

# **Benefits of Electronic Filing**

Filing your tax return electronically can eliminate filing errors, speed your refund, and make filing easier in future years.

## Benefits of E-filing

- **Eliminates most mistakes that occur on paper returns** that can delay a refund or bring extra scrutiny to a return from the IRS. **Examples:** Math errors...omitted forms and data... numbers carried to wrong lines. The e-filing process automatically checks such items before a return is filed and flags any errors. The IRS says that e-filed returns have substantially fewer errors than paper returns.
- **Speeds up refunds.** When e-filing is combined with electronic deposit of a refund in a bank account the refund will be delivered in about two weeks. **Contrast:** When a paper return is filed and a refund check is mailed, it takes about six to eight weeks for the refund to arrive. Moreover, there's a risk that the check will be lost in the mail – the IRS says it is now holding more than 84,000 refund checks for 2004 returns that were returned to it by the postal service as undeliverable.
- **Eases future filings.** Once you enter your data for an e-filed return, it is carried forward automatically to returns that are e-filed in future years. This saves the need to manually reenter the same data (names, Social Security numbers, employer ID numbers, etc.), and also ensures that tax carryover items are correctly entered on a subsequent year's return automatically. E-filing also provides the convenience of not having to obtain paper forms, and of being able to file any time from wherever you are – with no need to wait in long lines at the post office. In addition, 37 states now accept e-filed tax returns – and preparation of state returns is made easier by having data automatically transferred from the federal form.
- **Provides proof of filing.** When a return is e-filed, you receive an electronic receipt that is proof of filing. You eliminate the risk that a return will be delayed in the mail and be received late by the IRS – or be lost in the mail and not received by the IRS at all.

This information is provided as a courtesy by:  
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