

Record Retention Guide

Are you aware of how long a document must be kept before it's destroyed? Below is our guide to document retention:

Document	Retention Period	Reason
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Suppliers Accounts

Cheques/Remittance Advice	6 years	Legal
Cash Book	10 years	Legal
Cost Control Ledger Analysis	6 years	Legal
Invoices Revenue	6 years	Legal
Invoices Capital	12 years	Commercial
Purchase Orders Revenue	4 years	Audit
Purchase Orders Capital	3 years after expiry	Audit
Quotations Capital	12 years	Audit
Quotations Revenue	7 years	Audit
Customs and Excise Returns	6 years	Legal
VAT Deferments	6 years	Legal

Assets

Ledger Sheet	12 years	Legal
Consolidated Accounts	12 years	Commercial
Disposal of Assets	12 years	Commercial
Annual Depreciation	3 years	Audit

Sales Records

Customer Complaints	7 years	Legal
Customer Orders	6/12 years after expiry	Commercial
Customer Enquiries	1 year if unsuccessful	Commercial
Sales/Journal Entries	12 years	Legal/Tax
Nominal and Private Ledgers	Permanent	Legal/Tax
Journal Vouchers	3/6 years	Legal/Tax
Sales Invoices/Credit Notes	6 years	Legal
Consignment Notes	6 years	Legal
Outstanding Account Schedule	6 years	Legal
Statements	2 years	Audit
Overdue Account Letters	Until paid	Commercial
Project Files	6 years	Legal

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Registered in England as J W Baker Ltd No: 03779423 VAT Registration No: 586 2928 91
Registered Office: The Old School, Bower Hinton, Somerset TA12 6JY

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Employee Records

Unsuccessful Job Applications	1 year	Commercial
Medical Records	30 years after expiry	Legal
Accident Reports	Working life of employee	Legal
Pension Details	10 years after end of benefits	Legal
Payment Changes	6 years	Legal/Tax
Payroll Control	Current plus 6 years	Legal/Tax
Amended Code Number Notice	6 years	Legal
Trust Records	Permanent	Legal
Group Health/Personal Accident	12 years after benefit ends	Legal
Staff Personal Records	7 years after termination	Legal
Company Executive Records	12 years	Legal
Salary Register	6 years	Legal
Expense Accounts	7 years	Legal/Tax
Industrial Training	6 years	commercial

Wages

P45, P58, P48, P6, P60	6 years	Legal/Tax
Income Tax Pay Details	6 years	Legal/Tax
Pension Contributions	Permanent	Commercial
National Insurance Contributions	12 years	Commercial
Schedule of Deductions	6 years	Audit
Clock Cards	2 years	Audit
Pay Advice	Current plus 1 year	Legal
Payroll	Current plus 6 years	Legal
Annual Earnings Summary	Current plus 12 years	Legal

Sub-Contractors Documents

SC60 etc.	6 years	Legal/Tax
Other Tax	6 years	Legal/Tax
National Insurance	6 years	Audit/Tax
Timesheets etc.	3 years	Legal

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Insurance

Policies	12 years after lapse	Legal
Claims	3 years after settlement	Commercial
Schedules/Disclosures	12 years	Legal
Accident Record Book	Permanent	Legal
Public & Product Liability Policies	Permanent	Legal

Cash Records

Bank Paying-In Counterfoils	6 years	Legal/Tax
Cheque/Remittance Advice's	6 years	Legal
Bank/GIRO Account Statements	6 years	Legal
Daily Cash Book	6 years	Legal
Banking Returns	6 years	Legal
Unpresented Cheque Lists	6 years	Legal
Bank Reconciliation's	6 years	Legal
Employees pay receipts	2 years	Audit
Petty Cash Records	Current plus 6 years	Legal
Main Cash Book	Permanent	Legal
Cash/Cheques Received Sheets	Current plus 6 years	Legal
Petty Cash Returns	6 years	Commercial

Title Deeds etc.

Title Deeds and Property Documents	12 years after interest ceased	Legal
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Contracts/Agreements

Under Seal	12 years after expiry	Legal
Others	6 years after expiry	Legal
Royalty Payments/Agreements	1 year after expiry	Legal

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Stores Documents

Goods Received Register	4 years	Audit
Inward Invoice Register	6 years	Legal
Stock Control Records	7 years	Legal

Transport Records

Drivers Log Books	1 year	Commercial
Other records	2 years after vehicle disposal	Commercial
Tachographs	3 years	Legal

Property receipts

Leases	12 years from lease end	Legal
Architect/Builder agreements	6 years from contract end	Legal
Planning Permission	12 years from interest end	Legal

Management Information

Accounts	6 years	Commercial
Others	6 years	Commercial

Trade Mark Papers

All related documents	Permanent	Commercial
Expired Patents	12 years	Legal
"CE" marking details	10 years from cessation of manufacture	Legal

Quality Records

Internal & External Audits	6 years	Review
Old Procedures and Revisions	6 years	Review
Management Reviews	6 years	Audit
Defects & Corrective Action Records	6 years	Review
Calibration Records	6 years	Commercial
Others	6 years	Commercial

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Which documents should be securely destroyed?

Depending on your particular area of business these documents will vary slightly as some information may be limited to your industry. However there are many common documents that hold sensitive information that should be kept in a secure manner and also destroyed in a secure manner at the end of its life.

To give you an idea of information that must be kept confidential and therefore must be stored or destroyed in a secure manner we have compiled the following list:

HR Files:

- Application forms & CVs
- Interview notes
- Employment contracts
- Copies of passports & driving licences
- Name, address, DOB, NI number forms
- Contact details
- Medical details
- Bank account details
- Ethnic background forms
- Criminal Records Bureau forms

Accounts Details:

- Payroll details
- Bank account details including statements
- Client details
- Budgets
- Invoices & receipts
- Financial reports
- Supplier information including invoices
- Contracts
- Purchase orders
- Accounts payable/receivable
- Ex-employee tax records

Sales & Marketing Files:

- (Prospective) Client details
- Quotes and tenders
- (Prospective) Customer correspondence
- Out of date brochures or leaflets
- Out of date business cards
- Old letterhead paper & compliments slips
- Targets & business projections

Administration:

- Correspondence
- Junk mail
- Reports
- Schedules
- Training records
- Manuals
- Order information
- Meeting minutes
- Job & workload sheets
- Customer service files
- Inventory lists
- Memos

Research:

- Plans, designs & blueprints
- Lab books
- Development process papers
- Specifications
- Reports
- Competitive test sheets
- New product test sheets

Other materials:

- CD & DVDs
- Video or data tapes
- ID tags & cards
- X-rays
- Microfilm rolls
- Microfiche & jackets