Before you choose an investment account.

Start with the purpose of the money and when you need it. A tax wrapper changes account rules, not the risk of the investments inside. This checklist is education, not a suitability assessment.

My goal

Earliest access date

My readiness questions

- [ ] My essential bills and required debt payments are covered.
- [ ] I understand any expensive debt and what repayment would change.
- [ ] I have considered accessible emergency savings.
- [ ] I have checked workplace pension benefits before changing contributions.
- [ ] I understand that investments can lose value and I can explain what I would own.
- [ ] I have checked the provider and relevant permissions on the FCA record.

What needs attention before I commit money?

Separate the account from the investment

Account to investigate	Goal / access restrictions	Tax rules to verify	Cost / questions
Workplace / personal pension			
Stocks and shares ISA			
Lifetime ISA			
General investment account			

Check current eligibility, allowances and withdrawal rules. A bonus or tax saving is not a reason to lock away money needed for essentials.

Personal figures stay in your downloaded file. No bank connection. No submission to D2W.

Make fees visible in pounds.

Compare the same planned balance and buying pattern. This is an annual cost snapshot, not a return forecast. Use the workbook or a provider illustration for changing balances and fuller calculations.

Balance used for comparison (£)

Number of purchases per year

Annual cost component	Option A	Option B
Fixed account fee (£ per year)		
Balance-based fees (% per year)		
Balance × percentage / 100 (£)		
Fee per purchase × purchase count (£)		
Other fees: currency / exit / withdrawal (£)		
Total estimated charges (£)		

Fictional example: a £3 charge on a £20 purchase takes 15% of that payment. A £3 monthly account fee is £36 a year. These are arithmetic examples, not provider prices. Consider all applicable charges together.

My planned monthly contribution (£)

Annual contributions = monthly × 12 (£)

What I would own, its main risks and anything I cannot yet explain

Read alongside these guides

FCA: golden rules of investing
https://www.fca.org.uk/investsmart/golden-rules-investing

FCA: check an authorised firm
https://www.fca.org.uk/consumers/how-check-firm-individual-authorised

GOV.UK: current ISA rules
https://www.gov.uk/individual-savings-accounts