

# 2026 Tax Quick Reference Guide

Key tax information at a glance



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# 2026 Tax Quick Reference Guide

Taxes are an essential part of financial planning — they touch everything from retirement planning to philanthropy and estate planning. Each year, the IRS updates important limits and thresholds throughout the tax code. This guide provides key 2026 tax information at a glance.

## Income taxes

Your income tax bracket depends on two things: your filing status (for example, single or married filing jointly) and your taxable income.

### Taxable income range

Each income tax rate listed below applies only to income within a specific range, not all of your earnings. For example, in 2026, single filers pay 10% tax on their first \$12,400 in taxable income, 12% on any taxable income between \$12,401 and \$50,400, and so on.

**Ordinary income:** any income taxed at ordinary rates, including salary, wages, tips, bonuses, ordinary dividends, and most interest income

2025 Taxable income range				
Tax rate	Single filers	Head of household	Married filing jointly (and surviving spouse)	Married filing separately
0%	Up to total deduction amount	Up to total deduction amount	Up to total deduction amount	Up to total deduction amount
10%	\$0 to \$11,925	\$0 to \$17,000	\$0 to \$23,850	\$0 to \$11,925
12%	\$11,926 to \$48,475	\$17,001 to \$64,850	\$23,851 to \$96,950	\$11,926 to \$48,475
22%	\$48,476 to \$103,350	\$64,851 to \$103,350	\$96,951 to \$206,700	\$48,476 to \$103,350
24%	\$130,351 to \$197,300	\$103,351 to \$197,300	\$206,701 to \$394,600	\$103,351 to \$197,300
32%	\$197,301 to \$250,525	\$197,301 to \$250,500	\$394,601 to \$501,050	\$197,301 to \$250,525
35%	\$250,526 to \$626,350	\$250,501 to \$626,350	\$501,051 to \$751,600	\$250,526 to \$375,800
37%	\$626,351 and above	\$626,351 and above	\$751,601 and above	\$375,801 and above

2026 Taxable income range				
Tax rate	Single filers	Head of household	Married filing jointly (and surviving spouse)	Married filing separately
0%	Up to total deduction amount	Up to total deduction amount	Up to total deduction amount	Up to total deduction amount
10%	\$0 to \$12,400	\$0 to \$17,700	\$0 to \$24,800	\$0 to \$12,400
12%	\$12,401 to \$50,400	\$17,701 to \$67,450	\$24,801 to \$100,800	\$12,401 to \$50,400
22%	\$50,401 to \$105,700	\$67,451 to \$105,700	\$100,801 to \$211,400	\$50,401 to \$105,700
24%	\$105,701 to \$201,775	\$105,701 to \$201,750	\$211,401 to \$403,550	\$105,701 to \$201,775
32%	\$201,776 to \$256,225	\$201,751 to \$256,200	\$403,551 to \$512,450	\$201,776 to \$256,225
35%	\$256,226 to \$640,600	\$256,201 to \$640,600	\$512,451 to \$768,700	\$256,226 to \$384,350
37%	\$640,601 and above	\$640,601 and above	\$768,701 and above	\$384,351 and above

### Investment taxes

The tables below list the tax rates that apply to long-term capital gains — that is, profits on investments you've owned longer than 12 months. They also apply to qualified dividends.

### Long-term capital gains rate — taxable income range

2025 Taxable income range				
Long-term capital gains rate	Single filers	Head of household	Married filing jointly (and surviving spouse)	Married filing separately
0%	\$0 to \$48,350	\$0 to \$64,750	\$0 to \$96,700	\$0 to \$48,350
15%	\$48,351 to \$533,400	\$64,751 to \$566,700	\$96,701 to \$600,050	\$48,351 to \$300,000
20%	\$533,401 and above	\$566,701 and above	\$600,051 and above	\$300,001 and above

2026 Taxable income range				
Long-term capital gains rate	Single filers	Head of household	Married filing jointly (and surviving spouse)	Married filing separately
0%	\$0 to \$49,450	\$0 to \$66,200	\$0 to \$98,900	\$0 to 49,450
15%	\$49,451 to \$545,500	\$66,201 to \$579,600	\$98,901 to \$613,700	\$49,451 to \$306,850
20%	\$545,501 and above	\$579,601 and above	\$613,701 and above	\$306,851 and above

### Income tax deductions and credits

All taxpayers can claim the standard deduction. But some taxpayers can save on taxes by itemizing deductions instead — that is, tallying up their individual deductions and applying those rather than the standard deduction. Many deductions and credits phase out for high earners.

**MAGI (modified adjusted gross income):** your earnings after accounting for certain credits, deductions, and penalties

Standard deduction	Limit	
	2025	2026
<b>Filing status</b>		
Single and married filing separately	\$15,000	\$16,100
Head of household	\$22,500	\$24,150
Married filing jointly (and surviving spouse)	\$30,000	\$32,200
<i>Additional deduction limit</i>		
Blind or over 65 and unmarried*	Add \$2,000	Add \$2,050
Blind or over 65 and married*	Add \$1,600 per person	Add \$1,650 per person
<b>NEW:</b> Temporary bonus deduction for taxpayers over 65*	Add \$6,000 per person	Add \$6,000 per person

\*Taxpayers over 65 can claim both the temporary bonus deduction and the regular over-65 bonus amount (based on marital status) in the same year.

### Other important tax deductions and credits

You don't have to itemize to use the following deductions.

Tax deductions	Description	Limit	Phaseout starts at (MAGI)	
			2025	2026
Student loan interest	Interest paid on qualified student loans	\$2,500	Joint filers: \$170,000 All others: \$85,000	Joint filers: \$175,000 All others: \$85,000
<b>NEW:</b> Car loan interest	Interest paid on qualified vehicle loans	\$10,000	Joint filers: \$200,000 All others: \$100,000	Joint filers: \$200,000 All others: \$100,000
Educator expense deduction*	Qualified expenses for eligible educators	\$300	N/A	N/A
<b>NEW:</b> Tip income	Qualified tips received in eligible occupations	\$25,000	Joint filers: \$300,000 All others: \$150,000	Joint filers: \$300,000 All others: \$150,000
<b>NEW:</b> Overtime pay	Portion of overtime compensation that exceeds regular pay rate	\$12,500	Joint filers: \$300,000 All others: \$150,000	Joint filers: \$300,000 All others: \$150,000

\*For tax year 2026, eligible educators who itemize their deductions can claim an unlimited amount in qualified expenses.

Likewise, you can deduct contributions to a health savings account (HSA) even if you don't itemize.

	Status	Limit	
		2025	2026
Max HSA contribution	Single	\$4,300	\$4,400
	Family	\$8,550	\$8,750
	Catch-up limit: age 55+	\$1,000	\$1,000
Minimum annual deductible for high single deductible health plan (HDHP)	Single	\$1,650	\$1,700
	Family	\$3,300	\$3,400
HDHP max out-of-pocket expenses	Single	\$8,300	\$8,500
	Family	\$16,600	\$17,000

Unlike deductions, which reduce your taxable income, credits directly reduce your tax burden. The tax credits below are phased out for high earners.

Tax credits	Description	Limit	Phaseout starts at (MAGI)
		2025/2026	2025/2026
Child Tax Credit	Offsets childcare costs for children under the age of 17	\$2,000	Joint filers: \$400,000 Single filers: \$200,000
Lifetime Learning Tax Credit*	For qualified tuition and education-related expenses	\$2,000	Joint filers: \$160,000 Single filers: \$80,000
American Opportunity Tax Credit*	For qualified tuition and education-related expenses for the first four years of higher education	\$2,500	Joint filers: \$160,000 Single filers: \$80,000

\*The Lifetime Learning Tax Credit and American Opportunity Tax Credit cannot be claimed in the same year.

### Social Security and Medicare tax (FICA) rates

Social Security and Medicare taxes are payroll taxes that both employers and employees pay. Together, they are known as Federal Insurance Contributions Act (FICA) taxes.

- Social Security taxes apply up to a set income amount
- High earners pay an additional Medicare tax (see Stealth taxes section)

Social Security and Medicare	Limit	
	2025	2026
Social Security taxable wage base	Up to \$176,100	Up to \$184,500
Social Security (OASDI) percentage of taxable wage employers and employees are each responsible for	6.2%	6.2%
Medicare tax percentage of taxable wage employers and employees are each responsible for	1.45%	1.45%

Social Security benefits limits	Limit	
	2025	2026
Maximum earnings for individuals below normal retirement age before Social Security benefits are reduced. One dollar in benefits will be withheld for every two dollars in earnings above the limit.	\$23,400	\$24,480
Maximum benefit depends on the age you retire. Amount displayed is the maximum benefit at full retirement age.	\$4,018	\$4,152

### Stealth taxes

Stealth taxes are extra taxes that are not always obvious to taxpayers. They typically apply to higher earners in specific circumstances — and they can increase your effective tax rate without boosting you into a higher income tax bracket.

#### Net investment income tax (NIIT)

The NIIT applies if your MAGI is above a certain threshold and you have net investment income, including not just capital gains but also interest, dividends, rental income, and other investment income.

The NIIT applies to whichever is less:

- Your net investment income or
- The amount of your MAGI above the NIIT threshold

NIIT MAGI threshold			
Tax rate	Single or head of household	Married filing jointly (or surviving spouse)	Married filing separately
3.8%	\$200,000	\$250,000	\$125,000

For example, say your income lands you in the 35% tax bracket for single filers (\$256,226 to \$640,600 in 2026). If some of your income comes from investments, you'll pay an additional 3.8% on a portion of your income, bringing your top tax rate to 38.8%.

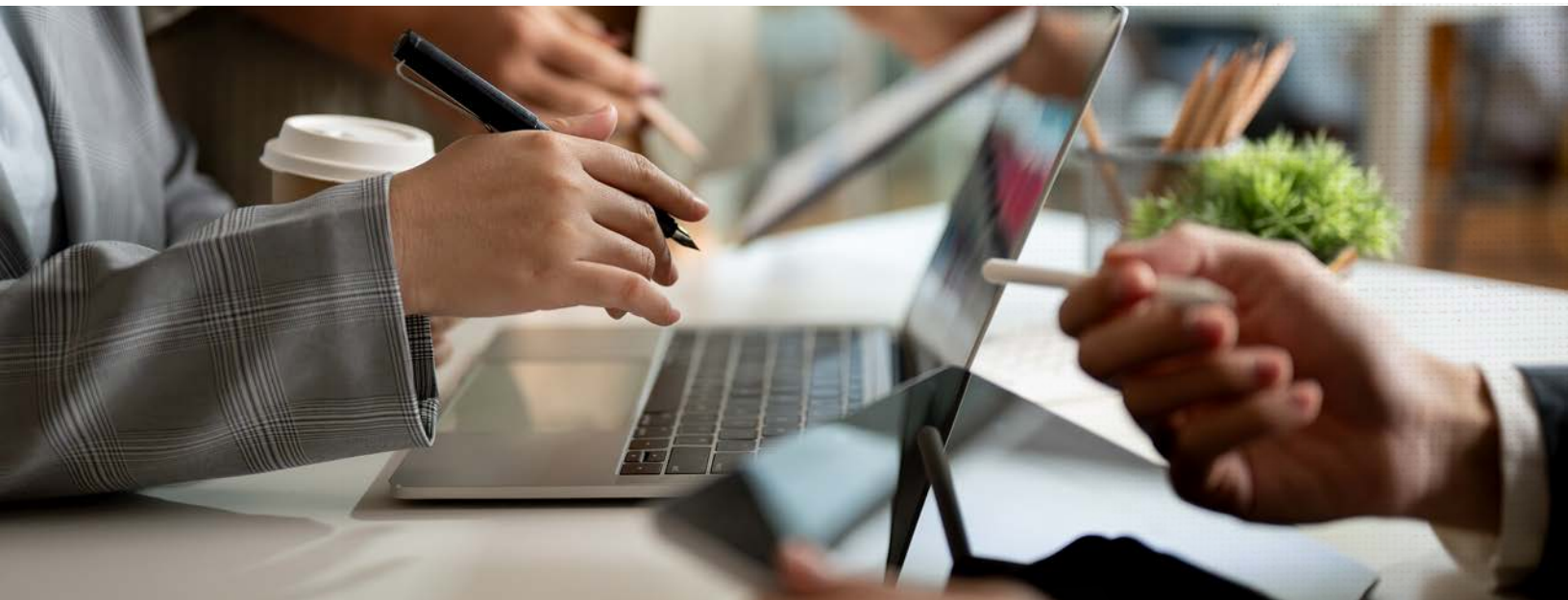
**Income-related monthly adjustment amount (IRMAA)**

The IRMAA is a surcharge on Medicare Part B and D premiums. Whether you pay it depends on your income from two years earlier.

Single filer (2024 MAGI)	Married filing jointly (2024 MAGI)	Part B			Part D
		Premium	Surcharge	Total monthly	Total monthly
\$0 to \$109,000	\$0 to \$218,000	\$202.90	\$0	\$202.90	Premium
\$109,001 to \$137,000	\$218,001 to \$274,000	\$202.90	\$81.20	\$284.10	Premium + \$14.50
\$137,001 to \$171,000	\$274,001 to \$342,000	\$202.90	\$202.90	\$405.80	Premium + \$37.50
\$171,001 to \$205,000	\$342,001 to \$410,000	\$202.90	\$324.60	\$527.50	Premium + \$60.40
\$205,001 to \$499,999	\$410,001 to \$749,999	\$202.90	\$446.30	\$649.20	Premium + \$83.30
\$500,000 and above	\$750,000 and above	\$202.90	\$487.00	\$689.90	Premium + \$91.00

**Additional Medicare tax**

Additional Medicare tax	2025/2026 limit	
	Surtax	Income thresholds
Surtax charged to high earners	0.9%	Single filers: above \$200,000 Joint filers: above \$250,000



## Retirement

You can set aside money for retirement in a variety of tax-advantaged accounts. Which accounts are available to you depends on your situation, the plans offered by your employer, and potentially your income.

### Retirement contribution limits

Every type of tax-advantaged retirement account has annual contribution limits. Whether and how much you're allowed to contribute can depend on your MAGI, and so can the amount you're allowed to deduct.

### Employer-sponsored plans

Plan type		Contribution limit	
		2025	2026
Total limit for defined contribution plans — except 457(b) plans		\$70,000	\$72,000
401(k), Roth 401(k), 403(b), 457(b), SARSEP	Elective deferral limit	\$23,500	\$24,500
	Catch-up limit: age 50 to 59	\$7,500	\$8,000
	<b>NEW catch-up limit:</b> age 60 to 63	\$11,250	<b>\$11,250</b>
	Catch-up limit: age 64 and older	\$7,500	\$8,000
401(k), SARSEP, and 457	Highly compensated employee	\$160,000	\$160,000
Profit-sharing, 401(k), SEP IRA, and money purchase plan	Employee annual compensation limit	\$350,000	\$360,000
Profit-sharing, 401(k), and money purchase plan	Top-heavy plan key employee compensation limit	\$230,000	\$235,000
SIMPLE IRA and SIMPLE 401(k) deferral	Elective deferral limit	\$16,500	\$17,000
	Catch-up limit: age 50 to 59	\$3,500	\$4,000
	<b>NEW catch-up limit:</b> age 60 to 63	\$5,250	<b>\$5,250</b>
	Catch-up limit: age 64 and older	\$3,500	\$4,000
	Maximum employer match (\$1 for \$1 match on the first 3% of employee compensation deferred)	\$16,500	\$17,000
	Maximum employer nonelective contributions (2% of eligible employee compensation up to \$345,000 in 2024 and \$350,000 in 2025)	\$7,000	\$7,200
	Catch-up deferral is also matched by employer if individual is age 50 or older	\$3,500 or \$5,250 based on age	\$4,000 or \$5,250 based on age

Plan type		Contribution limit	
		2025	2026
SEP IRA	Maximum SEP contributions	Lesser of \$70,000 or 25% of wages (20% for owners)	Lesser of \$72,000 or 25% of wages (20% for owners)
	SEP compensation exclusion (minimum annual compensation required)	\$750	\$800
Solo 401(k)	Elective deferral limit	\$23,500	\$24,500
	Catch-up limit: age 50 to 59	\$7,500	\$8,000
	<b>NEW catch-up limit:</b> age 60 to 63	\$11,250	<b>\$11,250</b>
	Catch-up limit: age 64 and older	\$7,500	\$8,000
	Employer nonelective contributions	25% of compensation	25% of compensation
	Maximum aggregate contribution (excluding catch-up)	\$70,000	\$72,000

#### Traditional and Roth IRAs and their MAGI phaseouts

Plan type	Status	MAGI phaseout	
		2025	2026
Traditional IRA* Annual limit: 2025: \$7,000 2026: \$7,500	Single or head of household participating in an employer plan	\$79,000 to \$89,000	\$81,000 to \$91,000
	Married filing jointly with contributing spouse participating in employer plan	\$126,000 to \$146,000	\$129,000 to \$149,000
	Married filing jointly with spouse participating in employer plan	\$236,000 to \$246,000	\$242,000 to \$252,000
	Married filing jointly without access to employer plan	No limit	No limit
	Married filing separately with access to employer plan	\$0 to \$10,000	\$0 to \$10,000
Roth IRA* Annual limit: 2025: \$7,000 2026: \$7,500	Single filer or head of household	\$150,000 to \$165,000	\$153,000 to \$168,000
	Married filing jointly	\$236,000 to \$246,000	\$242,000 to \$252,000
	Married filing separately	\$0 to \$10,000	\$0 to \$10,000
Traditional/Roth IRA catch-up limit	Age 50 and older	\$1,000 additional	\$1,100 additional

\*All IRA contributions combined cannot exceed the annual contribution limit.

## Required minimum distributions (RMDs)

The IRS requires you to begin making withdrawals from most tax-advantaged accounts once you reach 73 years of age. The life expectancy table the IRS applies to you depends on your tax filing status and other characteristics (see below). Calculating RMDs can be complex, so consult your financial advisor.

### Uniform lifetime (IRS table III)

This table is for use by:

- Unmarried account owners
- Married account owners whose spouses are not more than 10 years younger than they are
- Married owners whose spouses are not the sole beneficiaries of their IRAs

Age	Distribution period	Age	Distribution period	Age	Distribution period	Age	Distribution period
72	27.4	87	14.4	102	5.6	117	2.7
73	26.5	88	13.7	103	5.2	118	2.5
74	25.5	89	12.9	104	4.9	119	2.3
75	24.6	90	12.2	105	4.6	120+	2.0
76	23.7	91	11.5	106	4.3		
77	22.9	92	10.8	107	4.1		
78	22.0	93	10.1	108	3.9		
79	21.1	94	9.5	109	3.7		
80	20.2	95	8.9	110	3.5		
81	19.4	96	8.4	111	3.4		
82	18.5	97	7.8	112	3.3		
83	17.7	98	7.3	113	3.1		
84	16.8	99	6.8	114	3.0		
85	16.0	100	6.4	115	2.9		
86	15.2	101	6.0	116	2.8		

Single life expectancy (IRS table I)

This table is for use by certain beneficiaries who have inherited an IRA.

Age	Life expectancy	Age	Life expectancy	Age	Life expectancy	Age	Life expectancy
0	84.6	30	55.3	60	27.1	90	5.7
1	83.7	31	54.4	61	26.2	91	5.3
2	82.8	32	53.4	62	25.4	92	4.9
3	81.8	33	52.5	63	24.5	93	4.6
4	80.8	34	51.5	64	23.7	94	4.3
5	79.8	35	50.5	65	22.9	95	4.0
6	78.8	36	49.6	66	22.0	96	3.7
7	77.9	37	48.6	67	21.2	97	3.4
8	76.9	38	47.7	68	20.4	98	3.2
9	75.9	39	46.7	69	19.6	99	3.0
10	74.9	40	45.7	70	18.8	100	2.8
11	73.9	41	44.8	71	18.0	101	2.6
12	72.9	42	43.8	72	17.2	102	2.5
13	71.9	43	42.9	73	16.4	103	2.3
14	70.9	44	41.9	74	15.6	104	2.2
15	69.9	45	41.0	75	14.8	105	2.1
16	69.0	46	40.0	76	14.1	106	2.1
17	68.0	47	39.0	77	13.3	107	2.1
18	67.0	48	38.1	78	12.6	108	2.0
19	66.0	49	37.1	79	11.9	109	2.0
20	65.0	50	36.2	80	11.2	110	2.0
21	64.1	51	35.3	81	10.5	111	2.0
22	63.1	52	34.3	82	9.9	112	2.0
23	62.1	53	33.4	83	9.3	113	1.9
24	61.1	54	32.5	84	8.7	114	1.9
25	60.2	55	31.6	85	8.1	115	1.8
26	59.2	56	30.6	86	7.6	116	1.8
27	58.2	57	29.8	87	7.1	117	1.6
28	57.3	58	28.9	88	6.6	118	1.4
29	56.3	59	28.0	89	6.1	119	1.1
						120+	1.0

### Qualified charitable distribution rules

IRA owners who are age 70½ and older can make tax-free distributions directly from their IRAs to qualified charities. For those age 73 and older, these distributions can count against annual RMDs.

Distribution type	Annual limit	
	2025	2026
Charitable donation	\$108,000	\$111,000
One-time donation to a charitable remainder trust or charitable gift annuity	\$54,000	\$55,000

### Gift, trust, and estate taxes

Taxpayers looking to pass along assets to others need to consider the various tax rates and limits that apply to gifts, trusts, and estates.

#### Trust and estate tax rates (not individual)

If you receive income from a trust or estate, the tax you pay on it will depend on the amount paid to you.

Federal tax rate	Taxable income range	
	2025	2026
0%	Up to total deduction amount	Up to total deduction amount
10%	\$0 to \$3,150	\$0 to \$3,300
24%	\$3,151 to \$11,450	\$3,301 to \$11,700
35%	\$11,451 to \$15,650	\$11,701 to \$16,000
37%	\$15,651 and above	\$16,001 and above

#### Annual and lifetime gifting limits

As of 2026, tax law lets you give away up to \$15 million tax-free either during your lifetime or through your estate. This amount is called the unified gift and estate tax exemption. Anything more distributed to others is taxable.

That said, gifts under a certain amount each year do not count against your lifetime exemption. That amount is called the annual gift tax exclusion.

	Limit	
	2025	2026
Annual gift tax exclusion without filing a gift tax return	Single: \$19,000 Married filing jointly: \$38,000	Single: \$19,000 Married filing jointly: \$38,000
Annual exclusion for gifts to noncitizen spouses	\$190,000	\$194,000
Unified gift and estate tax exemption (lifetime)	\$13,990,000 per person	\$15,000,000 per person
Maximum estate and gift tax rate	40%	40%