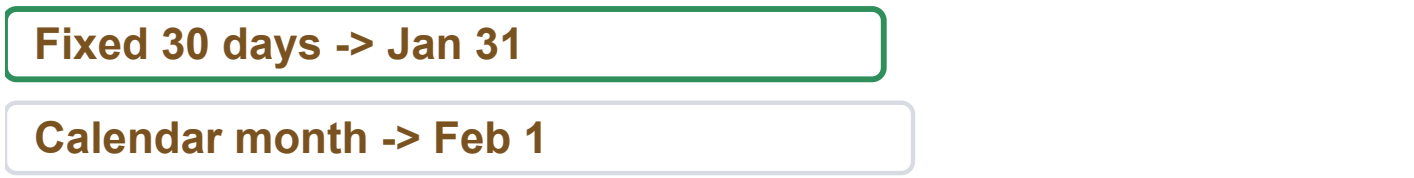
Calendar Months vs. Fixed-Day Periods

> "Net 30" and "one calendar month" sound interchangeable but produce different due dates for all but a handful of start dates each year.

A period stated as "30 days" is a fixed, unambiguous length. A period stated as "one month" or "one calendar month" is not a fixed length at all. It borrows whatever number of days the specific calendar month contains, which ranges from 28 to 31. Terms like "net 30" (payment terms) and "one month's notice" (contracts, leases) are often used as if they mean the same thing, but they only produce the same due date when the relevant month happens to have exactly 30 days.

Starting January 1



A 30-day period and a one-calendar-month period start at the same date but usually end on different dates.

Why the two only sometimes match

A fixed-day period always advances by exactly that many days, so it is fully predictable regardless of which month it crosses. A calendar-month period advances by "the same day-of-month, next month" (subject to the month-end rule covered in the companion resource above), so its actual day length varies with which month it starts in and whether it crosses a leap-year February. The two conventions coincide only for start dates in months where the elapsed days genuinely total the fixed number.

Where this matters in practice

Payment terms, notice periods, warranty windows, and subscription renewal dates are all sometimes specified as calendar months and sometimes as a fixed day count, and the source document does not always spell out which. A "30-day notice" that is actually meant as "one

calendar month's notice" can be several days off in either direction depending on the month, which matters when the deadline has real consequences (a lease ending, a contract lapsing, a refund window closing).

How to check which one applies

Read the governing document's exact wording. "30 days" and "one month" are not interchangeable even when a specific instance happens to produce the same date. When the wording is genuinely ambiguous, calculate both candidate end dates and treat the earlier one as the safer deadline to plan around. The Calendar Month vs Fixed Days Comparator runs both conventions from the same start date side by side for exactly this check.

Key takeaway. A "30-day" period and a "one-month" period are different rules that happen to agree only when the specific month involved has exactly 30 days. Check the governing document's exact wording rather than assuming.

Frequently asked

Is a 30-day period ever exactly the same as a month?

Only when the period starts in a month that itself has 30 days (April, June, September, or November) and does not cross into a different-length month. For any other start month, the two periods end on different dates.

Which convention is used more often in contracts?

Both appear regularly, and the choice is set by whoever drafted the specific document, not by any general rule. This is exactly why the wording needs to be checked rather than assumed from habit.

Does this interact with the business-day question too?

Yes, a period can additionally be stated in business days rather than calendar days, adding a third convention on top of these two. See the business-day counting resource for that layer.

WhenMath is a browser-local calculation tool, not a legal, payroll, or scheduling authority. This guide explains a calculation convention; it is educational, not a determination that any specific contract, employer, or jurisdiction follows it.