Year-End Stock Take Checklist

Tick each item as you go. Keep the signed count sheets for the accountant.

Two weeks before

- [ ] Pick the date and tell suppliers: no deliveries on count day if you can help it.
- [ ] Decide the scope: whole shop, or shop floor one day and yard the next.
- [ ] Book stock in from every delivery note that has arrived. Unbooked deliveries are the biggest source of 'missing' stock.
- [ ] Tidy and label shelves. Every location needs a code (A1, A2, Yard-3) so a count sheet means something.
- [ ] Print or prepare count sheets by shelf (both are in this kit).

The day before

- [ ] Freeze the expected quantities: export your stock list or start the count in your system so the baseline is fixed.
- [ ] Clear returns, damaged goods and customer orders into a marked area and count them separately.
- [ ] Assign shelves to people. Two people per area, one counts, one writes, is faster and more accurate than one.
- [ ] Charge phones and scanners, find the step ladder, put the kettle on.

Count day

- [ ] Count everything in a location before moving on; mark the shelf as done so nothing is counted twice or skipped.
- [ ] Count what is there, not what should be there. Do not look at the expected figure while counting.
- [ ] Write the unit you counted in (each, box, length). A 'box of 200' counted as '1' is the classic error.
- [ ] Part-used packs: count as a fraction or weigh them, and be consistent.
- [ ] Anything without a label or a code goes in a 'no code' pile with a note; do not guess a product.
- [ ] Record sales and deliveries that happen during the count separately so the variance can be corrected.

After the count

- [ ] Enter the counts in the variance spreadsheet from this kit and look at the differences before posting anything.
- [ ] Recount every line with a variance above your threshold (say £20 or 10 units) before accepting it.
- [ ] Post the adjustments once, as one dated stock take, so the audit trail is clean.
- [ ] Keep the signed count sheets for the accountant: they are the evidence behind the stock figure.
- [ ] Write down the three biggest causes of variance and fix the process, not just the numbers.

Stock count sheet

Shelf / location: _____ Counted by: _____ Date: _____

Shelf	SKU / code	Product	Unit	Counted qty	Notes

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