Free File Fillable Forms Tutorial

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Purpose (back to TOC)

The purpose of this tutorial is to provide an overview of the program. It provides navigation instructions, tips on how to use the program and things to avoid doing.

Free File Fillable Forms is an electronic version of paper forms, with the added ability to e-file your return. Before starting Free File Fillable Forms, you should review the <u>Forms</u> <u>you can use</u> and the <u>Program Limitations</u>. If you encounter a problem while using the program, look for a solution on the <u>Common input issues</u> page.

If you are not comfortable with preparing your own paper tax return, which includes reading, understanding and following the form instructions, this program is not for you.

To reduce common math errors, Free File Fillable Forms performs basic calculations, based on information you have entered, when you select the "Do the Math" button. If a line is calculated, you cannot override it. When it is possible that there is more than one way to calculate a number, you must input the number yourself. (For instance, on Schedule F, Line 34 can contain a profit or loss. There is only one-way to calculate a profit, but more than one way to calculate a loss; therefore, line 34 is a manual entry.)

If the IRS rejects your transmitted return, use the <u>Rejected Return Help</u> document to determine how to fix it. Live Technical Support for this program is limited; therefore, users are encouraged to use the helpful links on the <u>IRS Free File</u> landing page.

Taxpayers with a 2013 Adjusted Gross Income of \$58,000 or less should consider using brand name, interview based, tax software to assist in preparing a federal return. Get help choosing

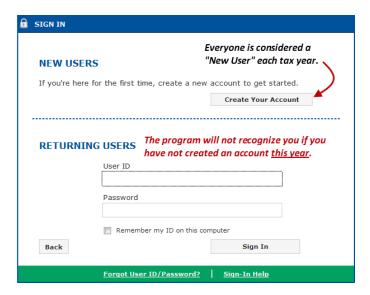
<u>free software</u> that is simple to use. Just answer some questions to see which brand name Free File software products are available for you.

Create an Account (back to TOC)

Select the "Start Fillable Forms Now" button from the <u>Free File</u> landing page. Read the Disclaimer and select "Leave IRS Site.

Once at the Free File Fillable Forms Landing Page, find and select "Start Free File Fillable Forms." Select "Continue" on the next page and the Sign On screen appears.

You are considered a "**New User**" if you have not created an account for the current tax year. Select "Create Your Account."



On the next screen, complete necessary information and check the Terms of Service box before selecting "Continue." Print the page with your login information and store it in a safe place. If you do not remember the answer to your security question, you will not be able to access your account if you forget your User ID or Password.

Important- You must use a valid email address: When creating your account, always enter an email address that you check often. After you create your account, customer_service@freefilefillableforms.com will send an email to the email address you entered, confirming your account creation. If you do not receive the email within a few minutes, check your spam or junk folder and adjust your email settings. Email is the only means used to provide information about your Free File Fillable Forms account and acceptance or rejection of your transmitted return.

Start a Return (back to TOC)

Once you create your account, you will need to select the start button for the type of 1040 you want to file, the Form 1040, 1040-A or 1040-EZ. If you are not sure which form to select, read the instructions for the form to see which one best meets your needs. To use the Form 1040-EZ read the checklist on page 4 and 5 of the 1040-EZ

instructions to see if you qualify to use the form. To use the Form 1040-A read "Who Can Use Form 1040A" on page 12 of the 1040-A instructions. Read the brief descriptions of each form and choose wisely. To find the instructions, just select the button, "Instructions For This Form," at the bottom of the Free File Fillable Forms.com screen. Switching to another main form later on will delete all the tax information you entered.

Note: To file an extension (Form 4868) you must first select a main 1040 form and fill in your name, address and SSN sections.

Tabs, Links, Buttons and Icons (back to TOC)

Tabs (upper Left)

- Step 1 Fill Out Your Tax Forms You will be on this page whenever you initially access your Free File Fillable Forms account. This is the page you will be on whenever you are filling out forms or schedules. When you start, the Step 1 page will be active, as indicated by the blue color on the page tab.
- Step 2 E-File Your Tax Forms Open this page when you want to add an
 income document and when you are preparing to e-file (transmit) your return.
 Learn more about Step 2 in the <u>Step 2 Components section of this tutorial</u>.



While in Step 1 or Step 2, these links and button-icons are visible and available:

Links (Upper Right)

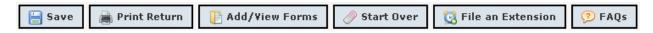
- Help Takes you to the Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs) on the Free File Fillable Forms page
- IRS Publications Takes you to IRS.gov Publications page
- **Update Account** Takes you to a page where you are able to change the information you used to establish your account.
- Sign Out Exit your account



Top Button/ Icons (just below the links)

- Save Saves the work you have done thus far.
- **Print Return** Opens a dialog box to enable printing.
- Add/View Forms Opens a window that allows you to see and open forms you have already selected and allows you to select additional forms.
 - Note: You cannot add a W2 or 1099 from this menu; however, W2's or 1099-Rs you have begun will be available from this menu to edit or delete.
- Start Over Selecting this icon will prompt you to select "Yes" to clear all the data you have entered so far and start over. Selecting this icon will delete all of the information you have entered on all the forms you have started.

- **File an Extension** –Opens Form 4868 for filing an extension. (Note: You must first enter identifying information (name, address, SSN) on your Form 1040, 1040-A or 1040-EZ before selecting this icon.
- FAQs Opens a browser window to the IRS FAQs for Free File Fillable Forms



Bottom Button/Icons (at bottom of page)

- **Instructions for this form** Will open up another window and display the instructions for the form or schedule you are currently working on.
- **Do the Math** Will perform basic calculations (addition, subtraction, multiplication, division) on certain lines in the form you are currently working on. It may also update figures on your 1040 form, even if you are not currently on Form 1040. It also saves your data.
- Delete this form This button is disabled when you on your main1040 form.
 It deletes the form you are currently viewing and removes all of its information from your 1040 and returns you to your main 1040 form
- Print this form This will print the form displayed.
- Done with this form This button is disabled when you in your 1040 form.
 Select this button to save and close the form you are currently viewing and return to your 1040 form.



Navigating Free File Fillable Forms (back to TOC)

Caution: Do not use your browser's "back" and "forward" buttons to navigate through the program and never fill in an area that does not need an entry.

Mouse- Use your mouse or pointing device to select the icons and buttons. Scroll through menu items, lists and forms. You can use your mouse to navigate to areas on the forms; however, when using your mouse to navigate a form, you may miss areas that may require an entry. Placing your mouse or pointing device over an input area will display text about what to input.

Tab Key- Use your Tab Key to move to areas where you can enter your information and to move forward through a form. Using the tab key will ensure you do not skip any fields that require information from you. If you tab to an area that does not pertain to you, skip it. **Do not enter unnecessary zeros** or anything else in these areas.

Shift and Tab Keys- Use your Shift and Tab Keys to move backwards through a form (hold down the Shift Key and hit the Tab Key)

Types of Input Areas (back to TOC)

Blank Fields – Except for your name and address information, most of your remaining input will be numbers placed in the far right column of the forms. When you select an

area for input, a blue box will surround the input area and a vertical line will blink where your input begins.

- Input information in these fields by typing.
- Erase information in these fields by one of the following methods:
 - Backspacing
 - Highlighting and deleting
 - Highlighting and typing in new information

Light Grey Areas (Tax Literal or Write-in Areas) –These areas generally come in pairs, (1) a description area and (2) a corresponding amount area. Erroneous input into these areas is the most common reason for a rejected return.

As a general rule, most users do not need to enter information in these fields, which generally appear left of the column where you enter your numbers.

Read the instructions for the form to determine if you are required to enter information into these areas. Some of these areas have a pick-list to choose an item that describes the type of income, credit deduction, depreciation method, etc.

If you do not recognize any of the pick-list items, the tax literal areas probably do not apply to you. **Read the form instructions**. Never fill in a corresponding "amount" area and leave a pick-list area blank, as this will result in a rejected return. When a pick-list is not available, a white box with a blue perimeter will appear, indicating where you can input data.

- Do not enter any information into these areas unless the form instructions lead you to do so. Incorrect data in these areas will cause a XML error return rejection.
- Enter information into these areas exactly as shown in the instructions.
- Do not enter zero "0" in any field unless instructed to do so.

Here you see line 21, which contains two tax literals (1) description area and (2) amount area. This example also shows a calculated field with the "No / Do Not" symbol and the notice that line 21 is a calculated field. For line 21 to calculate, the "Other income" amount must be placed in the amount literal area. Selecting "Do the Math" will populate Line 21 with the amount. If you do not input the corresponding description literal, your return will reject.



Pick lists – A pick list (or drop down menu) can be associated with a tax literal description area or another area where your input is restricted to specific information. Entering anything in these areas which is not an expected value will result in a rejected tax return.

Calculated Fields – When you place the required information in other parts of the return and select "Do the math," these fields will automatically populated with the

required figure. A red notification will alert you if you attempt to enter information into these fields.

- Generally, calculated fields cannot be overridden
- Calculated field data may always be changed by changing the data used to calculate the field and selecting "Do the math" again

Pre-populated Fields – These fields are populated with taxpayer identifying information (e.g., Name and SSN). Generally, these fields may not be manually overridden

Check Boxes – These are small boxes, which may require you to "check" one or more of them to provide the required information. When selected for input, the box will have a bright blue line surrounding it. The input for these boxes is generally a "check mark."

- To put a check mark in the box:
 - o Use your mouse, place your cursor on the box and "right click" or
 - Tap the touchpad on your laptop.
- To remove the check mark from a box
 - Use your mouse and place your cursor on the box and "right click" or
 - Tap the touchpad on your laptop.

Radio Buttons – These are small round circles, which may require you to "fill in" the circle to provide the information. When selected for input, the radio button will have a bright blue line surrounding it. Generally, you may only select one radio button to provide the required information.

- To fill in the circle:
 - Use your mouse and place your cursor on the circle and "right click"
 - Tap the touchpad on your laptop.
- Selecting another radio button for the question will de-select the previous radio button.
- To de-select a radio button, place your pointing device on the radio button and double click.
- If you elect direct deposit for your refund besides entering your Routing
 Transaction Number and account number, make sure you to select the radio
 button for the type of account, either checking or savings.

Adding and Deleting Forms and Schedules (back to TOC)

Adding Forms – There are two methods of adding forms:

- 1. Use an "Add" button, which may appear on the line of the form you are currently viewing.
- 2. Select the "Add/View Forms" icon in the upper right of the page, which will open the "My Tax Forms" box.
 - Select "Add a Form" from the bottom of the "My Tax Forms" box.
 - Scroll the list to find the form you want and click on it. The form will be added to your list of forms and will display on your screen

Note: Income documents (Forms W-2, W-2G and 1099-R) are added by selecting the Step 2 Tab. Once added, you may view and edit them using View/Add (method 2).

To add the same form more than once, use either method above to select the form. A box will display showing your previously added form (at the top) and a large "Add another ..." button at the bottom. Select the large button at the bottom to add the same form again.

Select Your Form

Schedule C - Profit or Loss From Business - Copy 1

Add Another Copy

Deleting Forms

If the form you want to delete is currently displaying on your screen, delete it by selecting the "Remove this form" button (at the bottom of the page). If you are not currently viewing the form you want to delete, follow these instructions:

- Select the Add/View Forms icon from the top right of your screen, opening the "My Tax Forms" box
- At the bottom of the "My Tax Forms" box, select "Delete a Form" bringing up the "Delete a Form" menu.
- Scroll the list of your forms and click on the form you want to delete.
- A pop-up box will appear asking if you are sure you want to delete the form. Select "Yes" and form, with all of its information is deleted from your return.

Step 2 Components (back to TOC)

Step 2 is where you add income documents and prepare your return for transmission to the IRS. It has five sections. At the top is the "**E-file Now**" button. The button will remain inactive until you have input all the mandatory information.



Section 1: W-2s, 1099-Rs and W-2Gs – This is where you input the information on your income documents (W-2, W2-G and 1099-R). Make sure you enter the information from these documents exactly as they appear on your paper copy. If you have other income documents, such as SSA-1099, 1099-INT, 1099-G, etc., you will **NOT** have to add those documents **BUT** if you have withholdings from these documents, you will need to enter the federal withholding amount(s) in Step 2, section 2, Box B.

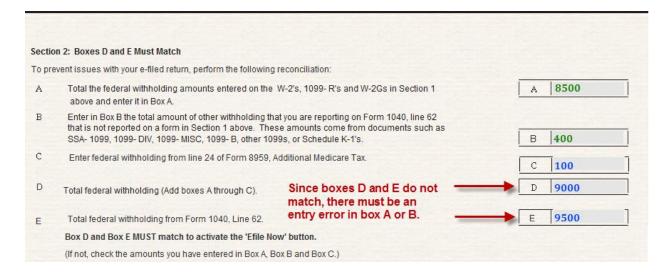
CAUTION: Make sure you enter your information for your W-2, 1099-R or W2-G exactly as it appears on your paper copy. Check to make you enter the correct amount of your federal withholdings in Box 2 of your Form W2.

Section 1: W-2s, 1099-Rs and W-2Gs		
If you received a form W-2, 1099-R, or W-2G select the "Add" button b	elow to add the applicable form. You will need to enter each	
item separately.		
Complete one electronic W-2 for every W-2 you received.	Click the Add button for each W-2 you received.	 Add W-2
	Click the Add button for each 1099-R you received.	Add 1099-R
Complete one electronic 1099-R for every 1099-R you received.		

Note: Section 1 for Forms 1040A and 1040EZ will have fewer add buttons for income documents

Section 2: Claiming Federal Withholdings (Boxes D and E Must Match) – This is a very important step. You must check your federal withholding to avoid an IRS rejection of your return. There are four boxes:

- Box A You will need to total all of the federal withholding from all of your W-2's, W2-G's and 1099-Rs and input that amount here.
- Box B You will need to total your other federal withholding from all other documents (EXCEPT W-2's, W2-G's and 1099-R's) and place that amount here. If you do not have any other withholdings, then leave Box B blank.
- Box C If you have and federal withholding from Form 8959 line 24, it will be
 placed here automatically.
- Box D Select "Do the Math" and this box will add the amounts entered into boxes A, B and C.
- Box E This box is pre-populated from your input that you already made from your total federal withholding on Form 1040 line 62, Form 1040A line 36 or Form 1040EZ line 7.
- The amounts in boxes D and E must match before you can e-file (transmit) your return. If they do not match, check the withholding amounts you entered in boxes A and B by adding the federal withholding in your paper documents. If the amounts in Boxes A and B are correct, then check the amount you entered on Form 1040 line 62, Form 1040A line 36 or Form 1040EZ line 7. The efile now button will NOT activate until Boxes D and E match.



Note: Step 2 Section 2 for Forms 1040A and 1040EZ will not have a box for Form 8959 withholding; therefore, it will appear as shown below. For Form 1040A and 1040EZ, Boxes C and D must match.

Sectio	n 2: Boxes C and D Must Match			
To pre	vent issues with your e-filed return, perform the following reconciliation:			
A	Total the federal withholding amounts entered on the W-2's, 1099- R's and W-2Gs in Section 1 above and enter it in Box A.		A	500.
В	Enter in Box B the total amount of other withholding that you are reporting on Form 1040, line 62 that is not reported on a form in Section 1 above. These amounts come from documents such as SSA- 1099, 1099- DIV, 1099- MISC, 1099- B, other 1099s or Schedule K-1's. Total Federal Withholding (Box A plus Box B).		В	800.
С			С	1300.
D	Total Federal Withholding from From 1040, Line 62.		D	500.
	Box C and Box D MUST match to activate the 'Efile Now' button. (If not, check the amounts you have entered in Box A and Box B.)	Since Box C does not be erroneous input in		

Section 3: Verifying Your Identity – The IRS needs you authenticate who you are. If you are filing a joint return with your spouse, both will need to provide either of these:

- The Adjusted Gross Income from last year's federal tax return that you originally filed- not an amended return or a return adjusted by the IRS
 - o 2012 Form 1040 line 37
 - o 2012 Form 1040A line 21
 - 2012 Form 1040EZ line 4 Tips:
 - Do not guess what this number is, if you do not have last year's return to look at, see the directions for getting an Electronic Filing PIN from the IRS (Note: an Electronic Filing PIN is not the same as a Signature PIN, which is covered in Step 2 Section 4)
 - 2. If you did not file a return last year, enter "0" (zero) for the original Prior Year AGI.
- Get an Electronic Filing PIN from the IRS- Use this link
 http://www.irs.gov/Individuals/Electronic-Filing-PIN-Request (Do not make up your own 5 digit PIN. To e-file, you MUST get this 5 digit PIN from the IRS.)

As the taxpayer, enter one of the following two pieces of information also.	ion. If you are filing a joint r	eturn with your spouse, your spouse
(a) Look at last year's (2012) federal tax return and enter the Adjus line 37 of the Form 1040, line 21 of the Form 1040A and line 4 of the same spouse that you filed in 2012, the prior year AGI will be not file a return last year, enter a zero in the AGI space provided.	f the Form 1040EZ. If you a e the same for both you the	are filing Married Filing Jointly with
	Taxpayer	Spouse
Last year's AGI:		
OR		
(b) If you don't have or can't remember last year's AGI, go to or call the IRS at 1-866-704-7388 to get an Electronic Filing PIN fr		uals/Electronic-Filing-PIN-Request, the space provided (all 5 digits are required)
	Taxpayer	Spouse

Section 4: Signing This Year's Return – To sign this year's return, you will need to provide the information below. If you are filing a joint return, both will need to:

- Provide any five-digit number, to serve as your electronic signature PIN for your 2013 tax return. (Do not use 00000 or 12345). This is a number that you make up yourself.)
- Provide your date of birth (If you are Primary Taxpayer under age 16 and never filed a return with the IRS, you must print and mail your Free File Fillable Forms return to the IRS. If you are under 16, you may still e-file by using a tax preparer. Refer to http://www.irs.gov/Filing
- Provide today's date, which is the date you are transmitting (e-filing) your return to the IRS.
- Provide your e-mail address which must be entered twice (we do not recommend copying and pasting it)
- Read the disclosure statement and check the box

After you check the disclosure statement box, the "E-file Now" button will activate if you have entered all of the mandatory information; however, if you owe a balance on your 2013 return, you should review Section 5.

You (and your spouse if filing Married Filing Joint) w birth, and today's date.	ill need to sign this return	electronically. To do so enter a 5-digi	t PIN, your date
	Taxpayer	Spouse	
Select any 5-digit PIN to sign this return. (Your PIN(s) cannot be 12345 or 00000)			
Date of Birth (mm/dd/yyyy)	mm/dd/yyyy	mm/dd/yyyy	
Today's Date (mm/dd/yyyy)	mm/dd/yyyy	mm/dd/yyyy	
E-mail address (for confirmation e-mail) Re-enter e-mail address (must match)	-		
Disclosure Statement I agree Inder penalties of perjury, I declare that I have exami and schedules and, to the best of my knowledge and b	ined this return (or request belief, it is true, correct, an		ermediate

Section 5 – Making a Payment APPLIES ONLY IF YOU ARE NOT GETTING A REFUND, if you owe a balance on your 2013 return, you can use this section to make an electronic payment directly from your financial institution. You will need to:

- Provide your routing and account number
- Provide a date of withdrawal
- Provide your daytime phone number
- Read the disclosure statement and check the box

Checking Your Return (back to TOC)

Prior to selecting the "E-file Now" button, you should take some time to review your return for accuracy and fix all errors. Check to make sure you do not have any input errors.

- Verify all of your forms and schedules will transmit with your 1040 form.
 - Select the "Print" icon at the top of Step 1 or Step 2.
 - The forms displayed in the print dialog box are the forms that are attached to your return that will be transmitted.

- Scroll the entire list to ensure that everything is attached
- If you return is complete, take this opportunity to print a copy for your records.

Note: W-2's and 1099's will not print as part of the return.

When something is missing from the list of forms to be transmitted, the likely reason is that the missing form was not completed. To complete the missing form:

- Select the View /Add icon and select the form that is missing from the printed documents.
- Review the form for completeness and input any missing information
- Select "Do the Math" before selecting "Done with this form."
- Print your return again

Transmitting (E-filing) your return (back to TOC)

Once the mandatory information in Step 2 has been entered, the "E-file Now" button will be activated. When activated, selecting it will transmit your return and you will receive a notification that your return was successfully transmitted. **Successful transmission** does not mean you have successfully e-filed your return.

The IRS will email the notice of acceptance or rejection of your return within a few minutes when the servers are not busy and within 24 hours of a successful transmission when the servers are busy.

If you do not receive an email from the provider regarding the IRS accepting or rejecting your return within 24 hours, check your SPAM box. If the email is not in your SPAM box, check all other email addresses you may have used.

Before calling 1-800-829-1040 and making an inquiry, check your return status by selecting the "Get E-file Status" link on this page www.freefilefillableforms.com It is in the left hand navigation, under the "Resources" heading. Enter your Social Security Number and zip code that was on the e-filed return. If the program shows no status, then you have not successfully transmitted your return.

For the status of your refund, go to Where's My Refund on IRS.gov

Filing an Extension (Form 4868) (back to TOC)

To file an extension, you must first select a main form (1040, 1040A or 1040EZ, and complete the personal information section (Name, Address and SSN). After the personal information is entered, select the "File and Extension" icon from the menu bar (See Illustration 15). Form 4868 will open. Complete the form. The bottom half of this extension is similar to the Step 2 Page, Sections 3 – 5. See the tutorial on Step 2, sections 3, 4 and 5 for completing the bottom half of the extension.

When you are filing an extension, if you owe a balance and want to make a payment, you MUST input amounts on both lines 6 and 7 of the Form 4868. If you leave line 7 blank and you are paying electronically, no amount will be deducted from your bank account.

You may elect to pay using direct debit or other <u>e-payment options</u>. You may also file a Form 1040V, Payment Voucher, and mail a check to the IRS for the amount on line 7 payable to the US Treasury.

Printing Your Return (back to TOC)

Make sure your print a copy of your Return or your Extension for your records. If you forget to print your return after October 20th you will need to <u>get a transcript</u>. Free File Fillable Forms shuts down on October 20th and does not furnish copies of returns. So make sure you print a copy of your return for your records.

Other Assistance and Information (back to TOC)

Additional Assistance- The type of issue you have will determine where to go for assistance with Free File Fillable Forms. Your best links for help will be from the IRS Free File landing page.

- You will find other helpful links on the IRS Free File landing page by looking in the left hand navigation, under "Resources."
- Tax Law Question

 If you have tax law questions, you can receive online Help
 <u>with Tax Questions</u> or call the IRS at 1800-829-1040. Hearing impaired
 taxpayers can call the IRS at 1800-829-4059.

Free File Fillable Forms does not support the preparation of prior year federal returns. The program only supports the current tax year.