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Financial year

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In short: A company's financial year (fiscal year, or accounting reference period) is the period its annual accounts cover. Many countries default to the calendar year but let companies choose another year end; the UK sets it from the month of incorporation unless the company changes it.

The year end drives deadlines for accounts, audits, annual returns and corporate tax. In the UK the first accounting period can run up to 18 months, and the year end can be changed by notifying Companies House, subject to limits. In the US, a corporation may use a calendar year or a fiscal year ending on the last day of any month, but some entities must use the calendar year.

See also

- Statutory registers

References

1. Change your company's year end . GOV.UK. Accessed November 2026.
2. Tax years . Internal Revenue Service. Accessed November 2026.

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