

## INFORMATION SHEET 33 (November 2025)

# POS SYSTEMS FOR FILM SOCIETIES

The purpose of this article is to explain how to set up a particular point of sale system that enables your film society to accept credit card payments in real time.

## Introduction:

How can your Film Society accept credit or debit card payments from your members?

When accepting payments on screening nights, some members will pay by cash, others with their credit or debit card. Card payments can present a problem if the film society has not set up a point of sale system.

## What is a point of sale system?

First, there's some terminology to clarify.

**Point of sale:** A point of sale (POS) is where you process your sales. For film societies, most if not all the sales are the membership payments from the members. The point of sale could be at the entry on the film-screening night, or on-line on the society's website.

**Point of Sale system:** A POS system allows your film society to accept payments from members, and to keep track of sales. Your point-of-sale system is the hardware and software that enable you to receive payments.

**POS system requirements:** The basic requirements in a POS system are a POS app and an internet-enabled device, such as a computer, tablet or phone. Other devices are available to meet the requirements of an organisation as it grows.

## Which POS system?

There are many POS systems in existence, such as Square, Shopify, Clover, Toast, Lightspeed, TouchBistro, Loveverse, and many more.

More information on POS systems can be found in the information sources listed at the end of this article.

One popular system suitable for film societies is Square. This article will use Square as the example for setting up and using a POS system.

## Example: Setting up and using Square

There are five steps to take to use Square:

1. Set Up a Free Square Account
2. Get Approved to Accept Payments
3. Choose Your Square Hardware

4. Download the Square POS App
5. Start Accepting Payments

### 1. Set Up a Free Square Account

Before you can start accepting payments, you'll need to create a free Square account.

Start by creating a free Square account online or the Square app. Square walks you through each step, and its dashboard is designed to be intuitive even if you've never used a point-of-sale system before.

Visit Square's website at [www.squareup.com/au](http://www.squareup.com/au) , or use the Square POS app.

In Getting Started, you will need to enter your society's name, password and location.

Square guides you through the steps you need to take. It is very easy to follow. Later you will be asked to enter your society's email address, type of business and bank account details for receiving deposits.

### 2. Get Approved to Accept Payments

Before you can accept credit card payments with Square, you'll need to verify your identity and activate payment processing on your account. This is a required step for security and compliance purposes from [merchant account providers like Square](#). But there's no need to stress. As long as you have all the necessary information, approval only takes a few minutes.

To get started:

- i. Log in to your Square Dashboard at [squareup.com](http://squareup.com).
- ii. At the top of your Home page, you'll see a black box that says "Get set up to bill clients."
- iii. Click the blue Start button next to "Get approved to accept payments."
- iv. Follow the on-screen prompts to complete your society's details.

Once your account is verified, Square will enable your ability to accept payments. Most users are approved right away.

### 3. Choose Your Square Hardware

Once your account is approved, you'll be able to accept credit card payments online. However, if you want to process credit cards or other contactless payment methods in person, you'll need hardware. Here are the current simplest forms of hardware for using Square:



**Mobile Phone** – you can use your mobile phone for Tap to Pay if it is iPhone XS or above, running iOS16.4 or later, or an android phone that runs on Android 9 or a later OS and have Near Field Communication (NFC) capabilities. With these phones, the Tap to Pay function enables acceptance of in person payment by contactless cards, Apple Pay and other digital wallets.

To check if your device is compatible for Tap to Pay, refer to the tool in the Square website; <https://squareup.com/au/en/compatibility?platform+android>



**Square Reader** – the Square Reader accepts in person payment by contactless cards, Apple Pay and other digital wallets, and inserted cards with chips and tap-to-pay (Apple Pay, Google Pay, etc.). Priced from \$65.



**Square Terminal:** An all-in-one handheld device that takes contactless payments and inserted chip cards, and prints receipts. Priced from \$349.



**Square Stand:** A countertop stand that turns a compatible iPad into a full POS. The Square Stand accepts contactless payments and inserted chip cards. Priced from \$149.

Square offers further hardware and systems not described in this paper, because they are better suited to cafes, restaurants and retail businesses that operate continuously in a fixed location.

All hardware options can be viewed on the Square website, and can be purchased directly from Square's Hardware Store ([www.squareup.com/au](http://www.squareup.com/au)) or authorized retailers.

#### 4. Download the Square POS App (If You're Using a Reader)

The Square POS app is the software required to use Square. This app turns your phone or tablet into a mobile register, so you can accept payments and issue receipts.

The Square POS app is free, and can be downloaded from the Square website:

<https://squareup/au/en/app>

#### 5. Start Accepting Payments

Before taking payments in person, it is advisable to familiarise yourself with the system. Have a look at the options and settings. For example, from the settings menu you can also customise the logo on your receipts, or include a thank-you message.

In order to manage your sales, you will need to set up a catalogue to describe each different product you have. Typically, a film society would have memberships as their products; for example 3 month, 6 month and full year memberships.

Here's how to accept your first in-person credit card payment using the Square Point of Sale app:

- i. Open the Square POS app on your phone, tablet, or Square hardware.
- ii. Add items to the sale by selecting them from your catalogue or entering a custom amount.
- iii. Tap "Charge."

- iv. Ask your customer to tap their card on your phone, tablet, or Square hardware.
- v. Your customer can sign or skip the signature screen, depending on the payment amount.
- vi. Choose to send the receipt by email, text or print.

Once the payment goes through, you'll see a confirmation screen. Square will set up the amount received for deposit into your nominated bank account, typically within one to two business days.

For more information, in addition to the references given at the end of this paper, there are numerous videos on the internet that give a step-by-step demonstration of accepting payments using Square.

## Questions about fees

### **Does Square charge a monthly fee?**

No, Square doesn't charge a monthly fee for its basic POS features.

### **Does Square charge transaction fees?**

Transaction fees are applicable to all credit card payment processors.

With Square, you only pay transaction fees when you accept a payment, depending on whether the transaction was online or in-person. For example, at the time of writing this article, Square processing rates for in-person Tap to Pay on iPhone is one flat rate of 1.2% per tap.

All costs and fees are explained on Square's website, [www.squareup.com/au/en](http://www.squareup.com/au/en)

### **How long does it take to get paid with Square?**

Square typically deposits funds into your linked bank account within the next business day. If you need faster access to your money, you can opt for Instant Transfers. Instant transfers will incur a fee.

All costs and fees are explained on Square's website, [www.squareup.com/au/en](http://www.squareup.com/au/en)

For more information on Square, including details on Getting Started, go to

[www.forbes.com/advisor/business/advisor/how-to-use-square](http://www.forbes.com/advisor/business/advisor/how-to-use-square)

[www.squareup.com/au/en](http://www.squareup.com/au/en)

Information sources for this article:

What is a Point of Sale System and How Does It Work? by Kira Deutch Jul 25, 2025 on [square.com](http://square.com)

How To Use Square to Process Credit Cards by Leeron Hoory Article on [forbes.com](http://forbes.com)

[www.top-posproviders.com/au](http://www.top-posproviders.com/au)

www.business.gov.au

[www.squareup.com.au/en](http://www.squareup.com.au/en)

Photograph of mobile phone from Oscar Nord on [www.unsplash.com](http://www.unsplash.com)

Photographs of Square devices from [www.squareup.com/au](http://www.squareup.com/au)

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