

# IRS News Release

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## Avoid Common Mistakes When Filing Your Tax Return

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WASHINGTON — The Internal Revenue Service today reminded taxpayers to review their tax returns for common errors that could result in delayed refunds. Here are some ways to avoid common tax return errors.

**File electronically.** Filing electronically, whether through [e-file](#) or [IRS Free File](#), vastly reduces the errors in a tax return, as the tax software does the calculations, flags common errors and prompts the taxpayers for missing information.

**Remember Making Work Pay.** The [Making Work Pay tax credit](#) — available in 2009 and 2010 — is worth up to \$400 for individuals and \$800 for married couples. Most people got it as a reduction to their paycheck withholding. Form 1040 filers must complete [Schedule M](#), attach it to their returns, and claim the credit to benefit from it. (Tax software handles these calculations automatically for e-filers.)

**Mail a paper return to the right address.** Paper filers should check the appropriate address [where to file](#) in IRS.gov or their form instructions to avoid delays in processing. Fill in all requested information clearly, including Social Security numbers.

**Check only one filing status.** Also, check the appropriate exemption boxes. When you enter Social Security numbers, make sure they are correct.

**Double check all figures.** While software catches and prevents many errors on e-file returns, math errors remain common on paper returns.

**Get the right routing and account numbers.** Requesting a federal refund directly deposited into one, two or even three accounts is convenient and allows the taxpayer access to his or her money faster. Make sure the financial institution routing and account numbers entered on the return are accurate. Incorrect numbers can cause a refund to be delayed or deposited into the wrong account.

**Sign and date the return.** If you are filing a joint return, both you and your spouse must sign and date the return. E-filers can sign using a self-selected personal identification number (PIN).

**Attach forms to the front of the return.** Paper filers need to attach W-2s and other forms that reflect tax withholding, as well as other necessary forms and schedules, to the front of their returns. Those claiming credits that require special documentation,

such as the [Homebuyers Credit](#) or the [Adoption Credit](#), are also reminded to include all the suitable records with their returns.

**Request a Filing Extension.** If you cannot meet the April 18 deadline, requesting a filing extension for your return is easy and will prevent late filing penalties. You can either use Free File or [Form 4868](#). But keep in mind that while an extension will grant you additional time to file, you are still required to pay any taxes owed by April 18.

**Do you owe tax?** If so, a number of [e-payment](#) options are available. Or send a check or money order payable to the “United States Treasury.”