



7 Best HR and Payroll Software for new businesses in 2026

Description

Build a strong foundation from day one.

Starting a new business is exciting but also full of challenges, especially when it comes to managing people and payroll. From paying employees accurately to staying compliant with tax laws, getting these basics right from the beginning builds trust and saves time later.

Modern HR and payroll tools make that process easier. They automate routine tasks, keep your business compliant, and help you focus on growth. The best systems for new businesses combine ease of use, affordability, and scalability so you can start small and grow confidently.

How to choose the right payroll system

When selecting an HR and payroll platform, focus on simplicity, automation, and scalability. Look for tools that reduce data entry, handle tax filings automatically, and provide clear support options.

It also helps to consider how well the system integrates with your accounting and time tracking tools. The right solution will save time, prevent compliance mistakes, and scale with your business as it grows.

Here are seven HR and payroll systems helping new businesses build a strong foundation for success in 2026.

1. [Paylocity](#) – The complete platform for payroll and HR growth

Founded in 1997 and headquartered in Schaumburg, Illinois, Paylocity serves more than 41,000 clients across the United States. The company provides a cloud-based platform that combines payroll, human resources, benefits, and workforce management in one system.

Paylocity helps small and midsize businesses manage payroll accurately while staying compliant with federal and state regulations. It includes tools for onboarding, performance management, and employee engagement. The mobile app and reporting dashboards give both leaders and employees flexibility and visibility from anywhere.

Key features:

- Automated payroll and tax filing across all U.S. states
- Built-in compliance support and analytics
- Mobile access and employee self-service tools
- Scalable design that grows with your workforce

Best for: Entrepreneurs who want a single, scalable system from the start.

2. Gusto – The easy start for first time employers

Gusto, originally launched as ZenPayroll in 2012, is designed for small businesses that need simple payroll and HR management. Based in San Francisco, Gusto serves more than 400,000 U.S. businesses.

The platform automates payroll, calculates and files federal and state taxes, and offers direct deposit and digital pay stubs. It also includes HR tools for onboarding, benefits, and employee documentation. The interface is simple and friendly, which makes it a favorite for first time employers.

Core strengths:

- Payroll automation with built-in tax filing and reporting
- Health benefits, 401(k) plans, and time tracking available
- Intuitive dashboard for employers and employees

Best for: Startups and microbusinesses that want an easy payroll and benefits solution.

3. Rippling – For startups focused on technology and speed

Founded in 2016 and based in San Francisco, Rippling offers a unified platform that connects HR, payroll, IT, and finance. It automates many of the manual processes new businesses face, from employee onboarding and payroll setup to software and device management.

Rippling integrates easily with hundreds of popular business applications, which helps new companies centralize data and avoid double entry. Its flexibility makes it ideal for remote or fast-growing teams.

Core strengths:

- Unified system for HR, payroll, and IT management
- Automated onboarding and employee record updates

- Integration with accounting and collaboration tools
- Supports multi-state and remote payroll

Best for: Startups that value automation and integration across all business systems.

4. OnPay – Affordable and reliable for small employers

OnPay, founded in 2011 and headquartered in Atlanta, Georgia, offers a balanced combination of value and reliability. The platform includes payroll, tax filing, and HR tools for one monthly price without hidden fees.

It provides guided payroll setup, handles federal and state tax filings, and includes features for onboarding and benefits management. OnPay also serves a variety of industries including nonprofits, professional services, and agriculture.

Key advantages:

- Transparent flat pricing with unlimited pay runs
- Payroll and tax filing support across all U.S. states
- Employee self-service and onboarding tools
- Integration with accounting software such as QuickBooks and Xero

Best for: Small business owners who want dependable payroll and HR tools at a reasonable cost.

5. ADP Run – A trusted choice from an experienced provider

ADP, headquartered in Roseland, New Jersey, has been a leader in payroll and HR services for decades. Its RUN platform is tailored for small businesses that need reliable payroll processing, compliance support, and access to HR tools as they grow.

RUN Powered by ADP handles payroll calculations, direct deposits, and tax filings. It also offers HR advisory services, benefits options, and mobile access for employees. New businesses can later upgrade to ADP's more advanced solutions as they expand.

Main advantages:

- Reliable payroll and tax filing automation
- Access to HR resources and employee benefits programs
- Scalable upgrade path for growing companies

Best for: New employers who want proven dependability and strong compliance assistance.

6. TriNet Zenefits – HR made simple for small and growing teams

TriNet Zenefits focuses on helping small businesses manage HR functions without needing a dedicated HR department. Founded in 2013 and headquartered in Austin, Texas, it provides a platform that combines payroll, benefits, and compliance tools in one system.

Zenefits also integrates with popular accounting and productivity apps, giving startups flexibility to customize their HR workflow. The platform's clean interface and guided setup make it accessible even for first-time users.

Core features:

- Centralized HR, payroll, and benefits management
- Compliance tools for federal and state requirements
- Integrations with QuickBooks, Slack, and other software

Best for: New teams that need a clear and easy HR and payroll system.

7. QuickBooks Payroll – A natural choice for QuickBooks users

QuickBooks Payroll, part of Intuit's software suite, is designed for small businesses already using QuickBooks Online. It connects accounting and payroll in real time, ensuring accurate financial records and simpler tax filing.

The platform offers automatic payroll runs, same-day direct deposit, and employee self-service access. It is well suited for new business owners who already manage their books through QuickBooks and want everything in one place.

Key capabilities:

- Seamless integration with QuickBooks accounting
- Automated payroll taxes and filings
- Simple setup and clear pricing

Best for: New businesses that use QuickBooks for accounting and want built-in payroll.

Final Thoughts

A solid HR and payroll system is one of the most valuable investments a new business can make. It ensures your team gets paid accurately, your taxes are handled properly, and your records stay organized.

Choosing the right software from the start gives you a foundation of trust and efficiency that supports your business long after launch. With these seven platforms, new businesses in 2026 can build confidently, stay compliant, and focus on growth.

Category

1. Human Resources
2. IT

Tags

1. HR Technology

Date

12/07/2025

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