Off-the-Top

Last Modified on 09/04/2026 11:18 am EDT

Take an amount out of the gross commission before Pipeline calculates anyone's split, so the figure the brokerage and its agents divide is already net of it.

Introduction

Some costs belong to the deal rather than to a person: a royalty, a B&O tax, an operating fee, a co-broke owed to an outside office. Taking one of those out of a single party's share puts the whole bill on whoever you picked, which isn't what anybody agreed to.

Off-the-top is the answer to that. Most fees in the Commission Module come out of somebody's share after the split. This one comes out first, from the gross commission, so the figure the brokerage and its agents go on to divide is already reduced. Everybody carries the cost in proportion to the split they'd already agreed on, and nobody has to do that arithmetic on a calculator.

It's switched on per location, so if the option isn't where you expect it at commission entry, that's the setting rather than anything you did wrong. The names on the list are your own deduction types, which means the same charge can appear off the top on one deal and out of a share on another. The name stays the same. What changes is when the money leaves.

How It Works

The setting, the order of operations, and the one place the rules differ from an ordinary deduction.

Off the Top Means Before the Split

In *Step 1*, Pipeline works from the gross commission down: it subtracts the referral commission, then the franchise fee, then any off-the-top deductions. What's left is the **Distributable Commission** — and that's the figure *Step 2* splits between the brokerage and the agents.

Turn It On

The off-the-top dropdown only appears if the transaction's location has **Allow off-the-top deductions** checked in its *Commission & CDA Settings*. It's set per location, so a multi-office account turns it on for each office that needs it.

The Names Come from Your Deduction Types

Off-the-top deductions draw on the same list as regular deductions — the *Deductions* page in **Admin / Settings**. Adding a name there makes it available in both places.

Who Can Be Paid

An off-the-top deduction can go to the brokerage, to an in-house agent or user, or to an outside person or company. That's broader than a regular deduction, which can't be paid to the brokerage.

Percentages Are Narrower Here

As a percentage, an off-the-top deduction runs only against **Gross Commission** or **Sale Price** — the later figures don't exist yet at this point in the form. A deduction type whose basis is something like *Broker Gross* can still come off the top. Enter it as a dollar amount.

It's a Transaction-Level Amount

An off-the-top deduction belongs to the transaction or the side, not to an individual agent. Financial reports total it as *Total Off-the-top Deductions* for the transaction, and there's no per-agent breakdown of it. When you need to see what a specific agent contributed, use an agent fee instead.

Turn On Off-the-Top Deductions

> Make the off-the-top dropdown available on transactions in a location.

> **Who Can Do This**: Master admins.

To turn on off-the-top deductions:

1. Click the [Gear] in the upper-right corner, then [Admin / Settings].
2. Click [Manage Locations] in the left menu.
3. Click the [Gear] next to the location, then [Commission & CDA Settings].
4. Under *Off-the-Top Deductions*, check [Allow off-the-top deductions].
5. Click [Save Settings].

The *Enter off-the-top deductions* dropdown now appears in *Step 1 — Sale Info* for transactions in that location. Repeat for each location that needs it.

Apply an Off-the-Top Deduction

> Take an amount out of the gross commission before Pipeline calculates the broker/agent split.

> **Who Can Do This**: Admins with the *enter financial data* permission for the transaction's location.

To apply an off-the-top deduction:

1. Open the transaction and click [Manage Commissions] or [Update Commissions] in the left menu.
2. In *Step 1 — Sale Info*, open the [Enter off-the-top deductions] dropdown and choose the deduction.
3. Confirm the default amount or enter a different one. As a percentage it can be calculated on gross commission or sale price; for any other basis, enter a dollar figure.
4. Select the payee — the brokerage, an in-house user, or an outside person or company.
5. Repeat for any other off-the-top deductions, then click [Calculate & Continue].

Pipeline subtracts the amount before the split, so the **Distributable Commission** carried into *Step 2* already reflects it. To check what a percentage runs against, hover over that deduction's [%].

Create the Deduction Types First

The off-the-top dropdown offers your deduction types and nothing else, and there's no way to type a one-off name onto a transaction. An empty list means nobody has created any types yet, not a setting that didn't take.

Deductions come out of the brokerage's share or an agent's share of a commission and get paid to someone else — an in-house teammate or an outside company.

See Deductions

Off-the-Top FAQ

Off-the-top deductions reduce the gross before Pipeline works out anyone's share, which is exactly why they behave differently from every other fee in the module. Answers to the common questions about turning them on, percentage bases, and what they do to splits.

See Off-the-Top FAQ

Off-the-Top Troubleshooting

Option missing, or numbers not adding up? Start here.

- Why Are Off-the-Top Deductions Missing or Calculating Wrong?