

IRS TAX TIP 2004-64

COMMON ERRORS TO AVOID

The IRS recommends reviewing your entire tax return to be sure it is accurate and complete. Even a simple mistake can cause problems with your tax return, which might lead to delays in processing your return and receiving your refund.

Want to avoid frequent trouble spots? Check these areas, which can reduce problems:

- Use the peel-off label. You may line through and make necessary corrections right on the label. Be sure to fill in your Social Security number in the box provided on the return. It is not on the label.
- If you do not have a peel-off label, fill in all requested information clearly, including the Social Security numbers.
- Check only one filing status on the tax return and check the appropriate exemption boxes. Enter the correct Social Security numbers for each of those exemptions. Make sure the writing is legible. Incorrect or missing SSNs will cause a delay in the processing of the tax return.
- If you claim the Child Tax Credit, be sure you subtract last year's advance payment amount when figuring the Credit. Use the worksheet in the instructions for Forms 1040 and 1040A or in IRS Publication 972, "Child Tax Credit."
- Use the correct Tax Table column for your filing status.
- Double check all figures on the return. Math errors are a common mistake.
- Make sure that the financial institution routing and account numbers you have entered on the return for a direct deposit of your refund are accurate. Incorrect numbers can cause the refund to be delayed or misdirected.
- Sign and date the return. If filing a joint return, both spouses must sign and date the return.
- Attach all Forms W-2, 1099-R and others that reflect tax withheld to the front of the return. If you are also filing a Form 9465, "Installment Agreement Request," attach that to the front of the tax return. Attach all other necessary forms and schedules, in the order as listed in the attachment sequence order in the upper right corner of each form or schedule.

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- Do you owe tax? If so, enclose a check or money order made payable to the "United States Treasury" and Form 1040-V, "Payment Voucher," with the return. Or, you may choose to pay by credit card by contacting one of the credit card service providers. If you file electronically, you may authorize the U.S. Treasury to withdraw the payment directly from your bank account.

For a complete checklist and a listing of some of the most common errors, see Tax Topic 303, "Checklist of Common Errors When Preparing Your Tax Return," on the IRS Web site at www.irs.gov, or call the toll-free TeleTax number, 1-800-829-4477.

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