

IRS TAX TIP 2003-61

HOW TO PREPARE YOUR TAX RETURN FOR MAILING

Although electronic filing is becoming more and more the filing method of choice for taxpayers, there are still many who file paper returns. If you are one, the IRS recommends that you take a few minutes to make certain that all information is complete and accurate before sealing that envelope. This simple precaution could help you avoid mistakes that may delay your refund or result in correspondence with the IRS.

Here are just a few items to complete prior to mailing your tax return:

- Sign your return. Your federal tax return is not considered a valid return unless it is signed. If you are filing a joint return, your spouse must also sign.
- Provide a daytime phone number. This may help speed the processing of your return if the IRS has questions about items on your return. If you are filing a joint return, you may provide daytime phone numbers for either you or your spouse.
- Assemble any schedules and forms behind your Form 1040/1040A in the order of the "Attachment Sequence No." shown in the upper right hand corner of the schedule or form. Arrange any supporting statements in the same order as the schedules or forms they support and attach them last.
- Attach a copy of Forms W-2, W-2G and 2439 to the front of Form 1040. Also attach Forms 1099-R if tax was withheld.
- Use the coded envelope included with your tax package to mail your return. If you did not receive an envelope, check the section called "Where Do You File?" of the tax instruction booklet. You may be mailing your return to a different service center this year because the IRS has changed the filing location for several areas to provide better customer service. Don't forget the stamp.
- If you owe tax, make your check or money order payable to the "United States Treasury." Write your name, address, Social Security number, daytime telephone number and "2002 Form 1040" (or appropriate form number) on your payment. Then complete Form 1040-V following the instructions on that form and enclose it in the envelope with your payment. Do not attach the payment to your return.

For more information, refer to your tax instruction booklet or visit the IRS Web site at *IRS.gov* .

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