

## CHOOSING A COMPANY NAME

Naming your company is an important early step when starting a new business. An effective business name could prove to be your most powerful branding tool. However, there are limitations set out by the British Government as to what you can call your company:

### IT MUST BE UNIQUE

Your name can't be the same as another registered company's name. If your name is too similar to another company's name, you may have to change it if someone makes a complaint. This can also lead to issues of mistaken identity with HMRC.

Your name must usually end in either 'Limited' or 'Ltd'. You can include the Welsh equivalents 'Cyfyngedig' and 'Cyf' instead if you registered the company in Wales.

You can check the Companies House Register [HERE](#) to see if your chosen name is available.

'Same as' names includes those where the only difference to an existing name is:

- certain punctuation
- certain special characters, for example, the 'plus' sign
- a word or character that's similar in appearance or meaning to another from the existing name
- a word or character used commonly in UK company names

Example:

'Hands UK Ltd' and 'Hand's Ltd' are deemed the same as 'Hands Ltd'.

You may have to change your name if someone complains and Companies House agrees it's 'too like' a name registered before yours.

Example:

'Easy Electrics For You Ltd' is deemed the same as 'EZ Electrix 4U Ltd'

### OTHER RULES

Your company name can't be offensive.

Your name also can't contain a 'sensitive' word or expression (which can be viewed [HERE](#) or suggest a connection with government or local authorities unless you get permission. These can be checked [HERE](#).

These lists include some commonly sought after names such as:

- Association
- England/English/British
- Foundation/Fund/Society/Trust
- Government/Parliament
- Her Majesty, or any other term or name connected with the Royal family such as King, Queen, Prince, Princess, Duke, Duchess, His/Her Majesty, and Windsor
- Insurance
- The name of a profession you are not qualified to perform.

If you're in doubt, please contact your Business Manager or our Company Secretarial Team on 0800 917 9100 for further guidance.