



IRS Summertime Tax Tip 2016-11: How to Request a Transcript or Copy of a Prior Year's Tax Return

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IRS Tax Tips

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Issue Number: **IRS Summertime Tax Tip 2016-11**
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How to Request a Transcript or Copy of a Prior Year's Tax Return

You should always [keep a copy of your tax return for your records](#). You may need copies of your filed tax returns for many reasons. For example, they can help you prepare future tax returns. You'll need them if you have to amend a prior year's tax return. You often need them when you apply for a loan to buy a home or to start a business. Or, you may need them to apply for student financial aid. If you can't find your copies, the IRS can give you a transcript of the information you need, or a copy of your tax return. Here's how to get your federal tax return information from the IRS:

- Transcripts are free. You can get them for the current year and the past three years. In most cases, a transcript includes the tax information you need.
- A [tax return transcript](#) is a summary of the tax return that you filed. It also includes items from any accompanying forms and schedules that you filed. It doesn't reflect any changes you or the IRS made after you filed your original return.

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- A [tax account transcript](#) includes your marital status, the type of return you filed, your adjusted gross income and taxable income. It also includes any changes that you or the IRS made to your tax return after you filed it.
- The quickest way to get a copy of your tax transcript is to use the [Get Transcript](#) application. Once you verify your identity, you will be able to view and print your transcript immediately online. This [Fact Sheet](#) provides details on how to complete this step.
- If you're unable or prefer not to use Get Transcript Online, you may order a **tax return transcript** and/or a **tax account transcript** using the online tool [Get Transcript by Mail](#) or by calling 800-908-9946. Transcripts arrive at the address we have on file for you in five to 10 calendar days from the time IRS receives your request.

oTo order by phone, call 800-908-9946 and follow the prompts. You can also request your transcript using your smartphone with the [IRS2Go](#) mobile phone app.

o Businesses that need a tax account transcript should use [Form 4506-T](#), Request for Transcript of Tax Return.

- If you need a copy of your filed and processed tax return, it costs \$50 for each tax year. You should complete [Form 4506](#), Request for Copy of Tax Return, to make the request. Mail it to the IRS address listed on the form. Copies are generally available for the current year and past six years. You should allow 75 days for delivery.
- If you live in a federally declared disaster area, you can get a free copy of your tax return. Visit [IRS.gov](#) for more [disaster relief information](#).

You can get tax forms anytime at www.irs.gov/forms.

[IRS Tax Tips](#) provide valuable information throughout the year. [IRS.gov](#) offers tax help and info on various topics including common [tax scams](#), [taxpayer rights](#) and more.

Additional IRS Resources:

- [Tax Topic 156](#) – Copy of Your Tax Return – How to Get One

IRS YouTube Videos:

- How to Use Get Transcript Online – [English](#) | [Spanish](#) | [ASL](#)

IRS Podcasts:

- How to Use Get Transcript Online – [English](#)

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