

## What's New

This section summarizes important tax changes that took effect in 2012. Most of these changes are discussed in more detail throughout this publication.

**Future developments.** For the latest information about the tax law topics covered in this publication, including information about any tax legislation, go to [www.irs.gov/pub17](http://www.irs.gov/pub17).

**Tax benefits extended.** Several temporary tax benefits have been extended through 2013, including the following.

- Deduction for educator expenses. See [chapter 19](#).
- Tuition and fees deduction. See [chapter 19](#).
- Credit for nonbusiness energy property. See [chapter 36](#).

- Election to deduct state and local general sales taxes instead of state and local income taxes. See [chapter 22](#).
- Deduction for mortgage insurance premiums. See [chapter 23](#).
- Exclusion from income of qualified charitable distributions. See [chapter 17](#).

**Standard mileage rates.** The 2012 rate for business use of your car remains 55½ cents a mile. See [chapter 26](#).

The 2012 rate for use of your car to get medical care is decreased to 23 cents a mile. See [chapter 21](#).

The 2012 rate for use of your car to move is decreased to 23 cents a mile. See Publication 521, Moving Expenses.

**Exemption amount.** The amount you can deduct for each exemption has increased. It was \$3,700 for 2011. It is \$3,800 for 2012. See [chapter 3](#).

**Roth IRAs.** If you converted or rolled over an amount to a Roth IRA in 2010 and did not elect to report the taxable amount on your 2010 return, you generally must report half of it on your 2011 return and the rest on your 2012 return. See Publication 575 for details.

**Designated Roth accounts.** If you rolled over an amount from a 401(k) or 403(b) plan to a designated Roth account in 2010 and did not elect to report the taxable amount on your 2010 return, you generally must report half of it on your 2011 return and the rest on your 2012 return. See Publication 575 for details.

**Schedule 8812.** Use Schedule 8812 (Form 1040A or 1040) to figure your additional child tax credit for 2012. Schedule 8812 is new for 2012. Form 8812 is no longer in use. See [chapter 33](#).

**Identity Protection Personal Identification Number (Identity Protection PIN or IP PIN).** If we sent you an Identity Protection PIN, see [chapter 1](#) to find out how to use it.

**Mailing your return.** If you are filing a paper return, you may be mailing it to a different address this year because the IRS has changed the filing location for several areas. See [Where To File](#) near the end of this publication for a list of IRS addresses.

## Reminders

Listed below are important reminders and other items that may help you file your 2012 tax return. Many of these items are explained in more detail later in this publication.

**Enter your social security number (SSN).** Enter your SSN in the space provided on your tax form. If you filed a joint return for 2011 and are filing a joint return for 2012 with the same spouse, enter your names and SSNs in the same order as on your 2011 return. See [chapter 1](#).

**Secure your tax records from identity theft.** Identity theft occurs when someone uses your personal information such as your name, SSN, or other identifying information, without your permission, to commit fraud or other crimes. An identity thief may use your SSN to get a job or may file a tax return using your SSN to receive a refund. For more information about identity theft and how to reduce your risk from it, see [chapter 1](#).

**Taxpayer identification numbers.** You must provide the taxpayer identification number for each person for whom you claim certain tax benefits. This applies even if the person was born in 2012. Generally, this number is the person's social security number (SSN). See [chapter 1](#).

**Foreign source income.** If you are a U.S. citizen with income from sources outside the United States (foreign income), you must report all such income on your tax return unless it is exempt by U.S. law. This is true whether you live inside

or outside the United States and whether or not you receive a Form W-2 or Form 1099 from the foreign payer. This applies to earned income (such as wages and tips) as well as unearned income (such as interest, dividends, capital gains, pensions, rents and royalties).

If you live outside the United States, you may be able to exclude part or all of your foreign source earned income. For details, see Publication 54, Tax Guide for U.S. Citizens and Resident Aliens Abroad.

**Foreign financial assets.** If you had foreign financial assets in 2012, you may have to file Form 8938 with your return. Check [www.irs.gov/form8938](http://www.irs.gov/form8938) for details.

**Automatic 6-month extension to file tax return.** You can use Form 4868, Application for Automatic Extension of Time To File U.S. Individual Income Tax Return, to obtain an automatic 6-month extension of time to file your tax return. See [chapter 1](#).

**Include your phone number on your return.** To promptly resolve any questions we have in processing your tax return, we would like to be able to call you. Please enter your daytime telephone number on your tax form next to your signature.

**Payment of taxes.** You can pay your taxes online or by phone. You can make a direct transfer from your bank account or use a credit or debit card. If you *e-file*, you can schedule an electronic payment. See [chapter 1](#).

**Faster ways to file your return.** The IRS offers fast, accurate ways to file your tax return information without filing a paper tax return. You can use IRS *e-file* (electronic filing). See [chapter 1](#).

**Free electronic filing.** You may be able to file your 2012 taxes online for free thanks to an electronic filing agreement. See [chapter 1](#).

**Change of address.** If you change your address, you should notify the IRS. See [Change of Address](#) in chapter 1.

**Refund on a late filed return.** If you were due a refund but you did not file a return, you generally must file your return within 3 years from the date the return was due (including extensions) to get that refund. See [chapter 1](#).

**Frivolous tax submissions.** The IRS has published a list of positions that are identified as frivolous. The penalty for filing a frivolous tax return is \$5,000. See [chapter 1](#).

**Filing erroneous claim for refund or credit.** You may have to pay a penalty if you file an erroneous claim for refund or credit. See [chapter 1](#).

**Privacy Act and paperwork reduction information.** The IRS Restructuring and Reform Act of 1998, the Privacy Act of 1974, and the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1980 require that when we ask you for information we must first tell you what our legal right is to ask for the information, why we are asking for it, how it will be used, what could happen if we do not receive it, and whether your response is voluntary, required to obtain a benefit, or

mandatory under the law. A complete statement on this subject can be found in your tax form instructions.

**Customer service for taxpayers.** You can set up a personal appointment at the most convenient Taxpayer Assistance Center, on the most convenient business day. See [How To Get Tax Help](#) in the back of this publication.

**Preparer e-file mandate.** Most paid preparers must *e-file* returns they prepare and file. Your preparer may make you aware of this requirement and the options available to you.

**Treasury Inspector General for Tax Administration.** If you want to confidentially report misconduct, waste, fraud, or abuse by an IRS employee, you can call 1-800-366-4484 (call 1-800-877-8339 if you are deaf, hard of hearing, or have a speech disability, and are using TTY/TDD equipment). You can remain anonymous.

**Photographs of missing children.** The Internal Revenue Service is a proud partner with the National Center for Missing and Exploited Children. Photographs of missing children selected by the Center may appear in this publication on pages that would otherwise be blank. You can help bring these children home by looking at the photographs and calling 1-800-THE-LOST (1-800-843-5678) if you recognize a child.