

IRS News Release

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Visits to IRS.gov Up Sharply as Taxpayers Go Online to Get Tax Information

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WASHINGTON — The number of visitors to IRS.gov is up more than 24 percent compared with last year, and more taxpayers rely on the Internal Revenue Service's online resources to get answers to tax questions on the economic recovery legislation and to prepare and file tax returns accurately and timely.

More than 138 million taxpayers already visited the IRS Web site this year, up from about 111 million from the same period last year.

Taxpayers can find the [latest information](#) about the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009, including details on extending health insurance for people who lost their jobs and tax breaks for first-time homebuyers. IRS also has developed ["What if" scenarios](#) and the possible tax implications for people who may be facing financially difficult times. Taxpayers periodically should check for updates to these pages.

Some IRS online publications contain hyperlinks allowing users to get the answers they need quickly. The links allow users to jump immediately to other parts of publications and external Web sites, reducing the time it takes to access information.

A total of 14 publications contain tailored hyperlinks that provide easier access, including [Publication 3](#), Armed Forces' Tax Guide, [Publication 970](#), Tax Benefits for Education, and [Publication 936](#), Home Mortgage Interest Deduction. [Publication 17](#), Your Federal Income Tax, was issued for the first time with hyperlinks last year, and the new version now has more links than ever before. Publication 17 also is available online in Spanish for the first time.

Available on IRS.gov this year is a new on-line tool that allows taxpayers to complete tax forms, perform basic mathematical calculations and e-file their federal income tax returns free of charge. [Free File Fillable Forms](#) is most suited for those who prepare their own paper returns without the assistance of a tax return preparer or tax preparation software. There are no income limitations to use Free File Fillable Forms, and the most commonly-used [federal tax forms](#) are available.

Also available to taxpayers is [Free File](#), which provides taxpayers with an adjusted gross income of \$56,000 or less in 2008 with free federal income tax preparation and electronic filing. Free File is free, fast and accurate.

Taxpayers also can download IRS [audio podcasts](#) on a variety of topics in English and Spanish. [Video tax tips](#) are also available.

Other electronic tools can be found on IRS.gov. Highlights include the following:

- Where's My Refund? — Whether taxpayers opted for direct deposit or asked the IRS to mail a check, they can track their refund through the [Where's My Refund?](#) tool.
- The Recovery Rebate Credit Calculator — The recovery rebate credit is a one-time benefit for people who didn't receive the full economic stimulus payment last year and whose circumstances may have changed, making them eligible now for some or all of the unpaid portion of the credit. In most cases, taxpayers who received the full amount of the stimulus payment last year will not be eligible for it this year. The recovery rebate credit can be calculated using the online tool, [Recovery Rebate Credit Calculator](#).
- How Much Was My 2008 Stimulus Payment? — Taxpayers will need to know the amount of their 2008 economic stimulus payment to calculate the recovery rebate credit. Taxpayers can use the online tool, [How Much Was My 2008 Stimulus Payment?](#), to check how much their payment was in 2008. Taxpayers don't need to report the 2008 stimulus payment as income because it's not taxable.
- EITC Assistant — The earned income tax credit is a substantial credit for people who work but don't earn a lot of money. Find out if you are eligible for the EITC by answering some questions and providing basic income information using the online [EITC Assistant](#).

Taxpayers looking for the IRS online should type www.irs.gov into their Internet browser. Taxpayers should also beware of Web sites that may resemble IRS.gov but end in .com, .net, .org, .biz or any other domain name extension.

Also available is [IRS.gov/Español](#), the IRS Web site offering tax forms, publications and information in Spanish. Interactive tools such as the following are available for individuals: *EITC Assistant, (Asistente EITC); Free File(Presentacion FreeFile)* Where's My Refund? (*¿Dónde Está Mi Reembolso?*), How Much Was My 2008 Stimulus Payment (*¿Cuánto fue mi Pago del Estímulo Económico?*) and Recovery Rebate Credit (RRC) Calculator (*Calculadora para el Crédito por Recuperación de la Devolución de Estímulo Económico.*)

2009 FILING SEASON STATISTICS

Cumulative through the weeks ending 3/21/08 and 3/20/09

Individual Income Tax Returns	2008	2009	% Change
Total Receipts	78,792,000	77,623,000	-1.5%
Total Processed	74,139,000	74,806,000	0.9%
E-filing Receipts:			
TOTAL	57,745,000	61,272,000	6.1%
Tax Professionals	40,040,000	40,006,000	-0.1%
Self-prepared	17,705,000	21,265,000	20.1%
Web Usage:			
Visits to IRS.gov	110,570,000	137,596,000	24.4%
Total Refunds:			
Number	64,725,000	66,893,000	3.3%
Amount	\$161.276 Billion	\$183.307 Billion	13.7%
Average refund	\$2,492	\$2,740	10.0%
Direct Deposit Refunds:			
Number	48,015,000	52,072,000	8.5%
Amount	\$133.495 Billion	\$155.952 Billion	16.8%
Average refund	\$2,780	\$2,995	7.7%

2009 FILING SEASON STATISTICS

Cumulative through the weeks ending 3/14/08 and 3/13/09

Individual Income Tax Returns	2008	2009	% Change
Total Receipts	71,028,000	70,807,000	-0.3%
Total Processed	66,656,000	67,595,000	1.4%
E-filing Receipts:			
TOTAL	53,359,000	56,665,000	6.2%
Tax Professionals	36,771,000	36,751,000	2.5%
Self-prepared	16,588,000	19,914,000	14.8%
Web Usage:			
Visits to IRS.gov	99,754,000	127,506,000	27.8%
Total Refunds:			
Number	59,199,000	61,042,000	3.1%
Amount	\$149.621 Billion	\$169.114 Billion	13.0%
Average refund	\$2,527	\$2,770	9.6%
Direct Deposit Refunds:			
Number	45,023,000	48,643,000	8.0%
Amount	\$126.127 Billion	\$146.438 Billion	16.1%
Average refund	\$2,801	\$3,010	7.5%

