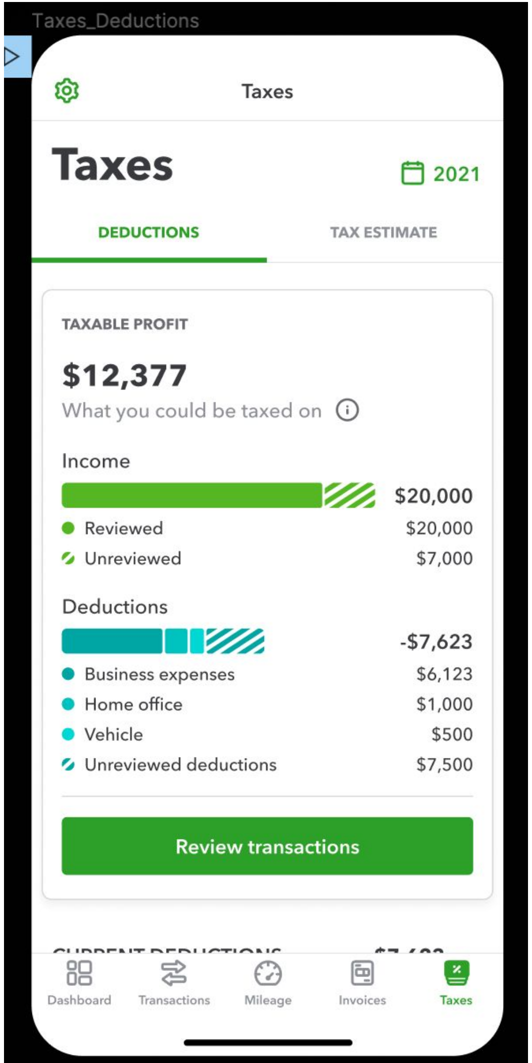
Continuing the journey: the issue with “review”

After conducting user testing sessions for the new tax tab:

We asked: “What action would you take here?”

They answered: “There's not going to be any action here."

Why did the big green button not make it obvious there was an action to take?



Joanna Redmond 3:41 PM

Also wanted to share this from Mirabel:

On the Banking page, we currently use “For review” as the tab name, so when I’m talking about transactions that haven’t been reviewed yet, I typically say “for review” to match the UI.

That being said, there are significant issues with the “reviewed”/“for review” language, and I’d love to see us move away from it. The problem is that customers don’t understand that “reviewing” is mandatory. The word “review” sounds passive and optional to customers, when in fact you NEED to do it to get the transactions into your books/reports/charts.

In customer testing, I’ve had much better luck with the words “categorized”/“uncategorized.” Customers are much more likely to understand that they need to action when they see the word “uncategorized.”

Rahul did separate research on this topic and got the exact same results. (I do have the doc for this, looking for it now)

James W mentioned we can also work to change "unreviewed" that is currently showing in Production.

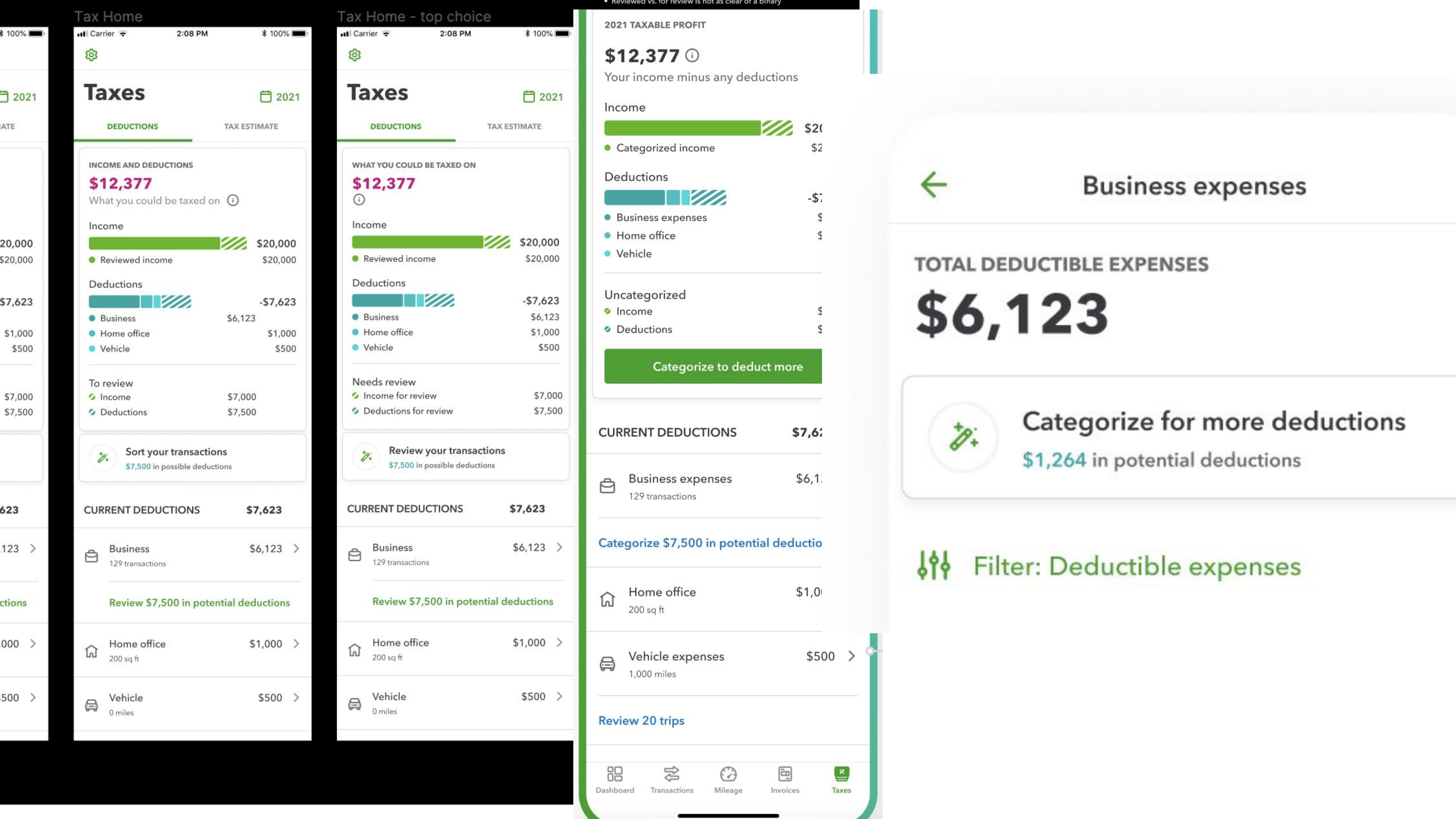
👍👍 2

Smitha Papolu 3:44 PM

Thanks for sharing the above Joanna. Customers resonate with the word category as they already do that in their own workflows, whether or not they use QuickBooks. It matches the real world so to speak.

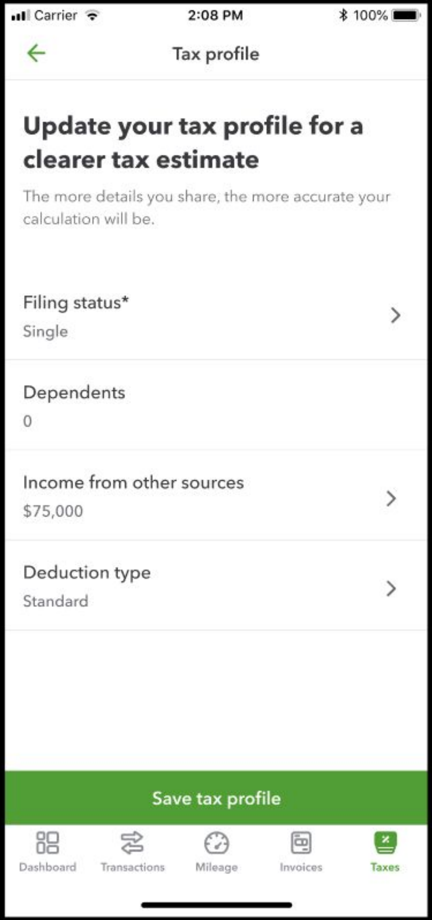
This was one of the reasons we used the word Sort to keep it simple but it could create confusion with not matching the UI (we did not observe this in testing however – customers understood they had to categorize) (edited)

👍 1

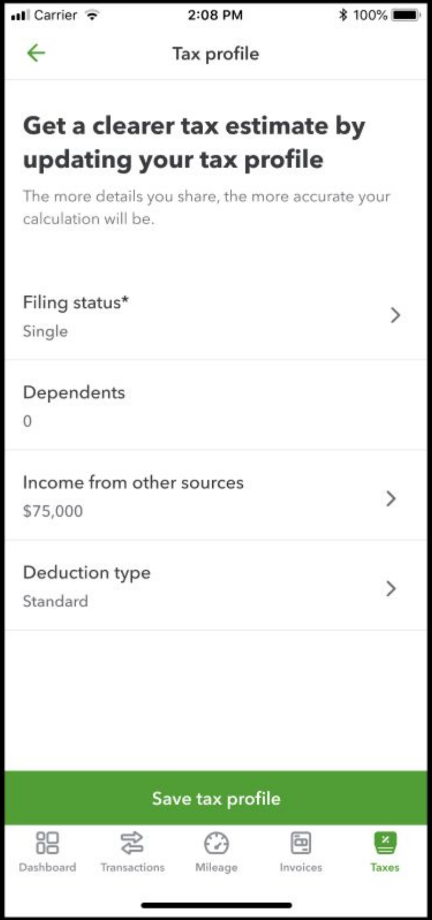


Tax Home
Carrier 2:08 PM 100%
Taxes
2021
DEDUCTIONS
TAX ESTIMATE
INCOME AND DEDUCTIONS
$12,377
What you could be taxed on
Income
$20,000
Reviewed income $20,000
Deductions
-$7,623
Business $6,123
Home office $1,000
Vehicle $500
To review
Income $7,000
Deductions $7,500
Sort your transactions
$7,500 in possible deductions
CURRENT DEDUCTIONS $7,623
Business $6,123
129 transactions
Review $7,500 in potential deductions
Home office $1,000
200 sq ft
Vehicle $500
0 miles
Tax Home - top choice
Carrier 2:08 PM 100%
Taxes
2021
DEDUCTIONS
TAX ESTIMATE
WHAT YOU COULD BE TAXED ON
$12,377
Income
$20,000
Reviewed income $20,000
Deductions
-$7,623
Business $6,123
Home office $1,000
Vehicle $500
Needs review
Income for review $7,000
Deductions for review $7,500
Review your transactions
$7,500 in possible deductions
CURRENT DEDUCTIONS $7,623
Business $6,123
129 transactions
Review $7,500 in potential deductions
Home office $1,000
200 sq ft
Vehicle $500
0 miles
2021 TAXABLE PROFIT
$12,377
Your income minus any deductions
Income
Categorized income
Deductions
Business expenses
Home office
Vehicle
Uncategorized
Income
Deductions
Categorize to deduct more
CURRENT DEDUCTIONS
Business expenses
129 transactions
Home office
200 sq ft
Vehicle expenses $500
1,000 miles
Review 20 trips
Dashboard
Transactions
Mileage
Invoices
Taxes
Business expenses
TOTAL DEDUCTIBLE EXPENSES
$6,123
Categorize for more deductions
$1,264 in potential deductions
Filter: Deductible expenses

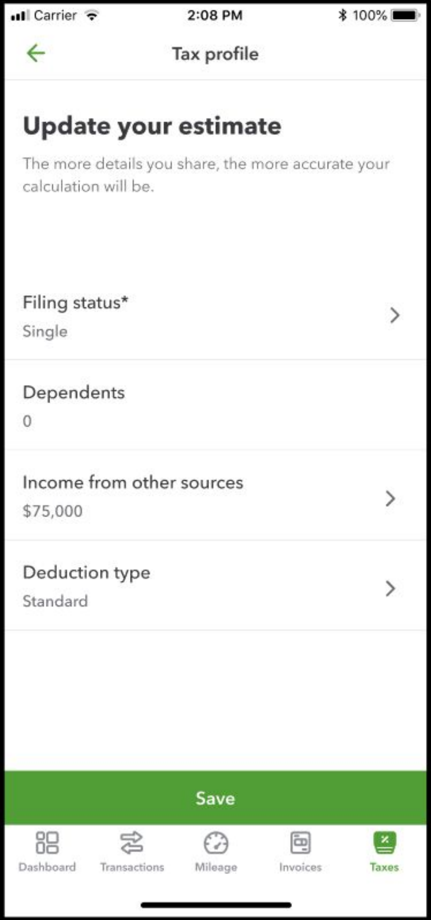
Tax Home



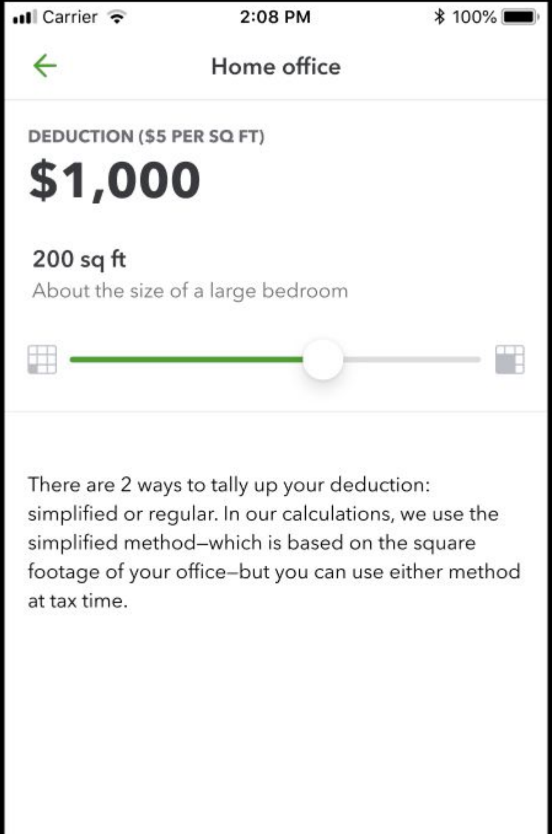
Tax Home



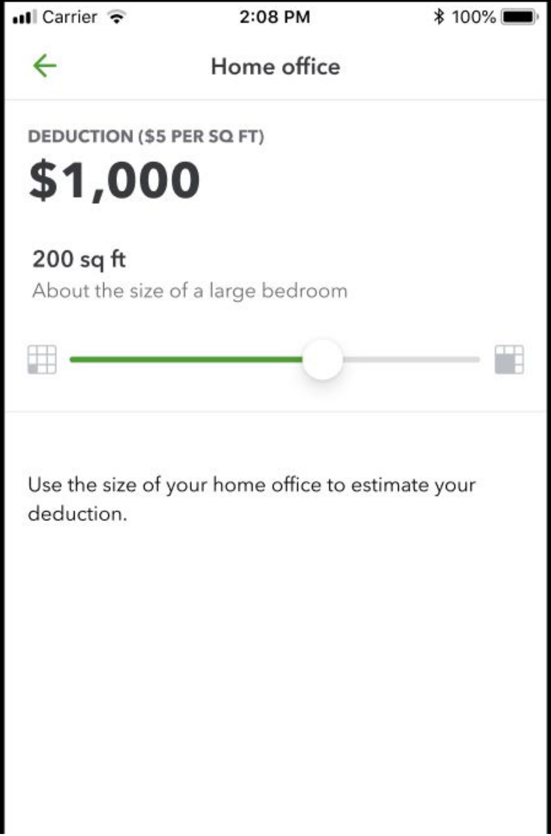
Tax Home



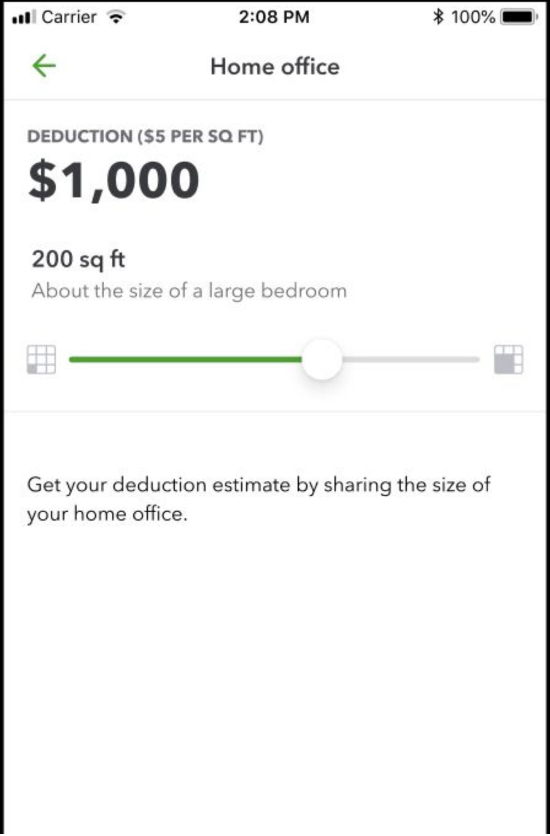
Tax Home



Tax Home



Tax Home

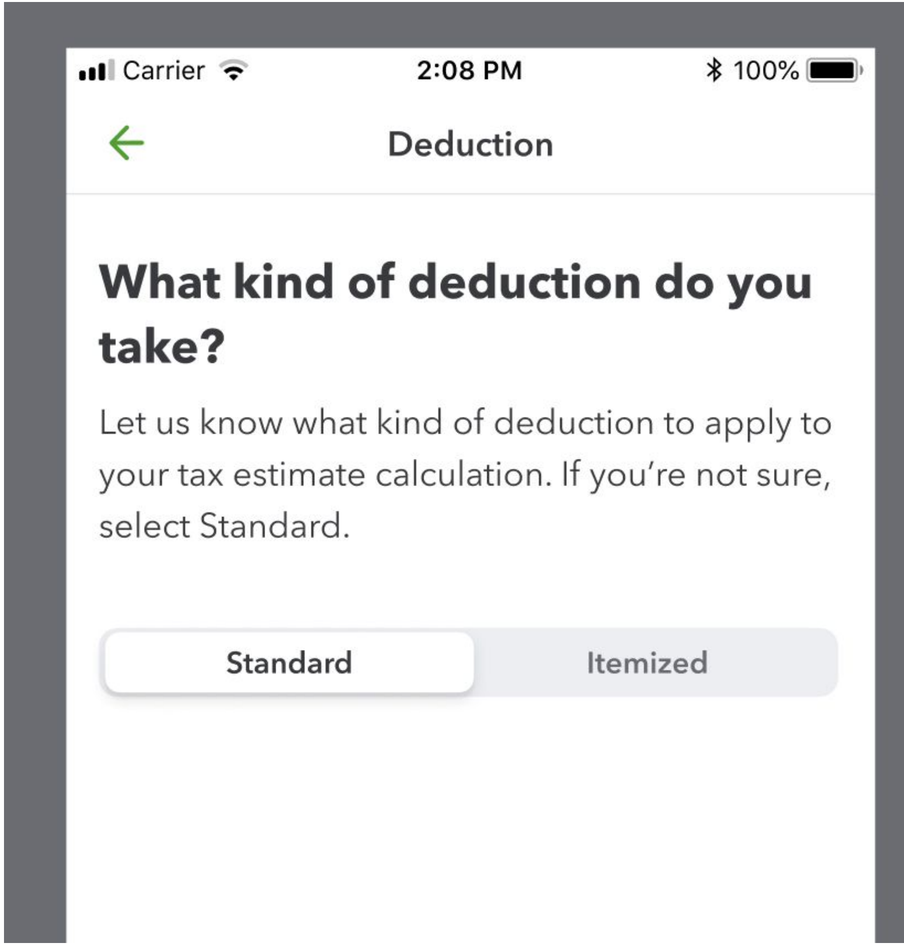


Aligning with other teams/products & leveraging what we have

Hey all, I just checked in with the TurboTax content team on the deduction type capitalization, and they gave some great feedback! Apparently TT capitalizes Standard Deduction everywhere because they treat it as a proper noun (there's only one of it vs. itemized being a collective group). To **enforce consistency** here we'll be following that pattern. I've updated the designs we were looking at to match this.

Other things I learned:

- Rather than "a Standard Deduction", IRS/TT says "the" Standard Deduction
- You can claim a limited amount of "certain expenses" -> "qualified expenses"
- We can remove "type" in the header, and just say "which deduction will you take?"
- they also gave a suggestion for the last bottom line explaining that itemized may give you a better deduction ("this can be more beneficial...")



Is there room for moments of delight? Will talking about the UI be tedious?

Content doesn't always need to spell everything out.

People come to our products to get things done, not to read about menus and buttons.

Language about links, navigation, and general UI might not always be accessible. It can sometimes be strategic to *not* say something (content be a fix for UI issues).

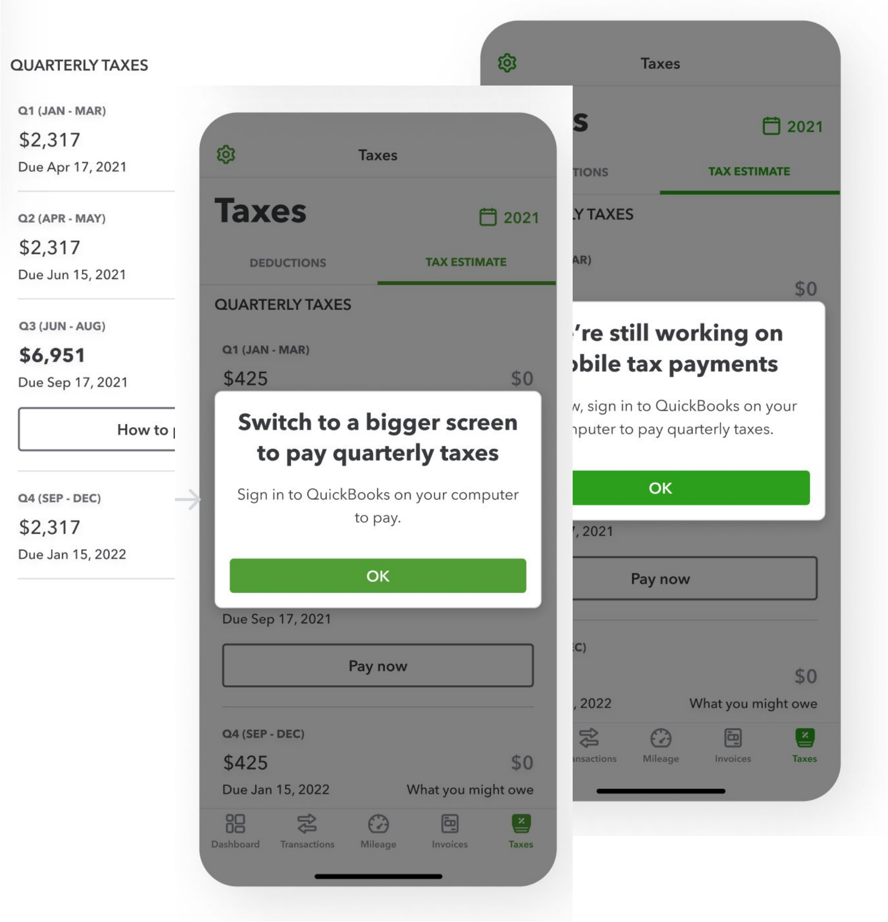
PROJECTED ANNUAL PROFIT

Aligning with business constraints

Problem: We need to be careful with promising that features will be delivered in the future. For legal revenue recognition reasons.

Answer: I think that would make sense if the functionality wasn't available at all, but it is ready on the web.

Solution: Helps us measure the interest.



Next steps

Aligning web with mobile

Planning for gathering feedback data, viewing retention, drop off rates, conversion rates

Possibly more customer research

How we measure success

Completion of tax profile

Banks linked/added

Transactions and trips categorized

Percentage of work done during tax season

Customer feedback in interviews or surveys

Analytics of drop offs, retention

Strategy added: Word lists

Income Tax

US Income Tax Words (QB)

Use/don't use: ☐

Language used	Part of speech	Definition	Notes/rati
categorized	adj	Describes an expense that the user has selected a category for. Categorized expenses contribute to estimated deductions.	
uncategorized	adj	Describes an expense where the user has not yet chosen a category for the transaction. Uncategorized expenses will not contribute to estimated deductions.	
categorize	verb	When a user chooses a category from a list for their transaction. This selects an account from their Chart of Accounts.	
category	noun	What we call accounts in the Chart of Accounts. This concept is extended to how users "categorize" their expenses to categories, or accounts, in their Chart of Accounts.	
confirm	verb	When the user verifies that something the QB AI did for them is right. (Ex. match transactions, add payee, transfer made, or to confirm that an AI categorization is correct)	
detail type	noun	Hidden in business view, in accountant view it's called "tax form section"	
review	verb	Do not use for anything that needs user action. According to testing, users understand this as quickly "scanning something" with no action needed.	
sort	verb	This is used in-product for using filters for looking at lists. Do not use for categorizing transactions.	

Income Tax

Words Under Review

US QBIT

Language used	Part of speech	Definition	Needs review	Notes/rationa	Other geo equivalents	Broader content de
account	noun		☑			☑
account type	noun		☑			☑
business income	noun		☑			☐
current deductions	noun		☑			☐
deduction	noun		☑			☐
end-of-year taxes						
estimate						
expense						
income						
income outside yo business						
link (an account)						
mark						
overdue (amount)						
project						

Income Tax

Tax Words Not to Use

US Tax Words Not to Use

Tax type	Language used	Part of speech	Definition	Notes/rationa	Broader content decision	Last reviewed
Income 4	review	verb	Do not use for anything that needs user action. According to testing, users understand this as quickly "scanning something" with no action needed.		☑	Jun 13, 2022
	sort	verb	This is used in-product for using filters for looking at lists. Do not use for categorizing transactions.		☑	Jun 13, 2022
	other income	noun			☐	Jun 13, 2022
	income from other sources	noun			☐	Jun 13, 2022
	+					

UK Tax Words Not to Use

Tax type	Language used	Part of speec	Definition	Notes/rationa	Broader content decision	Last reviewed
Income 2	QB uk word test				☐	Jun 13, 2022

Thanks!

Any questions?