



IRS Tax Tip 2015-06: Ten IRS Tips about Free Tax Preparation

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IRS Tax Tips

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Ten IRS Tips about Free Tax Preparation

Each year, millions of people have their taxes prepared for free. The IRS's Volunteer Income Tax Assistance or and Tax Counseling for the Elderly programs have helped people for more than 40 years. Many people know these programs by their initials. Here are 10 tips from the IRS about VITA and TCE:

1. **Trained and Certified.** The IRS works with local community groups to train and certify VITA and TCE volunteers.
2. **VITA Program.** VITA generally offers free tax return preparation to people who earn \$53,000 or less.
3. **TCE Program.** TCE is mainly for people age 60 or older. The program specializes in tax issues unique to seniors. AARP participates in the TCE program and helps people with low to moderate incomes.
4. **Free E-file.** VITA and TCE provide free electronic filing. E-filing is the safest, most accurate way to file your tax return. Combining e-file with direct deposit is the fastest way to get your refund.
5. **Tax Benefits.** Using VITA and TCE can help you get all the tax benefits for which you are eligible. For

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example, you may qualify for the Earned Income Tax Credit or the Credit for the Elderly. You can also get help with the new Health Care Law tax provisions.

6. **Bilingual Help.** Some VITA and TCE sites provide bilingual help for people who speak limited English.

7. **Help for Military.** VITA offers free tax assistance to members of the military and their families. Volunteers help with many military tax issues. These may include the special rules and tax benefits that apply to those serving in combat zones.

8. **"Self-Prep" Option.** At some VITA sites, you can prepare your own federal and state tax returns using free web-based software. This is an option if you don't have a home computer or need much help. Volunteers are on site to guide you if you need help. In most cases, this option offers free tax return preparation software and e-filing to people who earn \$60,000 or less.

9. **Local Sites.** The IRS partners with community organizations to offer free tax services at thousands of sites around the nation. Sites start to open in late January and early February.

10. **Visit IRS.gov.** You can visit IRS.gov to find a VITA site near you. Search the word "VITA" and click on "[Free Tax Return Preparation for You by Volunteers](#)." Site information is also available by calling the IRS at 800-906-9887. To locate the nearest AARP Tax-Aide site, visit aarp.org, or call 888-227-7669.

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