

Sample article for organizations to use to reach customers (420 word count)

Post the following article on your websites and/or use in other communication vehicles to help your customers choose the standard deduction or choose to itemize.

Should you itemize or choose the standard deduction?

When preparing your federal tax return, you have the option of either taking the standard deduction, or, if you think you may have more qualified expenses than the standard deduction provides, you may choose to itemize your deductions. The amount of the standard deduction for 2017 depends on your filing status. The following shows the standard deduction amounts for tax year 2017:

- Single or Married Filing Separately - \$6,350
- Married Filing Jointly or Qualifying Widow(er) - \$12,700
- Head of Household - \$9,350

If you choose to file using the standard deduction, one of the amounts above, based on your filing status, will be deducted from your income before the amount of tax you owe is calculated.

If you have expenses that are more than the standard deduction allowed for your filing status, you may want to itemize your deductions.

Here are some tips to help you decide which to choose:

- **Use IRS Free File.** If you earned \$66,000 or less, you qualify to use free, brand-name software to do your taxes for free. [IRS Free File](#) helps you determine whether to itemize by finding your tax credits and deductions and doing the math for you. You can even do your taxes from your mobile phone or tablet. If you earned more than \$66,000, you can use Free File Fillable Forms, the electronic version of IRS paper forms. Check out other [e-file options](#).
- **Figure Your Itemized Deductions.** You need to add up deductible expenses you paid during the year. Visit IRS.gov and refer to [Publication 17](#), Your Federal Income Tax, *When to Itemize*, for more details.
- **Use the IRS Interactive Tax Assistant Tool.** Use the [Interactive Tax Assistant](#) tool on IRS.gov. It can help you determine if you can use the standard deduction. It can also help figure your eligibility for certain itemized deductions.
- **File the Right Forms.** To itemize your deductions, file [Form 1040](#) and [Schedule A](#), Itemized Deductions. You can take the standard deduction on Forms 1040, 1040A or 1040EZ.

To learn more, visit IRS.gov.

Date: February 1, 2018

NOTE TO EDITOR: Below are links to help taxpayers find the information they need.

IRS.gov

- Itemize or Choose the Standard Deduction — [IRS Tax Tip 2017-17](#)

IRS YouTube

- Interactive Tax Assistant — [English](#) | [ASL](#)