

Table of limitation periods

Limitation periods impose time limits within which a party may bring a claim or give notice of a claim to the other party. It is important that clients are appraised of all relevant limitation dates. Below is a table setting out various time limits with the type of claim (e.g. Simple contract claim, 6 years).

Type of Claim	Time Limit	Source
CONTRACT		
Simple contract (i.e. all contracts which are not made under seal)	6 years from the date the cause of action accrued	s 5 of the LA 1980
Action upon a speciality (e.g. a contract under seal, bond, deed or covenant)	12 years from the date the cause of action accrued	s 8 of the LA 1980
Contractual claims based on fraud or concealment by the defendant, or based on a mistake	The period of limitation will not begin to run until the claimant has discovered the fraud, concealment or mistake or from the time at which the claimant could have discovered it with reasonable diligence	s 32 of the LA 1980
LAND		
Action to recover land	12 years from the date the cause of action accrued	s15 of the LA 1980
Action to recover rent	6 years from the date the arrears became due	s19 of the LA 1980
Action to recover proceeds of sale of land	12 years from the date the right to receive the money accrued	s20 of the LA 1980
Action to recover money secured by a mortgage or charge	12 years from the date the right to receive the money accrued	s20 of the LA 1980
Action to recover arrears of interest due (in respect of any sum of money secured by a mortgage or charge)	6 years from the date interest became due	s20 of the LA 1980

TORT		
All torts (other than personal injury, actions under the Consumer Protection Act 1987, latent damage and defamation)	6 years from the date the cause of action accrued	s2 of the LA 1980
PERSONAL INJURY		
Claim for damages for death arising in negligence, nuisance or breach of duty (including actions under the Fatal Accidents Act 1976)	3 years from whichever is later of (a) the date of death or (b) the date of knowledge of the personal representative/the person whose benefit the action is brought The court has discretion to exclude this time limit if it would be equitable to do so However, no action may be brought if the deceased person was themselves unable to bring an action for their injury	s11 and s12 of the LA 1980 s33 of the LA 1980 s12(1) of the LA 1980
Claim for damages for personal injury arising in negligence, nuisance or breach of duty (including actions in respect of trespass to the person)	3 years from whichever is the later of (a) the date the cause of action accrued or (b) the date when a claimant first had knowledge of the injury The court has discretion to exclude this time limit if it would be equitable to do so	s11 of the LA 1980 s33 of the LA 1980
ACTIONS UNDER THE CONSUMER PROTECTION ACT 1987		
Action in respect of a defective product in which the damages claimed by the plaintiff consist of or include damages in respect of death	3 years from whichever is the later of (a) the date of death or (b) the date of the personal representative's knowledge In any event, the action must be brought within 10 years from the "relevant time" (i.e. the time when the product was supplied)	s11A(3) and (5) of the LA 1980 s2(2) of the Consumer Protection Act 1987

<p>Action in respect of defective products in which the damages claimed by the plaintiff consist of or include damages in respect of personal injuries to the plaintiff or any other person or loss of or damage to any property</p>	<p>3 years from whichever is the later of (a) the date on which the cause of action accrued or (b) the date when a claimant first had knowledge of the injury</p> <p>In any event, the action must be brought within 10 years from the “relevant time” (i.e. the time when the product was supplied)</p>	<p>s11A(3) and (4) of the LA 1980</p> <p>s2(2) of the Consumer Protection Act 1987</p>
<p>LATENT INJURY</p>		
<p>Claim for latent injury caused by negligence (excluding personal injury)</p>	<p>The later of: (a) 6 years from the date on which the cause of action accrued; or (b) 3 years from the date when the claimant first had both the knowledge required for bringing an action for damages and a right to bring such an action</p> <p>In any event, the action must be brought within 15 years from the date on which the negligent act or omission occurred</p> <p>A ‘latent injury’ is one where the claimant only acquires knowledge of his right to claim at a time after the cause of action accrued.</p>	<p>s14A(4) of the LA 1980</p> <p>s14B of the LA 1980</p>
<p>DEFAMATION AND MALICIOUS FALSEHOOD</p>		
<p>Action for libel, slander or malicious falsehood</p>	<p>1 year from the date on which the cause of action accrued</p> <p>The court has discretion to exclude this time limit if it would be equitable to do so</p>	<p>s4A of the LA 1980</p> <p>s32A of the LA 1980</p>
<p>MISCELLANEOUS STATUTORY CLAIMS</p>		
<p>Claim for contribution under the Civil Liability (Contribution) Act 1978</p>	<p>2 years from the date on which the right to recover contribution in respect of any damage accrued. This is the date when the person</p>	<p>s10(1) of the LA 1980</p>

	seeking the contribution was made liable under a judgment or agreement in respect of the damage.	
Claim under the Defective Premises Act 1972	6 years from the date of the completion of the building If after completion a person who has done work for or in connection with the provision of the dwelling does further work to rectify the work they have already done, any such cause of action in respect of that further work is deemed to have accrued at the time when the further work was finished.	s9 of the LA 1980; s1(5) of the Defective Premises Act 1972
ADMINISTRATIVE LAW & HUMAN RIGHTS		
Judicial review	The claim form must be filed (a) promptly; and (b) in any event not later than 3 months after the ground to make the claim first arose This time limit may be shortened by any other statutory enactment.	CPR 54.5(1) CPR 54.5(3)
Application to quash or prohibit any order, scheme, certificate or plan of; amendment or approval of a plan of; decision of; action on the part of, a Minister or government department	The claim form must be served within the time limited by the relevant enactment for making the application	CPR Practice Direction 8A, 22.3
Claim against a public authority under the Human Rights Act 1998	1 year beginning with the date on which the act complained of took place The court or tribunal has discretion to extend this period if it is equitable to do so having regard to all the circumstances	s7(5)(a) of the Human Rights Act 1998 s7(5)(b) of the Human Rights Act 1998
EMPLOYMENT		
Wrongful dismissal claim by employee in	3 months starting with the effective date of termination or if no termination, the last day on	s 111(2) Employment Rights Act 1996

the employment tribunal	which the employee worked. The employment tribunal may extend time where it was not reasonably practicable to present the claim in time	
Wrongful dismissal claim by employee in the County Court or High Court	6 years from the date the cause of action accrued	s5 of the LA 1980
Unfair dismissal claims (except for taking part in official industrial action)	3 months beginning with the effective date of termination. The employment tribunal may extend time where it was not reasonably practicable to present the claim in time	s111(2) of the Employment Rights Act 1996, Trade Union and Labour Relations (Consolidation) Act 1992 and Transfer of Undertakings (Protections of Employment Regulations (2006)
Unfair dismissal claim for taking part in official industrial action	6 months from the complainant's effective date of dismissal	s239(2) of the Trade Union and Labour Relations (Consolidation) Act 1992
Discrimination and equal pay claims	3 months starting with the date of the act to which the complaint relates or such other period as the employment tribunal thinks is "just and equitable"	s123(1) of the Equality Act 2010

Abbreviations: Limitation Act 1980 (LA); Civil Procedure Rules (CPR)