

§ 1.167(a)-4

for purposes of determining the depreciation allowance referred to in paragraph (a) of this section, a taxpayer may treat an intangible asset as having a useful life equal to 15 years unless—

(i) An amortization period or useful life for the intangible asset is specifically prescribed or prohibited by the Internal Revenue Code, the regulations thereunder (other than by this paragraph (b)), or other published guidance in the Internal Revenue Bulletin (see § 601.601(d)(2) of this chapter);

(ii) The intangible asset is described in § 1.263(a)-4(c) (relating to intangibles acquired from another person) or § 1.263(a)-4(d)(2) (relating to created financial interests);

(iii) The intangible asset has a useful life the length of which can be estimated with reasonable accuracy; or

(iv) The intangible asset is described in § 1.263(a)-4(d)(8) (relating to certain benefits arising from the provision, production, or improvement of real property), in which case the taxpayer may treat the intangible asset as having a useful life equal to 25 years solely for purposes of determining the depreciation allowance referred to in paragraph (a) of this section.

(2) *Applicability to acquisitions of a trade or business, changes in the capital structure of a business entity, and certain other transactions.* The safe harbor useful life provided by paragraph (b)(1) of this section does not apply to an amount required to be capitalized by § 1.263(a)-5 (relating to amounts paid to facilitate an acquisition of a trade or business, a change in the capital structure of a business entity, and certain other transactions).

(3) *Depreciation method.* A taxpayer that determines its depreciation allowance for an intangible asset using the 15-year useful life prescribed by paragraph (b)(1) of this section (or the 25-year useful life in the case of an intangible asset described in § 1.263(a)-4(d)(8)) must determine the allowance by amortizing the basis of the intangible asset (as determined under section 167(c) and without regard to salvage value) ratably over the useful life beginning on the first day of the month in which the intangible asset is placed in service by the taxpayer. The intan-

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gible asset is not eligible for amortization in the month of disposition.

(4) *Effective date.* This paragraph (b) applies to intangible assets created on or after December 31, 2003.

[T.D. 6500, 25 FR 11402, Nov. 26, 1960; 25 FR 14021, Dec. 21, 1960, as amended by T.D. 8867, 65 FR 3825, Jan. 25, 2000; T.D. 9107, 69 FR 444, Jan. 5, 2004]

§ 1.167(a)-4 Leased property.

Capital expenditures made by a lessee for the erection of buildings or the construction of other permanent improvements on leased property are recoverable through allowances for depreciation or amortization. If the useful life of such improvements in the hands of the taxpayer is equal to or shorter than the remaining period of the lease, the allowances shall take the form of depreciation under section 167. See §§ 1.167(b)-0, 1.167(b)-1, 1.167(b)-2, 1.167(b)-3, and 1.167(b)-4 for methods of computing such depreciation allowances. If, on the other hand, the estimated useful life of such property in the hands of the taxpayer, determined without regard to the terms of the lease, would be longer than the remaining period of such lease, the allowances shall take the form of annual deductions from gross income in an amount equal to the unrecovered cost of such capital expenditures divided by the number of years remaining of the term of the lease. Such deductions shall be in lieu of allowances for depreciation. See section 162 and the regulations thereunder. See section 178 and the regulations thereunder for rules governing the effect to be given renewal options in determining whether the useful life of the improvement exceeds the remaining term of the lease where a lessee begins improvements on leased property after July 28, 1958, other than improvements which on such date and at all times thereafter, the lessee was under a binding legal obligation to make. Capital expenditures made by a lessor for the erection of buildings or other improvements shall, if subject to depreciation allowances, be recovered by him over the estimated life of the improvements without regard to the period of the lease.

[T.D. 6520, 25 FR 13692, Dec. 24, 1960]