

**Individual Taxpayer Burden Survey**  
Internal Revenue Service



**Data Placement  
Example**

**Your experience matters to us.**

**ITB**



# Individual Taxpayer Burden Survey

Want to take the  
survey on the web?

See the back cover  
for instructions.

## What is the Individual Taxpayer Burden Survey?

This survey provides Congress and the President with accurate estimates of the time and money taxpayers spend to follow federal tax rules and regulations. Tax administrators and policy makers use this information to reduce and manage taxpayer burden. By taxpayer burden, we mean all of the time and money spent during the course of the year by you, your spouse, business employees, friends, or relatives to complete your 2011 individual federal income tax return.

Please be assured that you will not be asked about specific income or other financial information. All information you provide will be used for research purposes only. Participation is voluntary, but the information you provide will ensure that households like yours are represented.

## Who should complete this survey?

The person in your household most involved in the completion of your 2011 individual federal income tax return should complete this survey. Your individual federal income tax return refers to Form 1040, 1040-A, or 1040-EZ, as well as any associated forms, schedules, and worksheets that you completed or filed. It does not include forms associated with state and local income taxes, partnerships, corporations, estates, employment taxes, excise taxes, or anyone else's individual federal income tax return.

## What if someone else did my taxes?

You may need to consult with others when completing this survey, and we encourage you to do so. However, please do not have your tax professional complete this survey for you, and do not include the time spent by a tax professional on your behalf. We are interested in your experiences.

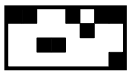
## How long will it take?

We expect that it will take about 15 to 20 minutes to complete this survey. Your time may vary based on your individual experiences.

## Questions?

If you have further questions about how to complete this survey, please contact Jocelyn Newsome at 1-888-848-0934 or send an email to [IRStaxpayerburdensurvey@westat.com](mailto:IRStaxpayerburdensurvey@westat.com). If you have concerns about this survey, please call the IRS Communications & Liaison office at 202-622-6440 or send an email to [\\*public\\_liaison@irs.gov](mailto:*public_liaison@irs.gov).

Si quiere usted tomar esta encuesta en español, por favor llame  
1-888-367-0403 o envíe un email al [IRStaxpayerburdensurvey@westat.com](mailto:IRStaxpayerburdensurvey@westat.com).



**Instructions:**

Please use a black or blue pen to complete this form.

Mark  to indicate your answer.

If you want to change your answer, darken the box  and mark the correct answer.

**Section A. General Questions about Your Taxes**

The questions below ask about the ways in which you completed your 2011 federal income tax return.

**1. How did you complete your 2011 federal income tax return?**

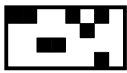
Check all that apply.

- I did it myself using paper forms
- I used a tax preparation website, software, or mobile app (such as TurboTax, SnapTax, TaxACT, or H&R Block At Home)
- I had expert assistance from someone such as a paid preparer, a paid professional (e.g., a bookkeeper, accountant, or lawyer), an employee of my business, or an unpaid volunteer

**2. Why did you choose this method for completing your 2011 federal income tax return?**

Check all that apply.

- Ease of use
- Time
- Familiarity with method
- Cost
- To ensure that my tax return was completed accurately
- To receive all of the deductions, credits, and refunds for which I was qualified
- To reduce the risk of audit
- Other *Please specify:*



### Section B. Recordkeeping

The following questions ask about the records you may have kept in order to prepare your 2011 federal income tax return. These records include forms you may have received from your employer or financial institution(s), as well as tax-related documents you may have kept.

3. **Whether or not you used them**, which of the following types of information did you keep for your 2011 federal income tax return?

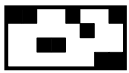
Check all that apply.

- Federal income tax returns, including your 2010 federal income tax return  
*Such as 1040, 1040A, or 1040EZ forms*
- Documentation of non-business income  
*Such as W-2s, interest, dividends, sales of stock, royalties, rental income, alimony received, IRA distributions, pension distributions*
- Documentation of non-business deductions  
*Such as educator expenses, moving expenses, alimony paid, home mortgage interest, property taxes, charitable contributions, casualty and theft losses, unreimbursed employee expenses*
- Documentation of business income and expenses  
*Such as invoices, business bank account statements, partnership or S corporation income, cancelled checks, taxes and licenses, advertising costs, and depreciation*
- Documentation of credits  
*Such as the earned income tax credit (EITC), child tax credit, child and dependent care credit, education credit*
- Other tax-related items *Please specify:*

4. **Thinking about all of the records you kept for your 2011 federal income tax return, why did you keep them?**

Check all that apply.

- For business purposes
- For personal reasons
- For tax purposes



### Section C. Tax Planning

The following section asks about any tax-related planning you may have done for your 2011 federal income tax return. Tax planning includes any strategies taxpayers use to reduce the taxes they owe, such as participating in a retirement account, making charitable donations, or buying or selling assets.

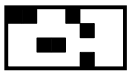
5. **Whether or not you did them**, did you consider the tax implications of any of the following as part of your overall planning for your 2011 federal income tax return?

Check all that apply.

- Buying or selling real estate, including purchasing a home to claim the first-time homebuyers credit or to deduct real estate taxes and mortgage interest
- Participating in or maintaining a retirement account such as a 401(k), any type of IRA, or a pension plan
- Investing in non-retirement tax-exempt or tax preferred investments or plans such as tax free bonds or education savings programs
- Buying or selling other investments such as stocks, bonds, or other securities
- Buying or disposing of assets such as equipment or supplies for a business, including any decisions made for section 179 accelerated depreciation expenses
- Structuring your business, such as deciding whether to form a partnership, LLC, or corporation
- Making charitable donations
- Making energy efficient improvements to your home in order to claim an energy tax credit
- Taking college or other educational classes in order to claim the American opportunity tax credit
- Other *Please specify:*

None of the above

Data Placement Example



### Section D. Completing Your Tax Return

The next question asks about any resources you may have used when completing your 2011 federal income tax return.

6. Which, if any, of the following resources did you use when completing your 2011 federal income tax return?

Check all that apply.

- IRS Toll Free Tax Assistance Line
- IRS Walk-in Site
- IRS website
- IRS2GO mobile app
- Tax professional
- Friends or family
- Tax preparation website, software, or mobile app
- Internet search engines
- Social media or blogs
- TV, newspapers, or magazines
- IRS tax forms or publications from a library or post office
- Seminars or classes

The next questions ask about the ways in which you completed your 2011 federal income tax return.

7. Who (if anyone) helped you, however briefly, with your 2011 federal income tax return?

Check all that apply.

- My spouse
- Other family members or friends
- Employee of my business
- Tax professional (paid or volunteer)
- Other *Please specify:*

- No one helped me



8. Which of the following best describes how you used IRS tax form instructions when completing your 2011 federal income tax return?

- Read most or all instructions
- Read instructions as needed
- Did not need to read instructions at all
- Other *Please specify:*

- None of the above

9. If you used a paid or volunteer tax professional, how did you work with them when completing your 2011 federal income tax return?

**Check all that apply.**

- Did not use a paid or volunteer tax professional
- Completed a tax questionnaire or worksheet for my paid or volunteer professional
- Provided records to my paid or volunteer professional
- Met with my paid or volunteer professional in person
- Communicated with my paid or volunteer professional by telephone or email
- Completed and reviewed my tax return with my paid or volunteer professional
- Other *Please specify:*

10. If you used a tax preparation website, software, or mobile app to complete your 2011 federal income tax return, which of the following best describes your use of the program?

- Did not use a tax preparation website, software, or mobile app → [GO TO QUESTION 12](#)
- Followed the entire step-by-step computer-guided instructions
- Only used the step-by-step computer-guided instructions to address specific tax areas
- Directly entered information into the tax forms without using the step-by-step computer-guided instructions



**11. Did you or your preparer electronically import any of the following information into a tax preparation website, software, or mobile app for your 2011 federal income tax return?**

**Check all that apply.**

- Data from last year's tax preparation software
- Data from an accounting software package, such as Quicken, MSN Money, or QuickBooks
- Data from my W-2(s)
- Data from my 1098(s), 1099(s), Schedule K-1(s) or other information returns
- Data from my bank, brokerage, or other financial accounts
- Other *Please specify:*

- Did not electronically import any information
- Don't know

**12. Was there anything that made completing your 2011 federal income tax return harder than you expected?**

- Yes → *Please tell us why*

- No

**Section E. Time Spent on Tax-Related Activities**

The next questions focus on the time you spent on activities related to the completion of your 2011 federal income tax return.

**Please include:**

- Time spent on your federal income tax return, including Form 1040, 1040A, or 1040EZ, as well as any associated forms, schedules, and worksheets that you completed or filed
- Time throughout the tax year as well as the tax filing season
- Time spent by family, friends, or business employees, however briefly

**Please do not include:**

- Time spent on state or local income tax returns
- Time spent on anyone else's federal income tax return
- Time spent responding to IRS notices or correspondence
- Time spent amending your 2011 federal income tax return
- Time spent on partnerships (Form 1065), corporations (Form 1120 or 1120S), estates (Form 706), gifts (Form 709), trusts (Form 1041), employment tax (Form 940, 941, 943, 944, 945), or excise tax (Form 720)





**13. How much time did you spend on the following activities for your 2011 federal income tax return?**

*If you did not spend any time on an activity, please enter a zero in the box.*

**Recordkeeping**

<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	:	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
Hours			Minutes	

*Include time spent throughout the tax year:*

- *Keeping track of tax-related information, such as records or receipts*
- *Collecting and organizing your tax-related records*
- *Making a special effort to obtain records or receipts*

*Do not include time spent on non-tax related business or personal recordkeeping.*

**Tax planning**

<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	:	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
Hours			Minutes	

*Include time spent throughout the tax year:*

- *Researching strategies to reduce the taxes you owe*
- *Working with a tax professional (paid or volunteer) on tax planning*
- *Doing business tax planning related to your personal tax situation*
- *Calculating or changing withholding or estimated payments*

*Do not include any time spent on financial planning that was not tax related.*

**Gathering information or purchasing materials**

<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	:	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
Hours			Minutes	

*Include time spent:*

- *Gathering IRS tax forms, instructions, or publications*
- *Selecting, buying, and installing tax preparation software or mobile app*
- *Selecting a tax preparation website*
- *Selecting a tax professional (paid or volunteer)*

**Completing and submitting your tax return**

<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	:	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
Hours			Minutes	

*Include time spent:*

- *Reading instructions and related materials*
- *Obtaining answers to questions about your return*
- *Completing and reviewing tax forms or worksheets, whether or not they were submitted*
- *Working with a tax professional (paid or volunteer) to complete your tax return*
- *Assembling and mailing your tax return*
- *Checking the status of your electronic submission*
- *Checking the status of your refund*



1072

123456

14. Did you spend any time on any of the following before realizing you did not need to report on them?

Check all that apply.

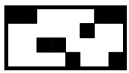
- Itemized Deductions
- Child Tax Credit or Additional Child Tax Credit
- Earned Income Tax Credit
- Education Deductions or Credits
- Credit for the Elderly or the Disabled
- Quarterly Estimated Taxes
- Unreimbursed Business Expenses
- Alternative Minimum Tax
- Depreciation or Amortization
- Other *Please specify:*

No → [GO TO SECTION F](#)

15. Of the time you spent completing and submitting your tax return (reported in Question 13), how much of it did you spend on these tax provisions before realizing you did not need to report on them?

			:		
Hours				Minutes	

Don't know



### Section F. Costs of Completing Your Tax Return

The next questions ask about the costs associated with the completion of your 2011 federal income tax return.

**Please include:**

- Costs associated with your federal income tax return, including Form 1040, 1040A, or 1040EZ, as well as any associated forms, schedules, and worksheets that you completed or filed
- Costs incurred throughout the tax year as well as the tax filing season

**Please do not include:**

- Costs associated with state or local income tax returns
- Costs associated with anyone else's federal income tax return
- Costs associated with responding to IRS notices or correspondence
- Costs associated with amending your 2011 federal income tax return
- Costs associated with partnerships (Form 1065), corporations (Form 1120 or 1120S), estates (Form 706), gifts (Form 709), trusts (Form 1041), employment tax (Form 940, 941, 943, 944, 945), or excise tax (Form 720)

**16. How much did you pay for the following products or services to complete your 2011 federal income tax return?**

*If you did not have any costs associated with an activity, please enter a zero in the box.*

**Paid preparer services**

*Include tax preparation or tax planning advice*

\$   ,    .

**Tax preparation website or software**

*Include the purchase price as well as live advice fees*

*Do not include any general purpose accounting software, such as Quicken, MSN Money, or QuickBooks*

\$   ,    .

**Fees for an early or immediate tax refund**

*Include any fees paid directly to a paid preparer, website, or software provider for an early or immediate tax refund, such as a refund anticipation loan, check, or rapid refund*

\$   ,    .

**Tax books, classes, or seminars**

\$   ,    .

**Postage or filing fees**

*Include costs associated with submitting your return, such as electronic filing fees, fees charged for paying your taxes by credit card, postage, faxes, or courier fees*

\$   ,    .



## Section G. Information about Your State Tax Return(s)

The next question asks about your state income tax return(s).

17. For which state(s) did you file a 2011 state income tax return?

Check all that apply.

- |                                                    |                                                    |
|----------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Alabama                   | <input type="checkbox"/> Mississippi               |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Arizona                   | <input type="checkbox"/> Missouri                  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Arkansas                  | <input type="checkbox"/> Montana                   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> California                | <input type="checkbox"/> Nebraska                  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Colorado                  | <input type="checkbox"/> New Hampshire             |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Connecticut               | <input type="checkbox"/> New Jersey                |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Delaware                  | <input type="checkbox"/> New Mexico                |
| <input type="checkbox"/> District of Columbia (DC) | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> New York       |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Georgia                   | <input type="checkbox"/> North Carolina            |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Hawaii                    | <input type="checkbox"/> North Dakota              |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Idaho                     | <input type="checkbox"/> Ohio                      |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Illinois                  | <input type="checkbox"/> Oklahoma                  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Indiana                   | <input type="checkbox"/> Oregon                    |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Iowa                      | <input type="checkbox"/> Pennsylvania              |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Kansas                    | <input type="checkbox"/> Rhode Island              |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Kentucky                  | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> South Carolina |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Louisiana                 | <input type="checkbox"/> Tennessee                 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Maine                     | <input type="checkbox"/> Utah                      |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Maryland                  | <input type="checkbox"/> Vermont                   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Massachusetts             | <input type="checkbox"/> Virginia                  |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Michigan       | <input type="checkbox"/> West Virginia             |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Minnesota                 | <input type="checkbox"/> Wisconsin                 |

I did not file a 2011 state income tax return.

**Note: Alaska, Florida, Nevada, South Dakota, Texas, Washington, and Wyoming are not included on the list above because these states do not have a state income tax.**



## Section H. Tell Us About You

18. Compared to other taxpayers, how would you rate your knowledge, skills, and abilities in completing your 2011 federal income tax return?

- Better than most taxpayers
- About the same as most taxpayers
- Not as good as most taxpayers

19. When completing their tax return, some people may be concerned that the information they provide is incomplete or that it may be processed inaccurately by the IRS. At the time you completed your 2011 individual federal income tax return, how concerned were you that...

	Not at all concerned	A little concerned	Somewhat concerned	Very concerned
Your tax return was completed accurately?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
You would receive all of the deductions, credits, and refunds for which you qualified?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Your tax return would be processed accurately?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
You would be audited?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

20. What is the highest level of education that you have completed?

- Less than a high school diploma
- High school graduate or GED
- Some college
- College graduate
- Advanced degree

21. Tax forms may be difficult, especially if English is not your primary language. Do you feel that you had any language limitations that made completing your 2011 federal income tax return more difficult?

- Yes
- No



1072

123456

22. Please share any suggestions you have for how the IRS could improve taxpayer services or make it easier for you to file and pay your taxes.

Data Placement  
Example

Thank you for completing our survey.

## **Privacy and Paperwork Reduction Act Notice for Individual Taxpayer Burden Model Data Collection**

The Privacy Act of 1974 states that when we ask you for information, we must first tell you our legal right to ask for the information, why we are asking for it, and how it will be used. We must also tell you what could happen if you do not provide it and whether or not you must respond under the law.

Our legal right to ask for this information is 5 U.S.C. 301.

The primary purpose for requesting the information is to analyze the role of taxpayer burden in tax administration. We will also use the information to fulfill the IRS' obligations to the Office of Management and Budget and Congress for information required by the Paperwork Reduction Act, and to provide tax policy analysis support to the Office of Tax Analysis at the Department of the Treasury. We will also use the information provided to better understand taxpayer needs and burden reduction opportunities.

Tax information may be disclosed only as provided by 26 U.S.C. 6103. Providing the information is voluntary.

OMB No: 1545-2212. This report is authorized under the Paperwork Reduction Act. Data collected will be shared with IRS staff, but your responses will be used for research and aggregate reporting purposes only and will not be used for other non-statistical or non-research purposes such as direct enforcement activities. The information that you provide will be protected to the fullest extent allowable under the Freedom of Information Act (FOIA). Public reporting burden for this collection of information is estimated to average 15 to 20 minutes, including the time for reviewing instructions, searching existing data sources, gathering and maintaining the data needed, and completing and reviewing the collection of information. Send comments regarding this burden estimate or any other aspect of this collection of information, including suggestions for reducing this burden, to IRS Tax Products Coordinating Committee, SE:W:CAR:MP:T:T:SP, 1111 Constitution Avenue, NW, Washington, DC 20224.

If you would prefer to complete the survey on the web, you may do so by following the instructions below. Web responses are processed more quickly and will help ensure that you don't receive follow-up contacts.

## Web Survey Instructions

### 1 Go to the website.

To take the survey online, please go to:

[www.IRStaxpayerburdensurvey.org](http://www.IRStaxpayerburdensurvey.org)

### 2 Log in.

You will need the following username and password to access the survey:

**Username:** [UID]

**Password:** [PWD]

### Problems?

If you have any technical difficulties, including problems with the website, please call 1-888-848-0934 or send an email to [IRStaxpayerburdensurvey@westat.com](mailto:IRStaxpayerburdensurvey@westat.com).

Si quiere usted tomar esta encuesta en español, por favor llame 1-888-367-0403 o envíe un email al [IRStaxpayerburdensurvey@westat.com](mailto:IRStaxpayerburdensurvey@westat.com).