

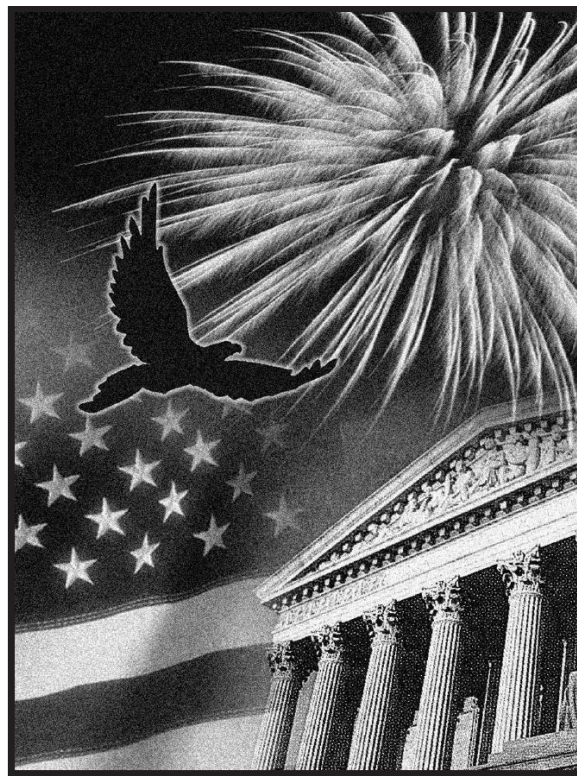
# Publication 527

## Residential Rental Property

### (Including Rental of Vacation Homes)

For use in preparing **2023** Returns

Volume 3 of 3



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You use Schedule E, Part I, to report your rental income and expenses. You enter your income, expenses, and depreciation for the house in the column for Property A. Because all property was placed in service this year, you must use Form 4562 to figure the depreciation. See the Instructions for Form 4562 for more information on preparing the form.

## **5.**

### **Personal Use of Dwelling Unit (Including Vacation Home)**

If you have any personal use of a dwelling unit (including a vacation home) that you rent, you must divide your expenses between rental use and personal use. In general, your rental expenses will be no more than your total expenses multiplied by a fraction, the denominator of which is the total number of days the dwelling unit is used and the numerator of which is the total number of days actually rented at a fair rental price. Only your rental expenses may be deducted on Schedule E (Form 1040). Some of your personal expenses may be deductible on Schedule A (Form 1040) if you itemize your deductions.

You must also determine if the dwelling unit is considered a home. The amount of rental

expenses that you can deduct may be limited if the dwelling unit is considered a home.

Whether a dwelling unit is considered a home depends on how many days during the year are considered to be days of personal use.

There is a special rule if you used the dwelling unit as a home and you rented it for less than 15 days during the year.

**Dwelling unit.** A dwelling unit includes a house, apartment, condominium, mobile home, boat, vacation home, or similar property. It also includes all structures or other property belonging to the dwelling unit. A dwelling unit has basic living accommodations, such as sleeping space, a toilet, and cooking facilities.

A dwelling unit doesn't include property (or part of the property) used solely as a hotel, motel, inn, or similar establishment. Property is used solely as a hotel, motel, inn, or similar establishment if it is regularly available for

occupancy by paying customers and isn't used by an owner as a home during the year.

**Example.** You rent a room in your home that is always available for short-term occupancy by paying customers. You don't use the room yourself and you allow only paying customers to use the room. This room is used solely as a hotel, motel, inn, or similar establishment and isn't a dwelling unit.

## **Dividing Expenses**

If you use a dwelling unit for both rental and personal purposes, divide your expenses between the rental use and the personal use based on the number of days used for each purpose.

When dividing your expenses, follow these rules.

- Any day that the unit is rented at a fair rental price is a day of rental use even if you used the unit for personal purposes

that day. (This rule doesn't apply when determining whether you used the unit as a home.)

- Any day that the unit is available for rent but not actually rented isn't a day of rental use.

**Fair rental price.** A fair rental price for your property is generally the amount of rent that a person who isn't related to you would be willing to pay. The rent you charge isn't a fair rental price if it is substantially less than the rents charged for other properties that are similar to your property in your area.

Ask yourself the following questions when comparing another property with yours.

- Is it used for the same purpose?
- Is it approximately the same size?
- Is it in approximately the same condition?
- Does it have similar furnishings?

- Is it in a similar location?

If any of the answers are no, the properties probably aren't similar.

**Example.** Your beach cottage was available for rent from June 1 through August 31 (92 days). Except for the first week in August (7 days), when you were unable to find a renter, you rented the cottage at a fair rental price during that time. The person who rented the cottage for July allowed you to use it over the weekend (2 days) without any reduction in or refund of rent. Your family also used the cottage during the last 2 weeks of May (14 days). The cottage wasn't used at all before May 17 or after August 31.

You figure the part of the cottage expenses to treat as rental expenses as follows.

- The cottage was used for rental a total of 85 days ( $92 - 7$ ). The days it was available for rent but not rented (7 days) aren't days of rental use. The July



weekend (2 days) you used it is rental use because you received a fair rental price for the weekend.

- You used the cottage for personal purposes for 14 days (the last 2 weeks in May).
- The total use of the cottage was 99 days (14 days personal use + 85 days rental use).
- Your rental expenses are 85/99 (86%) of the cottage expenses.

**Note.** When determining whether you used the cottage as a home, the July weekend (2 days) you used it is considered personal use even though you received a fair rental price for the weekend. Therefore, you had 16 days of personal use and 83 days of rental use for this purpose. Because you used the cottage for personal purposes more than 14 days and more than 10% of the days of rental use (8 days), you used it as a home. If you have a

net loss, you may not be able to deduct all of the rental expenses. See *Dwelling Unit Used as a Home* next.

## **Dwelling Unit Used as a Home**

If you use a dwelling unit for both rental and personal purposes, the tax treatment of the rental expenses you figured earlier under [Dividing Expenses](#) and rental income depends on whether you are considered to be using the dwelling unit as a home.

You use a dwelling unit as a home during the tax year if you use it for personal purposes more than the greater of:

1. 14 days, or
2. 10% of the total days it is rented to others at a fair rental price.

See [What is a day of personal use](#), later.

If a dwelling unit is used for personal purposes on a day it is rented at a [fair rental price](#) (discussed earlier), don't count that day

as a day of rental use in applying (2) above. Instead, count it as a day of personal use in applying both (1) and (2) above.

**What is a day of personal use?** A day of personal use of a dwelling unit is any day that the unit is used by any of the following persons.

1. You or any other person who owns an interest in it, unless you rent it to another owner as their main home under a shared equity financing agreement (defined later). However, see [\*Days used as a main home before or after renting\*](#), later.
2. A member of your family or a member of the family of any other person who owns an interest in it, unless the family member uses the dwelling unit as their main home and pays a fair rental price. Family includes only your spouse, siblings, half siblings, ancestors (parents, grandparents,

etc.), and lineal descendants (children, grandchildren, etc.).

3. Anyone under an arrangement that lets you use some other dwelling unit.
4. Anyone at less than a fair rental price.

**Main home.** If the other person or member of the family in (1) or (2) has more than one home, their main home are ordinarily the one they lived in most of the time.

**Shared equity financing agreement.** This is an agreement under which two or more persons acquire undivided interests for more than 50 years in an entire dwelling unit, including the land, and one or more of the co-owners are entitled to occupy the unit as their main home upon payment of rent to the other co-owner(s).

**Donation of use of the property.** You use a dwelling unit for personal purposes if:

- You donate the use of the unit to a charitable organization,
- The organization sells the use of the unit at a fundraising event, and
- The “purchaser” uses the unit.

**Examples.** The following examples show how to determine if you have days of personal use.

**Example 1.** You and your neighbor are co-owners of a condominium at the beach. Last year, you rented the unit to vacationers whenever possible. The unit wasn’t used as a main home by anyone. Your neighbor used the unit for 2 weeks last year; you didn’t use it at all.

Because your neighbor has an interest in the unit, both of you are considered to have used the unit for personal purposes during those 2 weeks.

**Example 2.** You and your neighbors are co-owners of a house under a shared equity financing agreement. Your neighbors live in the house and pay you a fair rental price.

Even though your neighbors have an interest in the house, the days your neighbors live there aren't counted as days of personal use by you. This is because your neighbors rent the house as their main home under a shared equity financing agreement.

**Example 3.** You own a rental property that you rent to your son. Your son doesn't own any interest in this property. He uses it as his main home and pays you a fair rental price.

Your son's use of the property isn't personal use by you because your son is using it as his main home, he owns no interest in the property, and he is paying you a fair rental price.

**Example 4.** You rent your beach house to Rosa. Rosa rents her cabin in the mountains to you. You each pay a fair rental price.

You are using your beach house for personal purposes on the days that Rosa uses it because your house is used

by Rosa under an arrangement that allows you to use her cabin.

**Example 5.** You rent an apartment to your mother at less than a fair rental price. You are using the apartment for personal purposes on the days that your mother rents it because you rent it for less than a fair rental price.

***Days used for repairs and maintenance.***

Any day that you spend working substantially full time repairing and maintaining (not improving) your property isn't counted as a day of personal use. Don't count such a day as a day of personal use even if family

members use the property for recreational purposes on the same day.

**Example.** Corey owns a cabin in the mountains that he rents for most of the year. He spends a week at the cabin with family members. Corey works on maintenance of the cabin 3 or 4 hours each day during the week and spends the rest of the time fishing, hiking, and relaxing. Corey's family members, however, work substantially full time on the cabin each day during the week. The main purpose of being at the cabin that week is to do maintenance work. Therefore, the use of the cabin during the week by Corey and his family won't be considered personal use by Corey.

***Days used as a main home before or after renting.*** For purposes of determining whether a dwelling unit was used as a home, you may not have to count days you used the property as your main home before or after renting it or offering it for rent as days of



personal use. Don't count them as days of personal use if:

- You rented or tried to rent the property for 12 or more consecutive months, or
- You rented or tried to rent the property for a period of less than 12 consecutive months and the period ended because you sold or exchanged the property.

However, this special rule doesn't apply when dividing expenses between rental and personal use. See [Property Changed to Rental Use](#) in chapter 4.

**Example 1.** On February 28, 2022, you moved out of the house you had lived in for 6 years because you accepted a job in another town. You rented your house at a fair rental price from March 15, 2022, to May 14, 2023 (14 months). On June 1, 2023, you moved back into your old house.

The days you used the house as your main home from January 1 to February 28, 2022,

and from June 1 to December 31, 2023, aren't counted as days of personal use. Therefore, you would use the rules in [chapter 1](#) when figuring your rental income and expenses.

**Example 2.** On January 31, you moved out of the condominium where you had lived for 3 years. You offered it for rent at a fair rental price beginning on February 1. You were unable to rent it until April. On September 15, you sold the condominium.

The days you used the condominium as your main home from January 1 to January 31 aren't counted as days of personal use when determining whether you used it as a home.

**Examples.** The following examples show how to determine whether you used your rental property as a home.

**Example 1.** You converted the basement of your home into an apartment with a bedroom, a bathroom, and a small kitchen.

You rented the basement apartment at a fair rental price to college students during the regular school year. You rented to them on a 9-month lease (273 days). You figured 10% of the total days rented to others at a fair rental price is 27 days.

During June (30 days), your brothers stayed with you and lived in the basement apartment rent free.

Your basement apartment was used as a home because you used it for personal purposes for 30 days. Rent-free use by your brothers is considered personal use. Your personal use (30 days) is more than the greater of 14 days or 10% of the total days it was rented (27 days).

**Example 2.** You rented the guest bedroom in your home at a fair rental price during the local college's homecoming, commencement, and football weekends (a total of 27 days). Your sister-in-law stayed in the room rent free for the last 3 weeks (21 days) in July. You

figured 10% of the total days rented to others at a fair rental price is 3 days.

The room was used as a home because you used it for personal purposes for 21 days.

That is more than the greater of 14 days or 10% of the 27 days it was rented (3 days).

**Example 3.** You own a condominium apartment in a resort area. You rented it at a fair rental price for a total of 170 days during the year. For 12 of these days, the tenant wasn't able to use the apartment and allowed you to use it even though you didn't refund any of the rent. Your family actually used the apartment for 10 of those days. Therefore, the apartment is treated as having been rented for 160 ( $170 - 10$ ) days. You figured 10% of the total days rented to others at a fair rental price is 16 days. Your family also used the apartment for 7 other days during the year.

You used the apartment as a home because you used it for personal purposes for 17 days.

That is more than the greater of 14 days or 10% of the 160 days it was rented (16 days).


**Minimal rental use.** If you use the dwelling unit as a home and you rent it less than 15 days during the year, that period isn't treated as rental activity. See [\*Used as a home but rented less than 15 days\*](#), later, for more information.

**Limit on deductions.** Renting a dwelling unit that is considered a home isn't a passive activity. Instead, if your rental expenses are more than your rental income, some or all of the excess expenses can't be used to offset income from other sources. The excess expenses that can't be used to offset income from other sources are carried forward to the next year and treated as rental expenses for the same property. Any expenses carried forward to the next year will be subject to any limits that apply for that year. This limitation will apply to expenses carried forward

to another year even if you don't use the property as your home for that subsequent year.

To figure your deductible rental expenses for this year and any carryover to next year, use [Worksheet 5-1](#).

Worksheet 5-1. **Worksheet for Figuring  
Rental Deductions for a  
Dwelling Unit Used as a  
Home**

Keep for Your Records 

<b>Use this worksheet only if you answer “Yes” to all of the following questions.</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Did you use the dwelling unit as a home this year? (See <a href="#">Dwelling Unit Used as a Home</a>.)</li><li>• Did you rent the dwelling unit at a fair rental price 15 days or more this year?</li><li>• Is the total of your rental expenses and depreciation more than your rental income?</li></ul>	
<b>PART I. Rental Use Percentage</b>	
A. Total days available for rent at fair rental price .....	A. _____
B. Total days available for rent (line A) but not rented .....	B. _____
C. <b>Total days of rental use.</b> Subtract line B from line A .....	C. _____
D. <b>Total days of personal use</b> (including days rented at less than fair rental price) .....	D. _____
E. <b>Total days of rental and personal use.</b> Add lines C and D .....	E. _____
F. <b>Percentage of expenses allowed for rental.</b> Divide line C by line E .....	F. _____
<b>PART II. Allowable Rental Expenses</b>	
1. Enter rents received .....	1. _____
2a. Enter the rental portion of deductible home mortgage interest. See instructions .....	2a. _____
b. Enter the rental portion of deductible real estate taxes. See instructions .....	b. _____
c. Enter the rental portion of deductible casualty and theft losses. See instructions .....	c. _____
d. Enter direct rental expenses. See instructions .....	d. _____
e. <b>Fully deductible rental expenses.</b> Add lines 2a–2d. Enter here and on the appropriate lines on Schedule E. See instructions .....	2e. _____
3. Subtract line 2e from line 1. If zero or less, enter -0- .....	3. _____
4a. Enter the rental portion of expenses directly related to operating or maintaining the dwelling unit (such as repairs, insurance, and utilities) .....	4a. _____
b. Enter the rental portion of excess mortgage interest. See instructions .....	b. _____
c. Enter the rental portion of excess real estate taxes. See instructions .....	c. _____
d. Carryover of operating expenses from 2022 worksheet .....	d. _____
e. Add lines 4a–4d .....	e. _____
f. <b>Allowable expenses.</b> Enter the <b>smaller</b> of line 3 or line 4e. See instructions .....	4f. _____
5. Subtract line 4f from line 3. If zero or less, enter -0- .....	5. _____
6a. Enter the rental portion of excess casualty and theft losses. See instructions .....	6a. _____
b. Enter the rental portion of depreciation of the dwelling unit .....	b. _____
c. Carryover of excess casualty and theft losses and depreciation from 2022 worksheet .....	c. _____
d. Add lines 6a–6c .....	d. _____
e. <b>Allowable excess casualty and theft losses and depreciation.</b> Enter the <b>smaller</b> of line 5 or line 6d. See instructions .....	6e. _____
<b>PART III. Carryover of Unallowed Expenses to Next Year</b>	
7a. <b>Operating expenses to be carried over to next year.</b> Subtract line 4f from line 4e .....	7a. _____
b. <b>Excess casualty and theft losses and depreciation to be carried over to next year.</b> Subtract line 6e from line 6d .....	b. _____



**Caution.** Use the percentage determined in Part I, line F, to figure the rental portions to enter on lines 2a–2c, 4a–4c, and 6a–6b of Part II.

**Line 2a.** If you are claiming the standard deduction, do not report an amount on line 2a; instead, report the rental portion of your mortgage interest on line 4b.

If you are itemizing your deductions on Schedule A, figure the amount of mortgage interest to include on line 2a by using the following steps.

**Step 1.** Treat all the mortgage interest you paid for mortgages secured by your home(s) as a personal expense and figure the amount that would be deductible as an itemized expense on Schedule A. See Pub. 936 for more information about figuring the home mortgage interest deduction and the limits that may apply.

**Step 2.** Include on line 2a the rental portion of deductible mortgage interest figured in Step 1 that is attributable to the home you are renting.

**Note.** Be sure to claim only the personal portion of your deductible mortgage interest on Schedule A. The personal portion of mortgage interest on the dwelling unit doesn't include the rental portion you reported on line 2a of this Worksheet 5-1 or any portion that you deducted on other forms, such as Schedule C or F.

**Line 2b.** If you are claiming the standard deduction, do not report an amount on line 2b; instead, report the rental portion of your real estate taxes on line 4c.

If you are itemizing your deductions on Schedule A, figure the amount to report on line 2b by using the following steps.

**Step 1.** If the total of your state and local income (or, if elected on your Schedule A, general sales) taxes, real estate taxes, and personal property taxes is not more than \$10,000 (\$5,000 if married filing separately), enter the rental portion of the real estate taxes attributable to the dwelling unit you are renting on line 2b.

**Step 2.** If you do not meet the condition of Step 1, use the following worksheet to figure the amount to include on line 2b.

Line 2b Worksheet

1. Enter your state and local income taxes (or, if you elect on Schedule A, your state and local general sales taxes) that are personal expenses
2. Enter all the state and local real estate taxes you paid on the dwelling unit you are renting
3. Enter any other state and local real estate taxes you paid that are a personal expense and not included on line 2
4. Enter your state and local personal property taxes that are a personal expense
5. Add lines 1 through 4
6. Multiply line 2 by the percentage of expenses allowed for rental (Part I, line F)
7. Subtract line 6 from line 5
8. Subtract line 7 from \$10,000 (\$5,000 if married filing separately). If zero or less, enter -0-
9. Real estate taxes reported on line 2b. Enter the smaller of line 6 or line 8 here and on line 2b
10. Excess real estate taxes reported on line 4c. Subtract line 9 from line 6

**Note.** Be sure to report only the personal portion of your real estate taxes on line 5b of Schedule A. The personal portion of real estate taxes on the dwelling unit doesn't include the rental portion you reported on line 2b of this Worksheet 5-1 or any portion that you deducted on other forms, such as Schedule C or F.

**Line 2c.** If you are claiming the standard deduction and you are not increasing your standard deduction by a net qualified disaster loss, do not report an amount on line 2c; instead, report the rental portion of your casualty losses on line 6a.

If you are itemizing your deductions on Schedule A or filing a Schedule A to increase your standard deduction by a net qualified disaster loss, figure the amount to report on line 2c by using the following steps.

**Step 1.** Complete a worksheet version of Section A of Form 4684 treating all your casualty losses (and gains) as personal expenses. If you are itemizing your deductions, when completing line 17 of this worksheet version of Form 4684, enter 10% of your adjusted gross income figured without your rental income and expenses from the dwelling unit. Don't file this worksheet version of Form 4684; instead, keep it for your records. You will complete a separate Form 4684 to attach to your return using only the personal portion of your casualty losses (and gains) for Section A.

**Step 2.** Include on line 2c the rental portion of the loss amounts from lines 15 and 18 of this worksheet version of Form 4684 that are the result of a federally declared disaster. If you are claiming an increased standard deduction instead of itemizing your deductions, only use the rental portion of a net qualified disaster loss on line 15 of the worksheet version of Form 4684 for this Step 2.

**Note.** Be sure to use only the personal portion of your casualty losses (and gains) when completing Section A of the separate Form 4684 you attach to your return. The separate Form 4684 you attach to your return is used to figure the casualty losses you can include on line 15 of Schedule A and the net qualified disaster losses you can include on line 16 of Schedule A. You will report casualty and theft losses attributable to your rental activity in Section B of the separate Form 4684 you attach to your return.



Worksheet 5-1 Instructions—*Continued*

<b>Line 2d.</b>	Enter the total of your rental expenses that are directly related only to the rental activity. These include interest on loans used for rental activities other than to buy, build, or improve the dwelling unit. Also, include rental agency fees, advertising, office supplies, and depreciation on office equipment used in your rental activity.
<b>Line 2e.</b>	You can deduct the amounts on lines 2a, 2b, 2c, and 2d as rental expenses even if your rental expenses are more than your rental income. Enter the amounts on lines 2a, 2b, and 2d on the appropriate lines of Schedule E. Include the amount from line 2c with the casualty loss from line 6e, if any, in Section B of Form 4684, on line 27, and enter "See attached statement" above line 27. Attach a statement to your tax return showing how you calculated the deductible loss (you can use the worksheet as your attachment).
<b>Line 4b.</b>	<p>If you are claiming the standard deduction, enter the rental portion of all the home mortgage interest paid for loans used to buy, build, or substantially improve the dwelling unit you are renting on line 4b. Do not include mortgage interest on a loan that did not benefit the dwelling unit (for example, a home equity loan used to pay off credit card bills, to buy a car, or to pay tuition costs).</p> <p>If you are itemizing your deductions and the amount you figured in Step 1 under <i>Line 2a</i> was less than the full amount of interest you paid because of the limits on deducting home mortgage interest as a personal expense, include on line 4b the rental portion of the excess attributable to the loans used to buy, build, or substantially improve the dwelling unit you rented.</p>
<b>Line 4c.</b>	<p>If you are claiming the standard deduction, enter the rental portion of all the real estate taxes paid on the dwelling unit you rented.</p> <p>If you are itemizing your deductions and you used the Line 2b Worksheet to figure the amount to include on line 2b, then include the amount from line 10 of the Line 2b Worksheet on line 4c; otherwise, do not enter an amount on line 4c.</p>
<b>Line 4f.</b>	You can deduct the amounts on lines 4a, 4b, 4c, and 4d as rental expenses on Schedule E only to the extent they aren't more than the amount on line 4f.*
<b>Line 6a.</b>	<p>If you are claiming the standard deduction and not increasing it by a net qualified disaster loss, enter the rental portion of all casualty losses attributable to the dwelling unit you rented.</p> <p>If you are itemizing your deductions on Schedule A or filing a Schedule A to increase your standard deduction by a net qualified disaster loss, enter the rental portion of the casualty losses attributable to the dwelling unit you rented that are in excess of the amount you figured on lines 15 and 18 of your worksheet version of Form 4684.</p>
<b>Line 6e.</b>	You can deduct the amounts on lines 6a, 6b, and 6c as rental expenses only to the extent they aren't more than the amount on line 6e.* Include the depreciation from line 6e, if any, on the appropriate line of Schedule E. Include the casualty loss from line 6e, if any, with the casualty loss from line 2c in Section B of Form 4684, on line 27, and enter "See attached statement" above line 27. Attach a statement to your tax return showing how you calculated the deductible loss (you can use the worksheet as your attachment).
<p><b>* Allocating the limited deduction.</b> If you can't deduct all of the amount on line 4e or 6d this year, you can allocate the allowable deduction in any way you wish among the expenses included on line 4e or 6d. Enter the amount you allocate to each expense on the appropriate line of Schedule E, Part I, or if a casualty loss, as instructed earlier on Form 4684, line 27.</p>	

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# Reporting Income and Deductions

## **Property not used for personal purposes.**

If you don't use a dwelling unit for personal purposes, see [chapter 3](#) for how to report your rental income and expenses.

**Property used for personal purposes.** If you do use a dwelling unit for personal purposes, then how you report your rental income and expenses depends on whether you used the dwelling unit as a home.

***Not used as a home.*** If you use a dwelling unit for personal purposes, but not as a home, report all the rental income in your income. Because you used the dwelling unit for personal purposes, you must divide your expenses between the rental use and the personal use as described earlier in this chapter under [Dividing Expenses](#). The expenses for personal use aren't deductible as rental expenses.

Your deductible rental expenses can be more than your gross rental income; however, see [Limits on Rental Losses](#) in chapter 3.

***Used as a home but rented less than 15 days.*** If you use a dwelling unit as a home and you rent it less than 15 days during the year, its primary function isn't considered to be rental and it shouldn't be reported on Schedule E (Form 1040). You aren't required to report the rental income and rental expenses from this activity. Any expenses related to the home, such as mortgage interest, property taxes, and any qualified casualty loss, will be reported as normally allowed on Schedule A (Form 1040). See the Instructions for Schedule A for more information on deducting these expenses.

***Used as a home and rented 15 days or more.*** If you use a dwelling unit as a home and rent it 15 days or more during the year, include all your rental income in your income. Because you used the dwelling unit for

personal purposes, you must divide your expenses between the rental use and the personal use as described earlier in this chapter under [Dividing Expenses](#). The expenses for personal use aren't deductible as rental expenses.

If you had a net profit from renting the dwelling unit for the year (that is, if your rental income is more than the total of your rental expenses, including depreciation), deduct all of your rental expenses. You don't need to use [Worksheet 5-1](#).

However, if you had a net loss from renting the dwelling unit for the year, your deduction for certain rental expenses is limited. To figure your deductible rental expenses and any carryover to next year, use [Worksheet 5-1](#).

## 6.

# How To Get Tax Help

If you have questions about a tax issue; need help preparing your tax return; or want to download free publications, forms, or instructions, go to [IRS.gov](https://www.irs.gov) to find resources that can help you right away.

**Preparing and filing your tax return.** After receiving all your wage and earnings statements (Forms W-2, W-2G, 1099-R, 1099-MISC, 1099-NEC, etc.); unemployment compensation statements (by mail or in a digital format) or other government payment statements (Form 1099-G); and interest, dividend, and retirement statements from banks and investment firms (Forms 1099), you have several options to choose from to prepare and file your tax return. You can prepare the tax return yourself, see if you qualify for free tax preparation, or hire a tax professional to prepare your return.

**Free options for tax preparation.** Your options for preparing and filing your return online or in your local community, if you qualify, include the following.

- **Free File.** This program lets you prepare and file your federal individual income tax return for free using software or Free File Fillable Forms. However, state tax preparation may not be available through Free File. Go to [IRS.gov/FreeFile](https://www.irs.gov/FreeFile) to see if you qualify for free online federal tax preparation, e-filing, and direct deposit or payment options.
- **VITA.** The Volunteer Income Tax Assistance (VITA) program offers free tax help to people with
- low-to-moderate incomes, persons with disabilities, and limited-English-speaking taxpayers who need help preparing their own tax returns. Go to [IRS.gov/VITA](https://www.irs.gov/VITA), download the free IRS2Go app, or call

- 800-906-9887 for information on free tax return preparation.
- **TCE.** The Tax Counseling for the Elderly (TCE) program offers free tax help for all taxpayers, particularly those who are 60 years of age and older. TCE volunteers specialize in answering questions about pensions and retirement-related issues unique to seniors. Go to [IRS.gov/TCE](https://www.irs.gov/TCE) or download the free IRS2Go app for information on free tax return preparation.
- **MilTax.** Members of the U.S. Armed Forces and qualified veterans may use MilTax, a free tax service offered by the Department of Defense through Military OneSource. For more information, go to [MilitaryOneSource](https://www.MilitaryOneSource.com) ([MilitaryOneSource.mil/MilTax](https://www.MilitaryOneSource.com/MilTax)).



Also, the IRS offers Free Fillable Forms, which can be completed online and then e-filed regardless of income.

**Using online tools to help prepare your return.** Go to [IRS.gov/Tools](https://www.irs.gov/Tools) for the following.

- The [Earned Income Tax Credit Assistant](https://www.irs.gov/EITCAssistant) ([IRS.gov/ EITCAssistant](https://www.irs.gov/EITCAssistant)) determines if you're eligible for the earned income credit (EIC).
- The [Online EIN Application](https://www.irs.gov/EIN) ([IRS.gov/EIN](https://www.irs.gov/EIN)) helps you get an employer identification number (EIN) at no cost.
- The [Tax Withholding Estimator](https://www.irs.gov/W4App) ([IRS.gov/W4App](https://www.irs.gov/W4App)) makes it easier for you to estimate the federal income tax you want your employer to withhold from your paycheck. This is tax withholding. See how your withholding affects your refund, take-home pay, or tax due.
- The [First-Time Homebuyer Credit Account Look-up](https://www.irs.gov/HomeBuyer) ([IRS.gov/HomeBuyer](https://www.irs.gov/HomeBuyer)) tool

provides information on your repayments and account balance.

- The [Sales Tax Deduction Calculator](#) ([IRS.gov/ SalesTax](#)) figures the amount you can claim if you itemize deductions on Schedule A (Form 1040).



### **Getting answers to your tax**

**questions.** On IRS.gov, you can get up-to-date information on current events and changes in tax law.

- [IRS.gov/Help](#): A variety of tools to help you get answers to some of the most common tax questions.
- [IRS.gov/ITA](#): The Interactive Tax Assistant, a tool that will ask you questions and, based on your input, provide answers on a number of tax topics.
- [IRS.gov/Forms](#): Find forms, instructions, and publications. You will find details on

the most recent tax changes and interactive links to help you find answers to your questions.

- You may also be able to access tax information in your e-filing software.

### **Need someone to prepare your tax**

**return?** There are various types of tax return preparers, including enrolled agents, certified public accountants (CPAs), accountants, and many others who don't have professional credentials. If you choose to have someone prepare your tax return, choose that preparer wisely. A paid tax preparer is:

- Primarily responsible for the overall substantive accuracy of your return,
- Required to sign the return, and
- Required to include their preparer tax identification number (PTIN).



*Although the tax preparer always signs the return, you're ultimately responsible for providing all the information required for the preparer to accurately prepare your return and for the accuracy of every item reported on the return. Anyone paid to prepare tax returns for others should have a thorough understanding of tax matters. For more information on how to choose a tax preparer, go to [Tips for Choosing a Tax Preparer](#) on IRS.gov.*

**Employers can register to use Business Services Online.** The Social Security Administration (SSA) offers online service at [SSA.gov/employer](https://ssa.gov/employer) for fast, free, and secure W-2 filing options to CPAs, accountants, enrolled agents, and individuals who process Form W-2, Wage and Tax Statement, and Form W-2c, Corrected Wage and Tax Statement.

**IRS social media.** Go to [IRS.gov/SocialMedia](https://irs.gov/SocialMedia) to see the various social media tools the IRS

uses to share the latest information on tax changes, scam alerts, initiatives, products, and services. At the IRS, privacy and security are our highest priority. We use these tools to share public information with you. **Don't** post your social security number (SSN) or other confidential information on social media sites. Always protect your identity when using any social networking site.

The following IRS YouTube channels provide short, informative videos on various tax-related topics in English, Spanish, and ASL.

- [Youtube.com/irsvideos](https://www.youtube.com/irsvideos).
- [Youtube.com/irsvideomultilingua](https://www.youtube.com/irsvideomultilingua).
- [Youtube.com/irsvideosASL](https://www.youtube.com/irsvideosASL).

**Watching IRS videos.** The IRS Video portal ([IRSVideos.gov](https://www.irs.gov/irs/videos)) contains video and audio presentations for individuals, small businesses, and tax professionals.

**Online tax information in other languages.** You can find information on [IRS.gov/MyLanguage](https://www.irs.gov/MyLanguage) if English isn't your native language.

**Free Over-the-Phone Interpreter (OPI) Service.** The IRS is committed to serving taxpayers with limited-English proficiency (LEP) by offering OPI services. The OPI Service is a federally funded program and is available at Taxpayer Assistance Centers (TACs), most IRS offices, and every VITA/TCE tax return site. The OPI Service is accessible in more than 350 languages.

**Accessibility Helpline available for taxpayers with disabilities.** Taxpayers who need information about accessibility services can call 833-690-0598. The Accessibility Helpline can answer questions related to current and future accessibility products and services available in alternative media formats (for example, braille, large print, audio, etc.). The Accessibility Helpline does

not have access to your IRS account. For help with tax law, refunds, or account-related issues, go to [IRS.gov/LetUsHelp](https://www.irs.gov/LetUsHelp).

**Note.** Form 9000, Alternative Media Preference, or Form 9000(SP) allows you to elect to receive certain types of written correspondence in the following formats.

- Standard Print.
- Large Print.
- Braille.
- Audio (MP3).
- Plain Text File (TXT).
- Braille Ready File (BRF).

**Disasters.** Go to [IRS.gov/DisasterRelief](https://www.irs.gov/DisasterRelief) to review the available disaster tax relief.

**Getting tax forms and publications.** Go to [IRS.gov/ Forms](https://www.irs.gov/Forms) to view, download, or print all the forms, instructions, and publications you

may need. Or, you can go to [IRS.gov/OrderForms](https://www.irs.gov/OrderForms) to place an order.

**Getting tax publications and instructions in eBook format.** Download and view most tax publications and instructions (including the Instructions for Form 1040) on mobile devices as eBooks at [IRS.gov/eBooks](https://www.irs.gov/eBooks).

IRS eBooks have been tested using Apple's iBooks for iPad. Our eBooks haven't been tested on other dedicated eBook readers, and eBook functionality may not operate as intended.

**Access your online account (individual taxpayers only).** Go to [IRS.gov/Account](https://www.irs.gov/Account) to securely access information about your federal tax account.

- View the amount you owe and a breakdown by tax year.
- See payment plan details or apply for a new payment plan.



- Make a payment or view 5 years of payment history and any pending or scheduled payments.
- Access your tax records, including key data from your most recent tax return, and transcripts.
- View digital copies of select notices from the IRS.
- Approve or reject authorization requests from tax professionals.
- View your address on file or manage your communication preferences.

**Get a transcript of your return.** With an online account, you can access a variety of information to help you during the filing season. You can get a transcript, review your most recently filed tax return, and get your adjusted gross income. Create or access your online account at [IRS.gov/Account](https://www.irs.gov/Account).

**Tax Pro Account.** This tool lets your tax professional submit an authorization request to access your individual taxpayer IRS online account. For more information, go to [IRS.gov/TaxProAccount](https://www.irs.gov/TaxProAccount).

**Using direct deposit.** The safest and easiest way to receive a tax refund is to e-file and choose direct deposit, which securely and electronically transfers your refund directly into your financial account. Direct deposit also avoids the possibility that your check could be lost, stolen, destroyed, or returned undeliverable to the IRS. Eight in 10 taxpayers use direct deposit to receive their refunds. If you don't have a bank account, go to [IRS.gov/ DirectDeposit](https://www.irs.gov/DirectDeposit) for more information on where to find a bank or credit union that can open an account online.

## **Reporting and resolving your tax-related identity theft issues.**

- Tax-related identity theft happens when someone steals your personal information to commit tax fraud. Your taxes can be affected if your SSN is used to file a fraudulent return or to claim a refund or credit.
- The IRS doesn't initiate contact with taxpayers by email, text messages (including shortened links), telephone calls, or social media channels to request or verify personal or financial information. This includes requests for personal identification numbers (PINs), passwords, or similar information for credit cards, banks, or other financial accounts.
- Go to [IRS.gov/IdentityTheft](https://www.irs.gov/identitytheft), the IRS Identity Theft Central webpage, for information on identity theft and data security protection for taxpayers, tax

professionals, and businesses. If your SSN has been lost or stolen or you suspect you're a victim of tax-related identity theft, you can learn what steps you should take.

- Get an Identity Protection PIN (IP PIN). IP PINs are six-digit numbers assigned to taxpayers to help prevent the misuse of their SSNs on fraudulent federal income tax returns. When you have an IP PIN, it prevents someone else from filing a tax return with your SSN. To learn more, go to [IRS.gov/IPPIN](https://www.irs.gov/ippin).

## **Ways to check on the status of your refund.**

- Go to [IRS.gov/Refunds](https://www.irs.gov/Refunds).
- Download the official IRS2Go app to your mobile device to check your refund status.
- Call the automated refund hotline at 800-829-1954.



*The IRS can't issue refunds before mid-February for returns that claimed the EIC or the additional child tax credit (ACTC). This applies to the entire refund, not just the portion associated with these credits.*

**Making a tax payment.** Payments of U.S. tax must be remitted to the IRS in U.S. dollars. [Digital assets](#) are **not** accepted. Go to [IRS.gov/Payments](#) for information on how to make a payment using any of the following options.

- [IRS Direct Pay](#): Pay your individual tax bill or estimated tax payment directly from your checking or savings account at no cost to you.
- [Debit Card, Credit Card, or Digital Wallet](#): Choose an approved payment processor to pay online or by phone.
- [Electronic Funds Withdrawal](#): Schedule a payment when filing your federal taxes

using tax return preparation software or through a tax professional.

- [Electronic Federal Tax Payment System](#): Best option for businesses. Enrollment is required.
- [Check or Money Order](#): Mail your payment to the address listed on the notice or instructions.
- [Cash](#): You may be able to pay your taxes with cash at a participating retail store.
- [Same-Day Wire](#): You may be able to do same-day wire from your financial institution. Contact your financial institution for availability, cost, and time frames.

**Note.** The IRS uses the latest encryption technology to ensure that the electronic payments you make online, by phone, or from a mobile device using the IRS2Go app are safe and secure. Paying electronically is

quick, easy, and faster than mailing in a check or money order.

**What if I can't pay now?** Go to [IRS.gov/Payments](https://www.irs.gov/Payments) for more information about your options.

- Apply for an [online payment agreement \(IRS.gov/ OPA\)](https://www.irs.gov/OPA) to meet your tax obligation in monthly installments if you can't pay your taxes in full today. Once you complete the online process, you will receive immediate notification of whether your agreement has been approved.
- Use the [Offer in Compromise Pre-Qualifier](https://www.irs.gov/OIC) to see if you can settle your tax debt for less than the full amount you owe. For more information on the Offer in Compromise program, go to [IRS.gov/OIC](https://www.irs.gov/OIC).

**Filing an amended return.** Go to [IRS.gov/Form1040X](https://www.irs.gov/Form1040X) for information and updates.

**Checking the status of your amended return.** Go to [IRS.gov/WMAR](https://www.irs.gov/WMAR) to track the status of Form 1040-X amended returns.



*It can take up to 3 weeks from the date you filed your amended return for it to show up in our system, and processing it can take up to 16 weeks.*

**Understanding an IRS notice or letter you've received.** Go to [IRS.gov/Notices](https://www.irs.gov/Notices) to find additional information about responding to an IRS notice or letter.

**Responding to an IRS notice or letter.** You can now upload responses to all notices and letters using the Document Upload Tool. For notices that require additional action, taxpayers will be redirected appropriately on IRS.gov to take further action. To learn more about the tool, go to [IRS.gov/Upload](https://www.irs.gov/Upload).

**Note.** You can use Schedule LEP (Form 1040), Request for Change in Language Preference, to state a preference to receive



notices, letters, or other written communications from the IRS in an alternative language. You may not immediately receive written communications in the requested language. The IRS's commitment to LEP taxpayers is part of a multi-year timeline that began providing translations in 2023. You will continue to receive communications, including notices and letters, in English until they are translated to your preferred language.

**Contacting your local TAC.** Keep in mind, many questions can be answered on IRS.gov without visiting a TAC. Go to [IRS.gov/LetUsHelp](https://www.irs.gov/LetUsHelp) for the topics people ask about most. If you still need help, TACs provide tax help when a tax issue can't be handled online or by phone. All TACs now provide service by appointment, so you'll know in advance that you can get the service you need without long wait times. Before you visit, go to [IRS.gov/TACLocator](https://www.irs.gov/TACLocator) to find the nearest TAC and to check hours, available

services, and appointment options. Or, on the IRS2Go app, under the Stay Connected tab, choose the Contact Us option and click on “Local Offices.”

## **The Taxpayer Advocate Service (TAS) Is Here To Help You**

### **What Is TAS?**

TAS is an ***independent*** organization within the IRS that helps taxpaaaaaayers and protects taxpayer rights. Their job is to ensure that every taxpayer is treated fairly and that you know and understand your rights under the [Taxpayer Bill of Rights](#).

### **How Can You Learn About Your Taxpayer Rights?**

The Taxpayer Bill of Rights describes 10 basic rights that all taxpayers have when dealing with the IRS. Go to [TaxpayerAdvocate.IRS.gov](#) to help you understand what these rights mean to you

and how they apply. These are ***your*** rights. Know them. Use them.

## **What Can TAS Do for You?**

TAS can help you resolve problems that you can't resolve with the IRS. And their service is free. If you qualify for their assistance, you will be assigned to one advocate who will work with you throughout the process and will do everything possible to resolve your issue.

TAS can help you if:

- Your problem is causing financial difficulty for you, your family, or your business;
- You face (or your business is facing) an immediate threat of adverse action; or
- You've tried repeatedly to contact the IRS but no one has responded, or the IRS hasn't responded by the date promised.

## **How Can You Reach TAS?**

TAS has offices *in every state, the District of Columbia, and Puerto Rico*. To find your advocate's number:

- Go to [TaxpayerAdvocate.IRS.gov/Contact-Us](https://taxpayeradvocate.irs.gov/Contact-Us);
- Download Pub. 1546, The Taxpayer Advocate Service Is Your Voice at the IRS, available at [IRS.gov/pub/irs-pdf/p1546.pdf](https://irs.gov/pub/irs-pdf/p1546.pdf);
- Call the IRS toll free at 800-TAX-FORM (800-829-3676) to order a copy of Pub. 1546;
- Check your local directory; or
- Call TAS toll free at 877-777-4778.

## **How Else Does TAS Help Taxpayers?**

TAS works to resolve large-scale problems that affect many taxpayers. If you know of one of these broad issues, report it to TAS at [IRS.gov/SAMS](https://irs.gov/SAMS). Be sure to not include any personal taxpayer information.

## **Low Income Taxpayer Clinics (LITCs)**

LITCs are independent from the IRS and TAS. LITCs represent individuals whose income is below a certain level and who need to resolve tax problems with the IRS. LITCs can represent taxpayers in audits, appeals, and tax collection disputes before the IRS and in court. In addition, LITCs can provide information about taxpayer rights and responsibilities in different languages for individuals who speak English as a second language. Services are offered for free or a small fee. For more information or to find an LTC near you, go to the LTC page at [TaxpayerAdvocate.IRS.gov/LITC](https://TaxpayerAdvocate.IRS.gov/LITC) or see IRS Pub. 4134, [Low Income Taxpayer Clinic List](https://www.irs.gov/pub/irs-pdf/p4134.pdf), at [IRS.gov/pub/irs-pdf/p4134.pdf](https://www.irs.gov/pub/irs-pdf/p4134.pdf).

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To help us develop a more useful index, please let us know if you have ideas for index entries. See “Comments and Suggestions” in the “Introduction” for the ways you can reach us.

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