

Small business IT | Easy | 2 min read

A simple IT equipment register and replacement cycle

You cannot protect what you do not know you have. A simple list of equipment helps with security, insurance and budgeting.

What to record

A spreadsheet is enough. For each item, note:

- What it is, such as laptop, phone, router or printer.
- Make, model and **serial number**.
- Who uses it, and where it is kept.
- Date bought, price, and warranty end date.
- Operating system version, and whether the drive is encrypted.
- Date of the last check.

Include phones, tablets, routers, printers, card machines, external drives and anything else that connects. Add a second sheet for software and cloud services with renewal dates and the person responsible.

Keep it up to date

1. Add new items when they arrive.
2. Record when equipment is handed to a new person.
3. Mark items as retired, with the date and what happened to the data.
4. Review the list once or twice a year.

A replacement cycle

Most business laptops and desktops give around four to five years of useful service, though this varies. Plan for it:

- Look at the age of each item every year.
- Replace machines that are slow, failing, or no longer receive security updates.
- Spread purchases so you are not buying everything at once.
- Put money aside each month.
- Keep a spare charger or two, and consider one spare laptop.

When equipment is retired

- Back up anything needed, then **securely wipe** the drive. Deleting files or a normal reset may not be enough.
- Use a reputable recycler who provides a certificate for WEEE disposal.
- Remove it from your list and from any accounts it was signed in to.

When to get more help

Ask for help if you are not sure what is on your network, if you need to wipe data safely, or if you want help planning a replacement budget.

Still stuck? Email admin@visiontech336.com and tell us what you can see on the screen. Menus and button names can differ slightly between versions and makes. If something does not match, stop and ask rather than guess. Please never send passwords or card details.