



Communications and Liaison

TAX OUTREACH, PARTNERSHIP & EDUCATION

Tax Time Guide: Use the 'Where's My Refund?' tool or IRS2Go app to conveniently check tax refund status

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WASHINGTON – The Internal Revenue Service reminds taxpayers today that the fastest and easiest way to check on tax refunds is by using the "Where's My Refund?" tool on IRS.gov or through the IRS2Go mobile app.

This year, more than ever before, those who don't normally have to file a tax return may wish to do so to get child-related tax credits that were expanded by the American Rescue Plan. These include the [Child Tax Credit and the Child and Dependent Care Credit](#).

Refund updates

Filing [electronically](#) and using [direct deposit](#) is the safest and fastest way to file an accurate return and receive a tax refund. Taxpayers can use "[Where's My Refund?](#)" to start checking their refund status within 24 hours after an e-filed return is received or four weeks after the taxpayer mails a paper return.

The tool's tracker displays progress through three phases:

1. Return Received,
2. Refund Approved and
3. Refund Sent.

Refund timing

Most tax refunds are issued within 21 days, however, some may take longer. There are several reasons this can happen:

- The return includes a claim for the Earned Income Tax Credit or Additional Child Tax Credit.
- The time between the IRS issuing the refund and the bank posting it to an account may vary since many banks do not process payments on weekends or holidays.
- The return may require additional review.
- The return may include errors or be incomplete.
- The return could be affected by identity theft or fraud.

The IRS will contact taxpayers by mail if more information is needed to process a return.

Earned Income Tax Credit and the Additional Child Tax Credit

Due to changes to the tax law made by the [Protecting Americans from Tax Hikes Act \(PATH Act\)](#), the IRS can't issue [Earned Income Tax Credit \(EITC\)](#) or [Additional Child Tax Credit \(ACTC\)](#) refunds before mid-February. This includes the entire refund, not just the part that's related to the credit claimed on a tax return.

["Where's My Refund?"](#) and [IRS2Go](#) are updated for most early EITC/ACTC filers with an estimated deposit date by February 19, if they file their taxes early.

If a filer claimed the EITC or the ACTC, they can expect to get their refund March 1 if:

- They [file their return online](#),
- They choose to get their refund by [direct deposit](#) and

- No issues were found with their return.

Ignore refund myths

Some taxpayers mistakenly believe they can expedite their refund by ordering a tax transcript, calling the IRS or calling their tax preparer. Ordering a tax transcript will not help a taxpayer get their refund faster or find out when they'll get their refund. The information available on "Where's My Refund?" is the same information available to IRS telephone assistants.

Taxpayers can find answers to questions, forms and instructions and easy-to-use tools at [IRS.gov](https://www.irs.gov). This news release is part of a series called the [Tax Time Guide](#), a resource to help taxpayers file an accurate tax return. Additional help is available in [Publication 17](#), Your Federal Income Tax For Individuals.

More resources:

- [Directory of Federal Tax Return Preparers with Credentials and Select Qualifications](#)
- [Choosing a Tax Professional](#)
- [IRS Free File](#)
- [Free Tax Return Preparation for Qualifying Taxpayers](#)