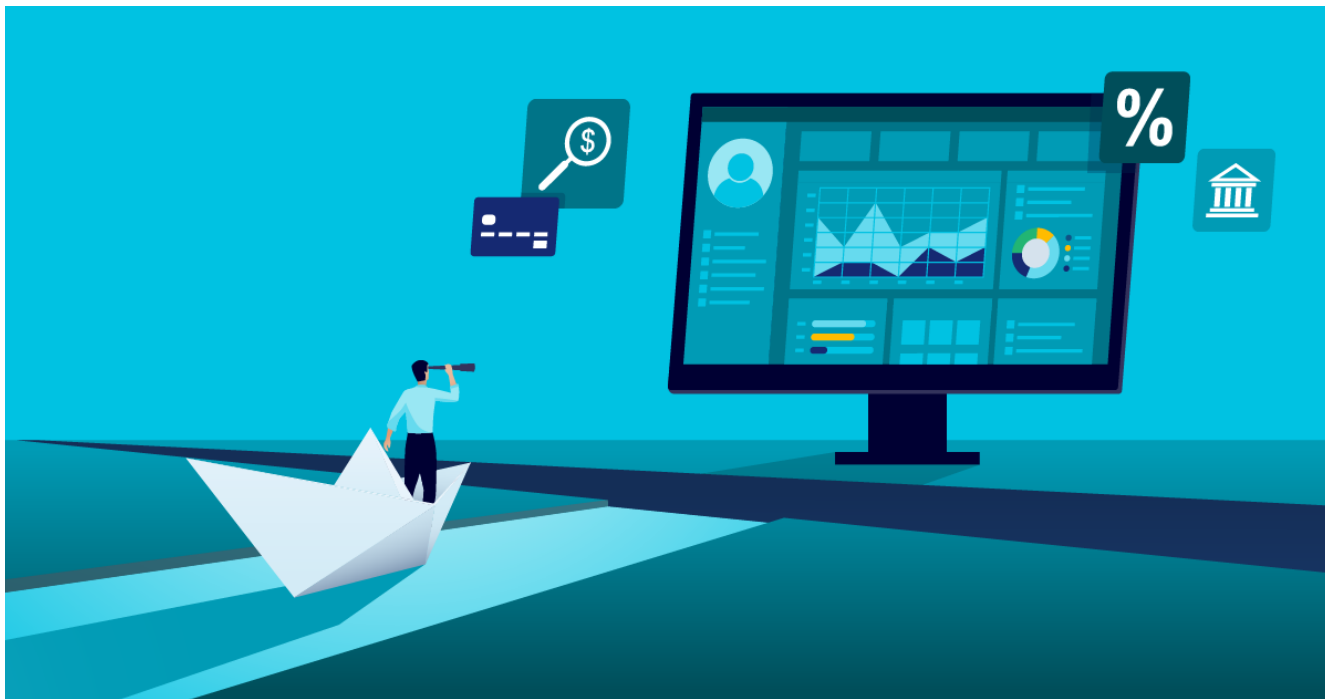


# Benefits of Using Legal Billing Software as a Solo Practitioner



As a solo lawyer, you wear all the hats at once, from attorney to accountant and everything in between. While it's always been possible to do things on your own, technology today makes that much easier, particularly [attorney time and billing software](#). Legal billing software assists with time tracking, invoice generation, and payment processing, all while keeping your information secure from bad actors. Billing software can be helpful, but as an attorney, you don't just want *any* software; your solutions need to work *with* your practice and adjust to your needs. At Bill4Time, we know what makes good legal billing software for small firms and solo lawyers, no matter their practice area, and we'd like to help you find the right solution for your practice. Keep reading to learn about the best legal billing software for a solo practitioner, including what to look for and how to vet your options, so you can find easy-to-use billing software that fits your needs. Understanding what "quality software" is today starts with knowing where the industry began. So, let's take a look at what the industry is doing now and how practices are shifting overall.

## What Software Do Law Firms Use for Billing?

Most law firms today use software that assists with timekeeping, invoice creation, and payment processing. Accounting software for attorneys evolved naturally from their specific needs, namely due to their billing practices (i.e. “billable hours”). The [American Bar Association](#) says that 9 out of 10 lawyers are using some kind of time tracking software, and that number gets closer to 10 out of 10 every year. Software helps firms stay organized and accurate, particularly with finances, where detail is critical and room for error is little or often zero. For lawyers, software is about more than staying trendy or keeping up with what other firms are doing. Billing software makes operations easier, more accurate, and more efficient. For law firms, simplifying the billing process makes a marked difference in collections, financial visibility, and even creates a more positive client experience. And the best billing software for solo lawyers provides these advantages with a simple, easy-to-use solution that’s affordable. All that said, any experienced solo lawyer knows it’s not as simple as buying new software and getting back to business as usual. When you handle every part of your practice, you have a routine: a strict method of organization and operation, and adding to that makes things get messy fast. If you *are* going to use software, it needs to be easy to learn, efficient to use, and able to adapt to your routine — all while being budget-friendly. Is that even a thing? You’ve probably guessed our answer to that question is “yes.” But that leads us to the next, more important question: *what does the right software even look like?*

## How To Pick the Right Billing Software as a Solo Lawyer

For solo practitioners, the right software will prioritize efficiency and flexibility. While there are a lot of choices, not every program is built with solo attorneys in mind; even some high-quality software doesn’t quite match what solo lawyers need. With this in mind, you should evaluate each option with your day-to-day workflow in mind. Some things you should look for include:

- **Ease of Use:** The best software lets you hit the ground running and comes with ample support. Especially if you’re flying solo, the last thing you want is to have questions about your software that you can’t answer. With this, be wary of providers that boast about having numerous add-ons and plug-ins; features are nice, but if they don’t serve a purpose to your practice, all they’ll do is add noise to your process.
- **Integrated Payments:** Clients today want convenience, particularly when it comes to [using online payment](#). Look for software that accepts credit

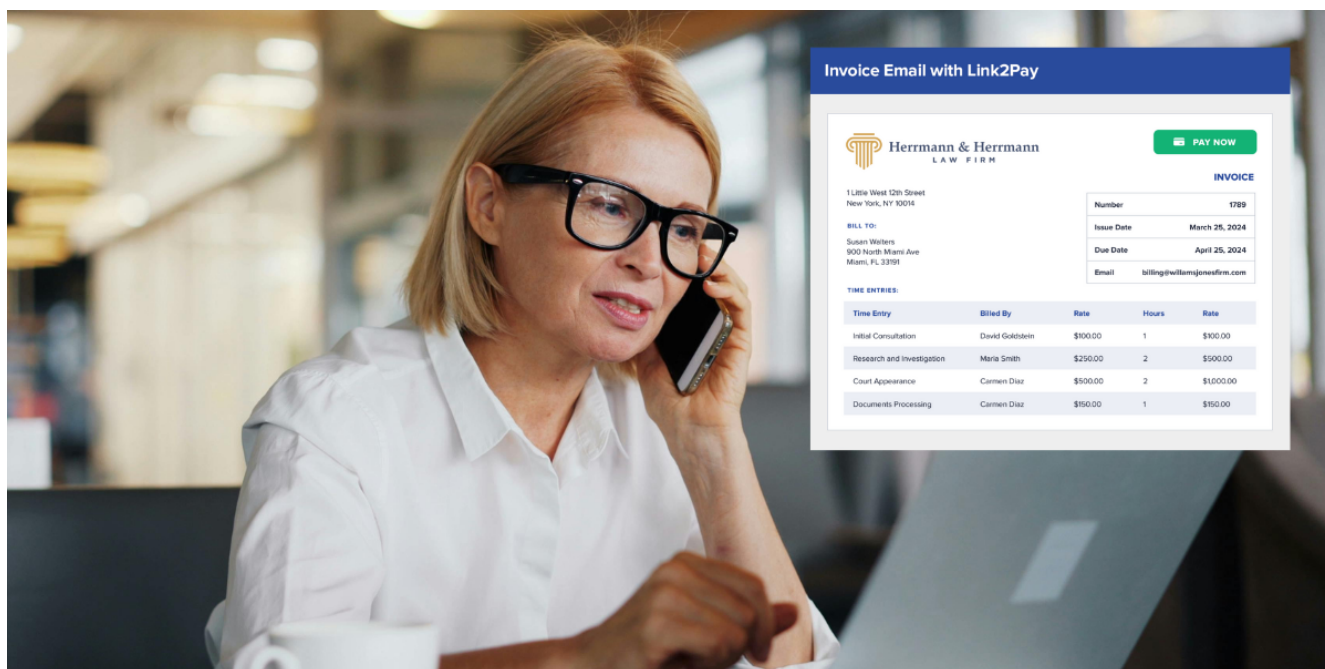
cards, ACH, or even e-checks, so your clients can pay how they prefer, no matter where they are. This will lead to not only happier clients, but quicker payment collections — a true win-win.

- **Simple Pricing Models:** Another benefit of simplified software is a simplified payment model. Most providers will offer [tiered pricing](#) that gives increasing access to features as the price goes up. And with essentially all software being cloud-based, upgrading or downgrading your plan is as simple as making a phone call. As you're browsing, keep an eye out for providers that have transparent, easy-to-understand pricing.
- **Scalability:** Similar to pricing models, the software should be able to accommodate your operations' size and client caseload. Even if you're a one-person firm, you may add a paralegal or associate later, so it's wise to choose software that can grow with you.
- **Trust Accounting Support:** One of the main reasons Excel spreadsheets don't cut it for legal billing is that they, quite literally, can't account for trust accounting. Legal software can handle retainers and track trust / IOLTA accounts far more accurately.
- **Improved Client Experience:** Legal billing software doesn't have to just help *you*; it can also make things better for your customers. The right solution will make for much easier communications and a more convenient process — for both you *and* your clients. Clean invoices, online payment, and prompt correspondence are all potential upgrades. As you're browsing, don't forget about who's on the other side of the software.
- **Trimming Down Your Tech Stack:** Having so many software solutions runs the risk of clogging up your day-to-day with too many options, which is why you should look for ways to simplify your tech. Software that can handle the *entire* billing process, from logging hours to collecting payments, is always going to be the best choice. This is particularly important for solo lawyers, as you are also your whole accounting team.

To get a quick sense of how billing software benefits you, picture two scenarios:

- In one, you're creating invoices in Word, formatting by hand, and mailing them out.
- In the other, you click one button, and your client pays the same day with a credit card.

The right software makes that second scenario your everyday, easy, convenient “normal.”



## What Are the Benefits of Legal Billing Software for Solo Lawyers?

For a solo lawyer, software can be a strategic advantage: by lifting rote, repetitive admin work off your shoulders and improving communications with clients. Law software for billing does this by easing time tracking, simplifying invoices, and speeding up your collections process. Let's look at some ways attorney invoicing software benefits a solo practice specifically.

### Improved Time Tracking

Data shows that [tracking in real time is best](#), but that's not always convenient — unless you have technology to help you. Legal software like [Bill4Time](#) lets you track hours from any smart device, which then automatically uploads those hours into its invoicing system. You don't need to spend time transferring notes to a spreadsheet, which also means less room for potential math errors.

### Time Savings

Automated time tracking and invoicing make things simpler *and* more efficient, for both you and your clients. You can print organized, consistent invoices that always break down details for clients in a way they will understand (and appreciate). Save time transferring hours from software to software by having your tracking system feed directly into your invoicing.

## **Detailed, Easy-to-Read Invoices**

Every lawyer knows the pain of clients not understanding what you're billing for and why. But when invoices say things like "1.6 hours – review email chain," can you really blame them? With billing software, you can create systems that automatically turn your shorthand notes into long-form breakdowns of your work, so clients can not only read but also understand your invoices. You'll get paid a lot faster, too!

## **Added Professionalism**

In addition to clarity, billing software also helps with your branding. You'll have a much easier time creating consistent, polished invoices that help present your practice as credible and client-friendly, even if you're a one-person firm.

## **Cash Flow Management**

With features like online payments, client reminders, and data analytics, you'll gain a much better understanding of your finances. You'll also speed up collections and reduce the stress of chasing overdue invoices. Answering questions like "how much do I have outstanding?" will be a lot simpler.

## **Improved Compliance & Reporting**

Staying compliant is a lot easier when you're not juggling multiple systems. All-in-one software like Bill4Time easily tracks trust accounting and generates financial reports, making it easy to maintain an ethical practice.

## **Simple Scalability**

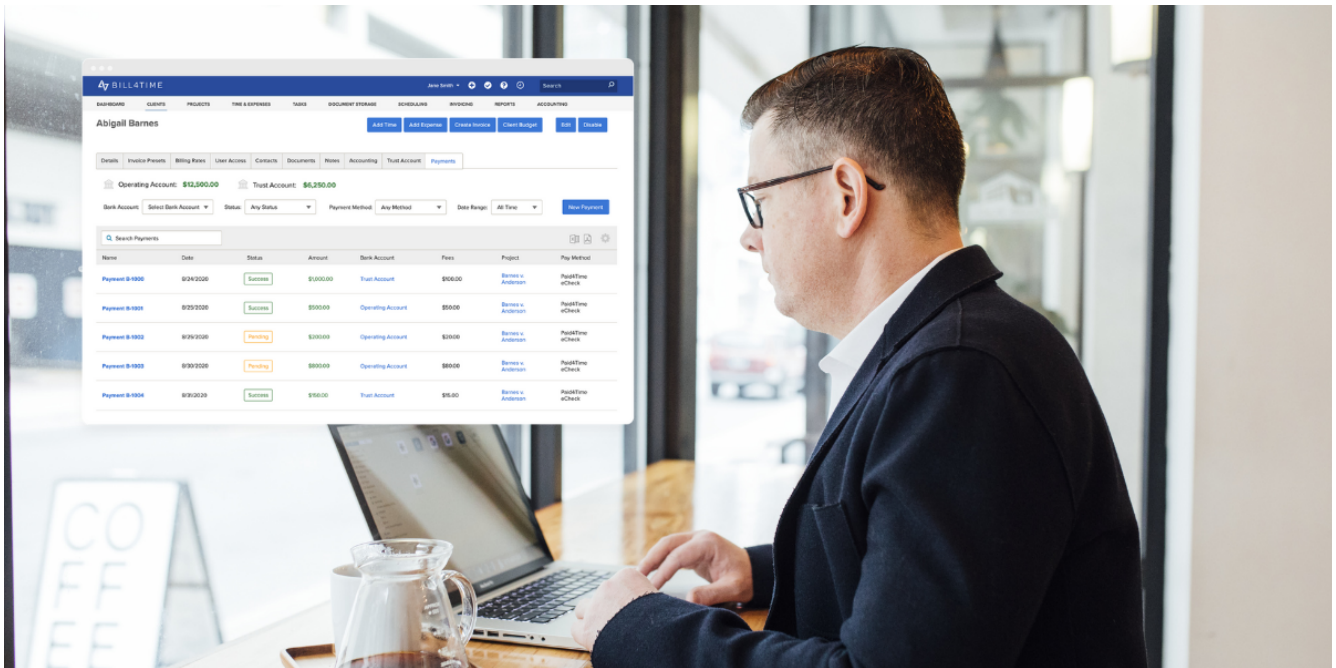
As your client base grows, you want your processes to match that growth. With software aiding billing, your process won't break, and you'll be able to handle more work without hiring more staff. And if you deal with different billing structures for each client, software like Bill4Time lets you easily create customized setups for each client and their appropriate rates. Legal billing software is designed to bear the weight of admin work, so you can focus on billable tasks and better serve your clients. You'll have a smoother tracking process, client-friendly invoices, high visibility on your finances, and better data security to boot.

# How Does Billing Work for Solo Lawyers When They Start Using Software?

Switching to billing software doesn't have to be a complicated, intimidating process. Most programs are designed for lawyers with no tech background and have features that specifically work with the practice of law. Don't worry about learning code or creating complex systems; the provider and their software do the work for you — or at least, they *should*. Here's how getting started with a legal software like [Bill4Time](#) looks in practice:

- **[Track Time as You Work](#)**: Instead of scribbling notes on legal pads or trying to remember how many hours you spent on a contract last week, you can just click a timer when you start and stop working. At the end of the month, all of your hours will already be logged and organized, ready to add to your invoice.
- **[Fast, Accurate Invoicing](#)**: What used to take an entire Saturday morning can now be done in less than an hour. With templating that even lets you add your logo, all you'll have to do is import your hours, send it via email, and let your client pay the bill online.
- **[Automated Reminders](#)**: We're sure you're sick of chasing after payments. Software can help take that load off your shoulders by automatically sending polite reminders when an invoice is overdue, so you can spend less time wearing the "bill collector" hat.

Imagine wrapping up a case, then sending a polished invoice before you even leave the office — all in just a few minutes. That's the kind of workflow software like Bill4Time can bring you.



## How Much Does Legal Billing Software Cost?

Prices for legal billing software typically range from \$30 to \$70 per month, depending on the provider and features offered. For most solo practitioners, cost is the biggest hesitation, but thankfully, billing software is relatively affordable, especially for the upsides it provides. You might be tempted to search for free legal billing software, but for a solo practitioner, this is a particularly bad idea because if it doesn't work, you'll be the one left holding the bag. At best, you'll get a clunky interface with no customer support that spends more time trying to tempt you into a paid version than actually helping your practice. At worst, you might end up with litigation of your own through failed compliance or negligent practice — not because you did anything wrong, but because your free software simply wasn't equipped for an ethical practice. Still wary of purchasing billing software? Here are a couple of things to consider:

- **Without software**, you're losing money in two ways: taking longer on billing, and hours that fall through the cracks, particularly if you don't track in real-time. The ABA estimates lawyers who record hours at the end of the day forget [10% of the hours](#) they worked; that balloons to 25% if you record it once a week. Even if you're not forgetful, though, manual tracking simply takes longer, and that gets worse if you also have to transfer your hours between systems (for example, from a notebook to a spreadsheet).
- **With software**, you not only recoup that lost profit but also gain more in speed and efficiency. Even if you spend upwards of \$70/month on a premium-tier software, you're reclaiming billable hours worth hundreds and

probably making thousands more. Think about this: between the time you'll save through [real-time tracking](#), [invoice batching](#), and a [faster collections process](#), you'll not only spend less time on billing but have *more* time to spend on billable tasks. Accuracy and clarity mean fewer errors and more detail; your invoices will be right the first time, and your clients will be able to see exactly why.

If you're still not convinced, then think of it this way: even if one additional invoice gets paid on time from something as simple as an [automatic reminder](#), the software has already paid for itself. That alone is worth at least giving billing software a try, particularly ours at Bill4Time. Trust us when we say that ["free software" isn't worth your time](#). Instead, invest in quality software that will not only prove its worth but actually make you money *back*.

## Ready To Simplify Your Billing Process?

For solo lawyers especially, time is more than money; it's survival. And with Bill4Time, solo attorneys can turn their billing process into their biggest advantage. Track time, create invoices, and manage payments with one easy-to-use platform. And when it's time to collect payments, Bill4Time's trust accounting keeps you compliant and your payment process convenient. You'll spend less time crunching numbers and more time on clients, working on matters that *matter*. We invite you to try Bill4Time today — for free! — and see why thousands of lawyers trust our software to streamline their practice. You can sign up for a [free trial](#) on our website, or click the button below to [schedule a free demo](#).

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