



# 2013 IRS Refund Information Guidelines for the Tax Preparation Community

## Key Message

The IRS issued more than 9 out of 10 refunds to taxpayers in less than 21 days last year. The same results are expected in 2013.

## Use *Where's My Refund?* to Check the Status of Your Refund

The improved *Where's My Refund?* tool will give you personalized refund information based on the processing of your 2012 tax return.

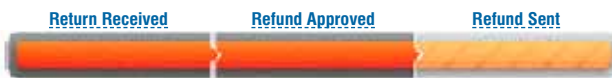
Just use the IRS2Go phone app or go to [IRS.gov](http://IRS.gov). Both are available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. You can start checking on the status of your return within 24 hours after we have received your e-filed return or 4 weeks after you mail a paper return.

**where's my refund?** To use *Where's My Refund?* have your tax return handy so you can provide your social security number, filing status and the exact whole dollar amount of your refund.

*Where's My Refund?* has a new look this year! The tool will include a tracker that displays progress through 3 stages:

1. Return Received,
2. Refund Approved and
3. Refund Sent.

### Refund Status Results



*Where's My Refund?* will provide an actual personalized refund date as soon as the IRS processes your tax return and approves your refund. So in a change from previous filing seasons, taxpayers won't get an estimated refund date right away. Updates to refund status are made once a day—usually at night.

*Where's My Refund?* includes information for the most recent return filed in the current year and does not include information about amended returns.

## Take these steps to file an accurate tax return and get your refund fast

- Using e-file is the best way to file an accurate tax return, and combining e-file with direct deposit is the fastest way for you to get your refund.
- Take these steps to ensure your tax return is processed as quickly as possible.
  - file electronically
  - submit an accurate, error-free return
  - verify the correct social security number or taxpayer identification number for yourself, your spouse and your dependents
  - verify you have used the correct mailing address
  - use the correct bank account and routing number if you choose direct deposit
- The IRS works hard to issue refunds as quickly as possible, but some tax returns take longer to process than others for many reasons, including when a return:
  - includes errors
  - is incomplete
  - needs further review
  - is impacted by identity theft or fraud
  - includes Form 8379, *Injured Spouse Allocation*, which could take up to 14 weeks to process

## Caution

Don't count on getting your refund by a certain date to make major purchases or pay other financial obligations. Even though the IRS issues most refunds in less than 21 days, it's possible your tax return may require additional review and take longer.

**Reminder** Any claims by Providers concerning faster refunds by virtue of electronic filing must be consistent with the language in official IRS publications. Per the advertising standards in Publication 3112, IRS e-file Application and Participation, and Publication 1345, Handbook for Authorized IRS e-file Providers of Individual Income Tax Returns, providers must not use improper or misleading advertising in relation to IRS e-file, including the time frames for refunds or other financial products.

This reminder serves as the IRS's request to the tax preparation community to follow these messaging guidelines. The IRS will monitor Industry practice during filing season, but anticipates and expects voluntary compliance from its partners in support of this important effort to help taxpayers understand their refund status.