

Sign Control

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Sign Control

Settings > Accounts > Categories

These define whether an account number is an asset, liability, income, expense, etc. Amounts are usually displayed as positive (user-friendly) for the type of account unless they reverse the norm.

For example, an income account has a credit balance (usually a negative sign), but it would display as positive (user-friendly) on reports or when browsing account balances. However, when browsing individual transactions, signs will show as they are (debit or credit transactions).

The only exception to this rule is if the General tab is set to **Show true sign** in a financial statement.

The **verbal way** of saying how signs are displayed for account variances is this:

- Good variances show as positive.
- Bad variances show as negative.
- Over in assets to last year or budget is good.
- Under in assets to last year or budget is bad.
- Over in liabilities to last year or budget is bad.
- Under in liabilities to last year or budget is good.
- Over in equity to last year or budget is good.
- Under in equity to last year or budget is bad.
- Over in revenue to last year or budget is good.
- Under in revenue to last year or budget is bad.
- Over in expenses to last year or budget is bad.
- Under in expense to last year or budget is good.
- Better in surplus to last year or budget is good.

Signs on a Variance Column

Comparing Year Variances:

For asset, equity, revenue accounts, and net gain loss, signs show a positive for an increase and a negative for a decrease.

For liability and expense accounts, signs show a negative for an increase and a positive for a decrease.

Account Type	This Yr	Last Yr	\$ Var	% Var	Increase shows as	Decrease shows as
Asset	2,100	2,000	100	5	Positive	Negative

Account Type	This Yr	Last Yr	\$ Var	% Var	Increase shows as	Decrease shows as
Liability	1,100	850	-250	-23	Negative	Positive
Equity	1,200	1,050	150	14	Positive	Negative
Revenue	6,700	6,000	700	12	Positive	Negative
Expense	5,000	4,800	-200	-4	Negative	Positive
Net Gain/Loss	15,650	15,150	500	3	Positive	Negative

Actual to Budget Variances for the same year:

For asset, equity, revenue, and net gain loss accounts, the signs show a positive when the actual is over budget and a negative when the actual is under budget.

For liability and expense accounts, signs show a negative when actuals are over budget and a positive when actuals are under budget.

Account Type	Actual	Budget	\$ Var	% Var	Over budget shows as	Under budget shows as
Asset	2,100	2,000	100	5	Negative	Positive
Liability	1,100	850	-250	-23	Positive	Negative
Equity	1,200	1,050	150	14	Negative	Positive
Revenue	6,700	6,000	700	12	Negative	Positive
Expense	5,000	4,800	-200	-4	Positive	Negative
Net Gain/Loss	15,650	15,150	500	3	Negative	Positive

Financial Statements - Sign Control on Total Rows

By default, financial statements try to determine the correct sign to display in a total row. If a row on the report contains only revenue or expenses, it is a positive number.

A row comprising revenue and expense accounts shows as a net. Therefore, the total would be positive if you have a report showing a department or branch summary total that consists only of expense accounts and does not include revenue accounts.

If you have this issue with the sign displaying wrongly on a summary total, add any revenue account to that department or branch; it may be marked inactive. The summary total will display correctly as long as there are both revenue and expense accounts in whatever is being summarized (branch, department, etc.).