

What to Bring to Your Tax Appointment

- Social Security Card(s) or Numbers for all family members listed on return.**
 - If you have your Social Security card, bring it with you to the appointment.
 - If you have changed your name (due to marriage, divorce, etc.), let us know which last name the Social Security Administration has for you.
 - Bring the Social Security Card and date of birth for each of your children
- Current Driver's License(s)** We will need your driver's license to verify your identity.
- Voided Check** In order to set up electronic tax refunds, we will need your bank routing number and account number
- Last Year's Federal and State Tax Returns** If you are not a prior client, please bring a copy of last year's income tax return with you. Some information from the prior year's return(s) could be helpful in calculating this year's tax return.
- Wage Statements – Form W2** For employee income, you will receive a Form W-2, Wage and Tax Statement, from each of your employers. If you have not received this form by the beginning of February, you will need to contact your employer. Employers are required to send W-2s by January 31. Bring all Wage Statements with you when you come in to have your income tax return prepared.
- Child Care Expenses and Provider Information** Do you pay someone to provide care for your children while you work, or search for work? You may qualify for a tax credit of up to 35% of your expenses. You will need to bring the provider's name, address and Taxpayer Identification Number (TIN). This can be a Social Security Number (if the provider is an individual) or an EIN number. We will need the total amount of expenses you paid during the year.
- Medical, Eye Care, and Dental Expenses** Do you itemize your deductions? If so, then medical, eye care, dental expenses and premiums paid for health insurance may be deductible, if your total expenses for the year are greater than 10% (or 7.5% if 65 years and older) of your Adjusted Gross Income (total income, minus federal adjustments allowed).

Do not include over-the-counter drugs or treatments unless prescribed by a doctor.

Expenses to itemize:

- Doctor Bills
- Dentists Bills
- Prescriptions
- Calculate miles driven to doctors, hospitals, pharmacies.
- Health insurance and Long Term Insurance premiums

- Charitable Contributions – Cash and Non-Cash** Have you made charitable contributions during the past year? Cash contributions to your church, Salvation Army, Goodwill and other charitable organizations can be deductible, if you itemize your deductions. Bring a record for contributions you made directly and through employer withholdings (such as United Way). You **MUST** keep the written acknowledgments from the charitable organization. Non-cash charitable donations (vehicles, clothing or real property), are valued at the fair market value. You should receive a written receipt or acknowledgment of these contributions from the charitable organization. Keep records of your contributions and provide your preparer with your contribution amounts at the time we prepare your income tax return.
- Mortgage or Home Equity Loan Interest Paid – Form 1098** If you itemize your deductions, you may be able to deduct your qualified mortgage interest and/or home equity loan interest. Points may be deductible. You should receive Form 1098 by January 31, which shows the interest you paid in the previous year. If you do not receive this form, the information may be found on your mortgage bill. Bring Form 1098 (or mortgage bill) when you come in to have your taxes prepared. If you do not receive Form 1098, or the information is not on your mortgage invoice, call your mortgage holder directly.
- Did you refinance your home last year?** If you did refinance your home, you may be able to deduct a portion of the points paid on your loan. If you had refinanced before you may be able to deduct the remaining balance of the points you have not already deducted.

Things to bring:

- The Hud1 form from your closing provided by your bank or title company. This form will show the points that were paid.
 - If you are refinancing a loan that was from a prior refinance, (new clients) bring the Hud1 from the previous loan. Current clients bring the same information unless you know that we have been deducting those points for you on your previous returns.
- Did you purchase a new home this last year?** If you purchased a new home last year, bring the HUD1 from the purchase of the home so that we can determine that you have been given credit for all the allowable closing costs that you can deduct.

- Real Estate or Personal Property Taxes** If you itemize your deductions, you can deduct amounts paid for real estate and personal property taxes from your Adjusted Gross Income.

Bring proof of tax payment in when you come to have your income taxes prepared. If your mortgage company pays real estate taxes for you from an escrow fund, they will send proof of this payment on Form 1098 by January 31.

To get the amount paid for Personal Property Taxes contact your taxing authority and ask them to give you the amount paid during the year. Depending on the State, Personal Property taxes may or may not be deductible.

- State Income Taxes or Sales Tax** You can deduct either Sales Tax or State Income tax. Depending on your situation, you may have the option to claim one or the other. If you claim sales tax, bring documentation of major purchases such as a car, truck, boat or similar large purchases.
- Record of Purchase or Sale of Real Residence** You need to report the sale of your main residence only if you have a gain for which part of the gain is taxable. If you owned the home and lived in it as your primary residence for at least two years, you may be able to exclude up to \$250,000 (\$500,000 if Married Filing Jointly) of the gain from your income.
- Unreimbursed Employment-Related Expenses** If you have necessary job expenses (required uniforms, laundry of required uniforms, protective clothing, tools, employment agency fees, dues to professional organizations, etc.) for which your company did not reimburse you, you may be able to deduct these expenses. Keep records of your expenses and bring that information in to your appointment.
- Educational Expenses** Tuition paid for college classes (any family member) may provide additional tax credits. Bring the amount you paid for higher education (1098-T) to your appointment. If the tuition paid if for the first four year of post high school education, also bring a listing of expenses paid for books, labs and other required supplies for those classes.
- Educator Expenses** Are you a teacher in grades K-12, an instructor, counselor, principal or aide who has logged at least 900 hours of work in school during the year? If so, you may deduct up to \$250 of qualified expenses paid.
- Pension or Retirement Income** – Form 1099-R Bring your Form(s) 1099-R (Distributions from Pensions, Annuities, Retirement or Profit Sharing Plans, IRAs, Insurance Contracts, etc.) to you appointment. You should receive this form from the payer by January 31.
- Investment or Dividend Income statements** – **Forms 1099-INT and 1099-DIV INTEREST INCOME:** If you earned interest on any of your bank or investment accounts during the prior year, you should receive Form 1099-INT (Interest Income) by January 31. Please note: banks do not send 1099s if interest income earned is less than \$10 for the year.

DIVIDEND INCOME: If you received dividend income from stocks or funds during the prior year, each company or institution will send you a Form 1099-DIV usually by February 15.

- Student Loan Interest – Form 1098-E** You may be able to deduct the interest you paid on student loans. You should receive a Form 1098-E showing how much interest you paid during the year.
- Social Security Income – Form SSA-1099** Did you receive Social Security payments? If so, some of these funds may be taxable income. The Social Security Administration should send you this information by the end of the year.
- Unemployment Income – Form 1099-G** Did you receive state unemployment compensation? If so, it should be included as income on your return. The State should send you Form 1099-G by January 31. Contact your state office if you have not received your Form 1099-G.
- Sales of Stocks or Bonds – Form 1099-B** If you sold Stocks or Bonds bring Form 1099-B to your appointment, along with any brokerage statements (showing dates bought and sold), confirmation receipts (showing cost basis and fees paid), so we can get you the lowest tax rate available for your situation. Make sure your statements or records include information about stocks purchased in other years that were sold in 2011.
- Self-Employed Business/Farm Income and Expenses – Form 1099-MISC** Do you run a business as a sole proprietor or professional? If so, you are taxed on gross income minus expenses. Bring all your accounting records (This includes Form 1099-MISC) showing your income totals and expense items. Any work you can do to summarize the business expenses will result in a lower cost of preparing your taxes.

Auto expenses can be calculated by using either the actual expenses or a mileage allowance. In 2011, there is a different mileage rate for the first half of the year and the last half. Calculate your mileage for each portion of the year to be able to receive the maximum deduction.

If you choose to use the actual expense method, summarize all your expenses for the use of the vehicle. Calculate the business percentage based on personal versus business miles.

- Lottery or Gambling Winnings – Form W-2G** Did you win cash or prizes last year? If so, those winnings may be subject to income tax withholding. If you receive gambling winnings of \$600 or more, the payer should send you a Form W-2G. This form shows the amount you won and the amount withheld, if applicable.
- Lottery or Gambling Losses** Did you know that gambling losses could be deducted on your income tax return? Only up to the amount of your gambling winnings, though. You need to keep a written log that includes the date, location, type of gambling, amount of wager and your winnings and losses.

- Income and Expenses from Rental Property** Do you own rental property? You will need to report as income any money received as rent. You can deduct certain expenses for your rental property (acquiring, maintaining, insuring and operating).

Items needed if it is the first year for claiming rental property:

- Mortgage interest paid
- Real estate property taxes
- Insurance
- Cost of the property (separate out the land cost)
- If you can itemize the cost of HVAC and other short term assets that are a part of the building, they can be depreciated with a shorter life and provide more deductions in the first years.
- Maintenance
- Repairs
- Auto Expenses – Mileage (first half and last half of year) or Actual expenses
- Supplies
- Utilities (including cell phone if used in the rental activity)
- Computer and internet expenses
- Management fees or commissions
- Legal and Professional fees including Tax Preparation

- Alimony Paid or Received** If you paid alimony, it is deductible on your income taxes. If you received alimony, it is taxable income. Child support is neither deductible nor taxable. If you paid Alimony, you will need to bring the recipient's Social Security Number.