

# How to Get a Transcript or Copy of a Prior Year Tax Return

There are many reasons why you should keep a copy of your federal tax return. For example, you may need it to answer an IRS inquiry. You may also need it to apply for a student loan or a home mortgage. If you can't find your tax return, the IRS can provide a copy or give you a transcript of the tax information you need.

Here's how to get your federal tax return information from the IRS:

1. Transcripts are free and you can get them for the current year and the past three years. In most cases, a transcript includes all the information you need.
2. A tax return transcript shows most line items from the tax return you originally filed. It also includes items from any accompanying forms and schedules you filed. It does not reflect any changes made after you filed your original return.
3. A tax account transcript shows any changes either you or the IRS made to your tax return after you filed it. This transcript includes your marital status, the type of return you filed, your adjusted gross income and taxable income.
4. You can get transcripts on the web, by phone or by mail. To request transcripts online, go to [IRS.gov](https://www.irs.gov) and use the Order a Transcript tool. To order by phone, call 800-908-9946 and follow the prompts.
5. To request a 1040, 1040A or 1040EZ tax return transcript by mail or fax, complete Form 4506T-EZ, Short Form Request for Individual Tax Return Transcript. Businesses and individuals who need a tax account transcript should use Form 4506-T, Request for Transcript of Tax Return.
6. If you order online or by phone, you should receive your tax return transcript within five to 10 calendar days. You should allow 30 calendar days for delivery of a tax account transcript if you order by mail.
7. If you need an actual copy of a filed and processed tax return, it will cost \$57 for each tax year. Complete Form 4506, Request for Copy of Tax Return, and mail it to the IRS address listed on the form for your area. Copies are generally available for the current year and past six years. Please allow 60 days for delivery.
8. If you live in a Presidentially declared disaster area, the IRS may waive the fee to obtain copies of your tax returns. Visit [IRS.gov](https://www.irs.gov) and select the 'Disaster Relief' link in the lower left corner of the page for more about IRS disaster assistance.

Forms 4506, 4506-T and 4506T-EZ are available at [IRS.gov](https://www.irs.gov) or by calling 800-TAX-FORM (800-829-3676).