

The Most Common Errors When Preparing and/or Filing Your Tax Return



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Although the tax return deadline for most filers is over, let's not forget about the people and

businesses on extension. If you haven't filed yet, not to worry, there are still avenues to explore to get your tax returns in while minimizing penalties and interest. Below are some of the most common errors when preparing and filing tax return as noted by the IRS. Before filing your return, review it to make sure it is correct and complete. The following may help you to avoid common errors:

1. Did you consider filing your tax return electronically? By electronically filing your tax return, many common errors may be avoided or corrected by the computer software. Depending on your income, you may even qualify to e-file for free by using IRS Free File.
2. If you choose to file a paper return, did you use the peel-off label and enter any corrections? If you used the label, did you enter your social security number in the space provided?
3. If you do not have a label, or there are too many corrections, did you

clearly print your name, social security number, and address, including zip code directly on your return?

4. Did you enter the names and social security numbers for yourself, your spouse, your dependents, and qualifying children for earned income credit or child tax credit, exactly as they appear on the social security cards? If there have been any name changes be sure to go to www.ssa.gov or call at 800-772-1213.

5. Did you check only one filing status?

6. Did you check the appropriate exemption boxes and enter the names and social security numbers exactly as they appear on the social security cards, for all of the dependents claimed? Is the total number of exemptions entered?

7. Did you enter income, deductions, and credits on the correct lines and are the totals correct?

8. If you show a negative amount on your return, did you put brackets around it?

9. Did you sign and date the return? If it is a joint return, did your spouse also sign and date the return?

10. Do you have a Form W-2 (PDF) from each of your employers and did you attach

Copy B of each to your return? File only one return, even if you have more than one job. Combine the wages and withholdings from all Form W-2's, on one return.

11. Did you attach each Form 1099-R (PDF) that shows federal tax was withheld?

12. Did you attach all other necessary schedules and forms in sequence number order shown in the upper right-hand corner?

Did you use the pre-addressed envelope that came with your tax form booklet? If you did not receive an envelope, check the section called "Where did you use a postage stamp on the envelope?"

14. If you owe tax, did you enclose a check or money order made payable to the "United States Treasury" with the return and include your name, address, social security number, daytime telephone number, tax form, and tax year on the payment? For additional information, refer to Topic 158, Ensuring Proper Credit of Payments.

15. If you are due a refund and requested direct deposit did you check your financial institution routing and account numbers?

16. Did you make a copy of the signed return and all schedules for your records?

A few of the most common errors are:

1. Incorrect or missing social security numbers.
2. Incorrect tax entered based on taxable income and filing status.
3. Computation errors in figuring the taxable income, withholding and estimated tax payments, Earned Income Credit, Standard Deduction for age 65 or over or blind, the taxable amount of social security benefits, and child and dependent care credit. Also, missing or incorrect identification numbers for child care providers.
4. Withholding and estimated tax payments entered on the wrong line, and
5. Math errors; both addition and subtraction.