

How to File Tax Return Online

THOMAS KRALOW

How to File Tax Return Online

Step 1. Gather Necessary Documents

Before you begin filing your tax return online, gather all the necessary documents and information:

1. Personal Information:

- **Social Security numbers** for yourself, spouse, and dependents;
- **Last year's tax return** for reference.

2. Income Documents:

- **W-2 forms** from employers;
- **1099 forms** for other income (e.g., freelance work, interest, dividends, unemployment);
- Any **other income documentation** (e.g., rental income, alimony received).

3. Deduction and Credit Documents:

- **Mortgage** interest statement (Form 1098);
- **Student loan** interest statement;
- **Medical** expenses;
- **Charitable** donations;
- **Education** expenses (Form 1098-T);
- **Childcare** expenses.

4. Other Necessary Information:

- **Bank account** number and **routing** number (for direct deposit of your refund);
- Any notices or letters **received from the IRS**.

Step 2. Choose an E-filing Method

You have several options for filing your taxes online:

1. IRS Free File:

- Available for **taxpayers with an AGI** (Adjusted Gross Income) **of \$73,000 or less**.
- Visit the [IRS Free File website](#).

2. Tax Preparation Software:

- Popular options include **TurboTax**, **H&R Block**, **TaxAct**, and others.

- These services often have both free and paid versions depending on the complexity of your tax situation.

3. IRS E-file Providers:

- Use **an authorized e-file provider** for a small fee.

Step 3. Create an Account

If using tax preparation software or an e-file provider, you will need to:

1. **Create an account** on the chosen platform.
2. **Enter your personal information** to set up your profile.

Step 4. Enter Your Information

1. Personal Information:

- Enter your **name, address, and Social Security number**.
- Indicate your **filing status** (e.g., Single, Married Filing Jointly).

2. Income Information:

- Input information from your **W-2 forms**.
- Enter information from any **1099 forms**.
- Report any other **income sources**.

3. Deductions and Credits:

- Enter details for any **deductions or credits you qualify for**.
- **The software will guide you through common deductions** such as mortgage interest, student loan interest, and charitable contributions.

Step 5. Review and Confirm

1. **Review your return** for accuracy. Most software will double-check for errors.
2. **Check for potential deductions or credits** that you might have missed.

Step 6. Pay Any Owed Taxes

1. **Calculate your total tax liability.**
2. **If you owe taxes**, choose a payment method (e.g., bank transfer, credit/debit card).
3. **Set up a payment plan** if you cannot pay the full amount immediately.

Step 7. E-file Your Return

1. **Submit your tax return** electronically through the software.
2. **Receive confirmation** that your return has been accepted by the IRS.

Step 8. Keep Records

1. **Save a copy of your filed tax return** for your records.
2. **Retain all supporting documents** for at least three years.

Step 9. Monitor Your Refund Status

1. **Use the “Where’s My Refund?” tool** on the IRS website to check the status of your refund.
2. **Log in to your e-filing account** to check the status if using tax software.

Tips for a Smooth E-filing Experience

- **File early** to avoid last-minute rushes and potential delays.
- **Double-check your entries** to avoid mistakes.
- **Use direct deposit** for faster refunds.
- **Seek help** from the software’s support team or a tax professional if you encounter any issues.