

 Fact Sheet

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When Can I Expect My Refund?

IRS YouTube Video: Where's My Refund?: [English](#) | [Spanish](#) | [ASL](#)

FS-2012-4, January 2012

The Internal Revenue Service reminds taxpayers to keep in mind that many variables can affect the speed of a tax refund. Using e-file with direct deposit remains the fastest option for taxpayers.

Following technology improvements, the IRS will issue refunds to more taxpayers in as few as 10 days this year for those who e-file and select direct deposit. Overall, the IRS issues the vast majority (more than 9 out of 10) of all refunds – whether filed electronically or on paper – in 21 days or less.

Although refund speed will generally increase overall, the IRS emphasizes these are “best-case scenarios,” where tax returns are filed accurately and no corrections or review are required.

In addition, the IRS also cautions taxpayers it is increasing scrutiny of tax returns for signs of fraud. This means some tax refunds will face additional screening and review before being released, which will add time before the refund is delivered.

There are some simple ways for people to help ensure they receive their refund quickly.

E-file remains the best way to ensure an error-free return.

Taxpayers can help ensure their refund arrives as expected by submitting an error free return. Use the correct Social Security number or taxpayer identification number, the correct address, and the correct bank and routing number if electing direct deposit.

You don't need to wait on the phone to check on the status of your refund. The fastest and best way to get information on your refund is through the “Where's My Refund?” tool on IRS.gov and the IRS2Go phone app. Information about refund status is available about three days after the IRS acknowledges receipt of your e-filed return, or four weeks after mailing a paper return.

The free IRS2Go application is available at the Apple App Store and the Android Marketplace.

When checking the status of your refund through these IRS online tools, you will need to have your federal tax return handy. To get your personalized refund information you

must enter the following information on the safe and secure IRS.gov website or phone app:

- Your Social Security Number or Individual Taxpayer Identification Number;
- Your filing status which will be Single, Married Filing Joint Return, Married Filing Separate Return, Head of Household, or Qualifying Widow(er); and
- Exact whole dollar refund amount shown on your tax return.

Once you've entered your personal information, and depending on the status of your refund, our online tool may provide several pieces of information, including acknowledgement that your return was received and is being processed, the mailing or payment issuance date of your refund, and possibly a notification that the IRS could not deliver your refund due to an incorrect address.

The IRS must review refunds to prevent fraudulent and erroneous refunds, while balancing customer service, fast refunds and protecting against fraud. If the IRS needs additional information to process your return, we will contact you by mail. You don't need to call and wait on the phone. Taxpayers are encouraged not to tie major financial decisions to the receipt of their tax refund by a specific day, but please know that the IRS works hard to issue proper refunds as quickly as possible.