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IRS.gov

Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs) about Free File

What is Free File?

Free File is a free service that offers free federal tax preparation and e-file options for all taxpayers. Free File is made possible through the Free File Alliance, LLC, a public-private partnership between the IRS and commercial tax software companies. All taxpayers have a Free File option.

Who can use Free File?

Everyone can use IRS Free File. If your adjusted gross income was \$57,000 or less in 2012, use brand-name software to do your taxes for free. If your income was higher, use Free File Fillable Forms. Both options allow taxpayers to prepare and e-file their taxes for free.

Why should I use Free File?

Using Free File helps you do your own taxes online—hassle free. You can choose when and how to do your taxes, because Free File is available online 24/7. The software asks the questions; you provide the answers. What could be easier? And, you can transmit your return electronically for free with IRS e-file. E-file and direct deposit are still the fastest way to get your refund.

How do you get started?

To learn more about Free File and your free filing options, visit our website at www.freefile.irs.gov. Once you're ready to file your federal taxes, you'll be directed to the IRS.gov Free File page at www.irs.gov/freefile, where you can choose a company or let us help you choose which program is best suited to your needs.

Will Free File help me choose which program is best for me?

Yes. A variety of software companies participate in the Free File Alliance. Each company has unique offerings, so you can find the program that works best for you. Select "Pick a Free File company" at www.irs.gov/freefile. By answering a few simple questions, the IRS will narrow your options and direct you to the best software program for your situation.

Are there free state tax-filing options?

IRS Free File is for the preparation and filing of federal taxes. There are currently 22 states and the District of Columbia that offer free state tax preparation and filing options.

What if I don't have a computer?

The Free File Alliance has partnered with Volunteer Income Tax Assistance (VITA) and Tax Counseling for the Elderly (TCE) sites in approximately 30 states to offer Free File through a self-help program. To find participating VITA/TCE sites where you can access Free File on their computers, go to www.irs.gov and search "VITA" to find a site near you.



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What is AGI?

Adjusted Gross Income (AGI) is the amount of household income after certain deductions. For a list of eligible deductions, please reference www.irs.gov.

What information do I need before I get started?

Make sure you have your W-2s or 1099s, plus records for any deductions. There is a full list of all documents and information you may need to complete your taxes available at www.irs.gov/freefile.

What if this is my first-time filing federal taxes?

Free File is great for first-time filers. Software guides you, helps find tax breaks and e-files your federal return—all for free. Get started at www.irs.gov/freefile.

What is e-file?

IRS e-file is the highly secure way to transmit your federal tax return to the IRS. It uses the latest encryption standards to safely and securely protect your personal data. Learn more about e-file at www.irs.gov/efile.

Why should I e-file?

Using e-file is the best way to file an accurate tax return, and combining e-file with direct deposit is the fastest way for you to get your refund. The IRS issued more than nine out of 10 refunds to taxpayers in less than 21 days last year. The same results are expected in 2013. You should opt for e-file whether you use software or a paid tax preparer.

Is there contact information if I have additional questions?

For questions, please email Nancy Mathis, brand manager, at Nancy.Mathis@irs.gov.

What is the Free File Alliance?

The Free File Alliance, LLC is a group of industry-leading, private-sector tax preparation companies that have agreed to meet the IRS' high standards for security and privacy and provide tax software options for free.*

**The IRS does not endorse any individual Free File Alliance company. While the IRS manages the content of the Free File pages accessible on www.irs.gov, it does not retain any taxpayer information entered on the Free File site.*