

Let's talk taxes!

**Getting started filing
all or part of your taxes online**

Jessamyn West - February 24, 2021



70%

of Americans are eligible to file their taxes for free online

Free File

...is actually two, or maybe three things



1. IRS **partners** offering free online software for people making under \$72,000.
2. Online forms you can fill out **yourself** at irs.gov for people with higher incomes.
3. Vermont's version of #1.

"Why doesn't the IRS just tell me how much I owe, or have their own tax-paying software?"

Capitalism. And lobbying by tax preparation companies.



How do I know if I made less than 72K?

Check last year's taxes

(FYI: for a married couple this is **combined** income)

- Line 4 if you filed a Form 1040EZ
- Line 21 if you filed a Form 1040A
- Line 37 if you filed a Form 1040

Form

1040
Simplified

Department of the Treasury—Internal Revenue Service

U.S. Individual Income Tax Return 2018

OMB No. 1545-0074

IRS Use Only—Do not write or staple in this space.

Married filing separate return Qualifying widow(er) Head of household

Your first name and initial Last name Your social security number

Standard deduction: Someone can claim you as a dependent You were born before January 2, 1954 You are blind

Spouse or qualifying person's first name and initial (see inst.) Last name Spouse's social security number

Standard deduction: Someone can claim your spouse as a dependent Your spouse was born before January 2, 1954 Your spouse is a dual-status alien

Home address (number and street). If you have a P.O. box, see instructions. Apt. no.

City, town or post office, state, and ZIP code. If you have a foreign address, attach Schedule B.

Presidential Election Campaign.
✓ if you want \$3 to go to this fund (see inst.) You Spouse
 Full-year health care coverage (see instructions)

Dependents (see instructions):	(2) Social security number	(3) Relationship to you	(4) ✓ if qualifies for (see inst.):
(1) First name			Child tax credit Credit for other dependents
			<input type="checkbox"/>
			<input type="checkbox"/>

If you have last year's forms, and your life is more or less the same, filling out this year's forms is something you can do online.

Sign Here
Joint return? See instructions. Keep a copy for your records.

Under penalties of perjury, I declare that I have examined this return and accompanying schedules and statements, and to the best of my knowledge and belief, they are true, correct, and accurately reflect all amounts and sources of income I received during the tax year. Declaration of preparer (other than taxpayer) is based on all information of which preparer has any knowledge.

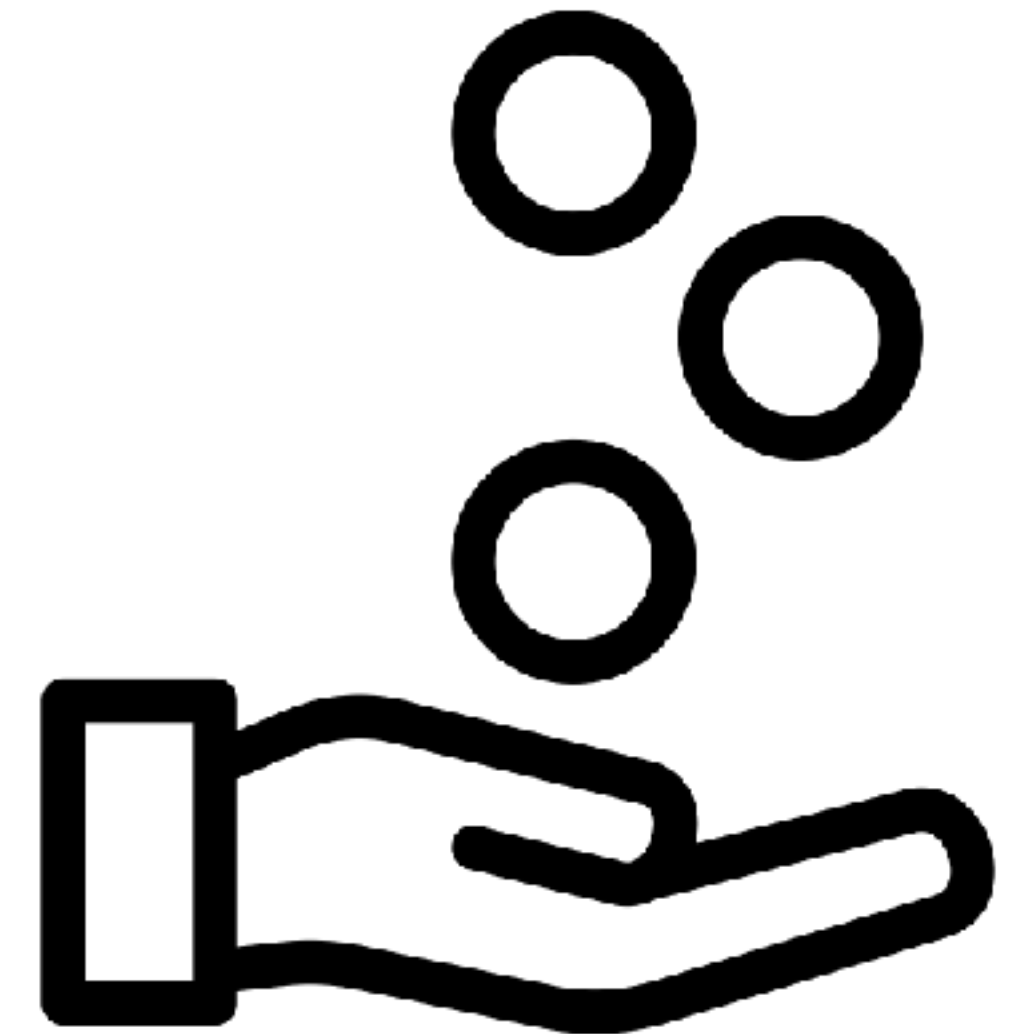
Your signature	Date	Your occupation	If the IRS sent you an Identity Protection PIN, enter it here (see inst.)
Spouse's signature. If a joint return, both must sign.	Date	Spouse's occupation	If the IRS sent you an Identity Protection PIN, enter it here (see inst.)

Paid Preparer's

Print/Type preparer's name	Preparer's signature	PTIN	Check if: <input type="checkbox"/> 3rd Party Designee
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Why file online?

- Fewer errors.
- Quicker acknowledgment of receipt.
- Quicker refunds.
- No post office runs necessary.
- Do it from home if you have internet access.



IRS.gov

is the general starting point
for any free filing options.

(in case you share this info with a friend)



Important things to know

- Free File is free **FEDERAL** filing, state filing may have fees.
- Free File can only be used on **THIS YEAR'S** tax return.
- Free File offers the thirty most commonly used forms, but not all forms.
- You will need last year's taxes to begin this year's forms, to verify your identity.
- You will need a **valid email address** to get confirmation that your returns have been accepted.

tax.vt.gov

**is the general starting point
for free filing options that
INCLUDE state taxes.**

An Official Vermont Government Website

Agency of Administration
Department of Taxes

Contact ▾ File ▾ Pay ▾ Refunds ▾ Forms ▾ myVTax ▾

2020 Tax Forms Now Available

2020 Vermont tax forms and instructions are available for download beginning on Monday, Feb. 8. Eligible taxpayers can also file online for free through the Free File program.

[Find a Form](#)

Home

- COVID-19 Resources
- Individuals
- Businesses
- Property
- Tax Professionals
- Municipal Officials
- Forms and Publications
- Tax Law and Guidance
- Data and Statistics
- Help

CORONAVIRUS UPDATE: INFORMATION FOR TAXPAYERS

Our mission is to serve Vermonters by collecting the proper amount of tax revenue

CORONAVIRUS (COVID-19) UPDATE

FREE FILE

FILE OR PAY ONLINE

FY2021 PROPERTY TAX RATES

Vermont forms include common ones...

- Vermont Homestead Declaration or Property Tax Credit Claim
- Extension to File Vermont Personal Income Tax
- Vermont Renter Rebate Claim
- Landlord Certificate



If you're new to online filing...

- The systems will save your work, you don't have to do it all at once.
- The software will have *some* self-service help systems.
- Ask around to see which tool other people use, some options may be simpler to use than others.
- If you owe money to the IRS, there will be ways to pay online, some may have small fees associated with them.

" If you need more help than the software offers, the IRS Volunteer Income Tax Assistance (VITA) and the Tax Counseling for the Elderly (TCE) programs offer free tax help for those who qualify."

What you'll need to get started

- Your social security number or Tax ID number
- Last year's taxes or information.
- Information about stimulus payments you may have received.
- Copies of W-2 or 1099 forms from any work you've done.
- Other information about income and expenses for 2020 (see linked list).
- Way to pay online (if you owe money) which is a credit/debit card or the routing and account numbers from your bank.

Important don'ts

- Don't wait until the last minute; websites can be slow/busy in April.
- Don't lose your login to the tax preparation site.
- Don't start tax preparation anywhere but Vermont's Free File page unless you are not filing a Vermont State tax return

Questions?

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Thank you!