

Express guide to preparing your taxes

It may seem trivial, but gathering all the relevant information before you file your tax return makes a real difference. Getting everything ready ensures that you **take full advantage of the credits and deductions** to which you are entitled, while avoiding any potential problems with the tax authorities.

Simplify your tax preparation and avoid oversights! This checklist sets out the main points to bear in mind as you prepare to file—or have a professional file—your tax return with complete confidence.

Your information

The following information about your situation during the past year will have a significant impact on your eligibility for various programs, credits, deductions or benefits:

- Did your marital status change? If so, when?
- Did you live alone (excluding dependents) for the entire year?
- Did you buy a home?
If you bought an eligible first home, federal and provincial tax credits are available.
- Did you sell your principal residence or change its use (e.g., rental)?
- Did you move?
- Are you covered by a private drug insurance plan?
- Do you have any dependent children?
- Were you a student?
- Does a member of your family have a disability?
- Did you telecommute?



Childcare expenses

If you paid childcare expenses for one or more eligible children under age 16, you can claim a childcare expense deduction by completing federal Form T778. You can also obtain a tax credit by completing provincial Schedule C.

Note: – For the province, childcare expenses do not qualify for a tax credit if the services provided by a childcare centre, a home childcare provider or a daycare centre are subject to the reduced contribution set by the government

Tax forms and other forms

- Employment income (T4/RL-1)
- Employment insurance benefits (T4E/RL-6)
- Quebec Parental Insurance Plan (QPIP) benefit (T4E/RL-6)
- Income from pensions, retirement, annuities or other sources (T4A)
- Income from registered plans (RRSPs, RRIFs, etc.) (T4RSP and T4RIF/RL-2)
- Scholarships (T4A/RL-1)
- Income from investments (ordinary dividends, interest, etc.) (T5/RL-3)
- Income from trusts (T3/RL-16)
- Income from partnerships (T5013/RL-15)
- Securities transactions (e.g., capital gains or losses) (T5008/RL-18 or investment statements)
- Benefits from CNESST, SAAQ or social assistance (T5007/RL-5)
- Tuition certificate for yourself or a child (T2202/RL-8)
- Childcare expense receipts (RL-24)
- Advance payments of tax credits for childcare expenses (RL-19)
- Information about a leased dwelling (RL-31)

Eligible employment expenses

If you use part of your home to perform your professional duties on a regular basis, you can claim a deduction for home office expenses.

Eligible employees must use these forms issued by their employer:

- T2200 - Declaration of Conditions of Employment (federal)
- TP-64.3 - General employment conditions (provincial – Quebec)

Before applying, you can first check whether you meet the eligibility criteria and determine your eligible expenses using the calculators offered by:

- [Canada Revenue Agency \(CRA\)](#)
- [Revenu Québec](#)

Solidarity tax credit

The RL-31 slip, concerning information about a leased dwelling, is used to complete Schedule D for claiming the solidarity tax credit on the provincial income tax return.

Did you know that...

Provincial and federal forms are named differently! The provincial form is usually marked “Relevé” or its abbreviation “RL” (e.g., Relevé 1 or RL-1) or begins with the letters “TP,” while the federal form generally begins with the letter “T” followed by a number (e.g., T4).

Other relevant documents

- Interest paid on eligible student loans (provided by your financial institution)
- Receipts for investment advisory fees or interest paid on investment loans
- Charitable donation receipts
- Receipts for medical expenses paid
- Receipt for professional dues
- Deed of sale for a residence
- Moving expenses (if eligible)
- Tax statements (municipal and school)
- Support agreement for former spouse/common-law partner or for children
- Rental income and expenses

If you are self-employed, a few additional details are required:

- Documentation of all instalments paid throughout the year
- Statement of income and expenses for the year

Good to know

If you are covered by a group health insurance plan, you can provide your insurer’s statement. The latter indicates the portion covered for the services claimed, as well as the amounts personally assumed by you, which can be used for your tax return.

For costs of drugs purchased at the pharmacy, you can ask them to produce an annual statement and upload it to the respective application, if applicable.

Psst! Remember to register for “My Account” with the CRA and Revenu Québec.

Your online accounts let you see the status of your refund, check your credits and benefits, view your maximum RRSP contribution (federal), sign up for direct deposit, receive e-mail notices, and much more. And it's available anytime!



RRSPs, FHSAs and taxes

RRSP and FHSA contributions can reduce your taxable income, since they are deductible and must be reported on your return using statements provided by your financial institution.

The RRSP reduces the tax payable immediately, while the FHSA offers the same advantage, while allowing tax-free withdrawals for the purchase of a first property. In both cases, it is essential to:

- keep official documents;
- enter the amounts correctly in the return;
- understand that non-qualifying withdrawals can increase your tax liability.

Whether you use online tools or the services of a professional, make sure your return is prepared in accordance with current tax rules.

However, it is important to know that the Canada Revenue Agency (CRA) and its Quebec counterpart, Revenu Québec, conduct audits to detect fraud and omissions. Penalties for misrepresentation are substantial, and revisions may occur over a period of up to three years following the filing of the return. However, it is essential to keep your documentation for a minimum of six years.

Happy tax season!

