

Future Developments

Information about any future developments affecting Form 8888 (such as legislation enacted after we release it) will be posted on www.irs.gov/Form8888.

General Instructions

Purpose of Form

Use Form 8888 if:

- You want us to directly deposit your refund (or part of it) to either two or three accounts at a bank or other financial institution (such as a mutual fund, brokerage firm, or credit union) in the United States, or
- You want to use at least part of your refund to buy up to \$5,000 in paper or electronic series I savings bonds.

An account can be a checking, savings, or other account such as:

- An individual retirement arrangement (IRA),
- A health savings account (HSA),
- An Archer MSA,
- A Coverdell education savings account (ESA), or
- A TreasuryDirect® online account.

You can't have your refund deposited into more than one account or buy paper series I savings bonds if you file Form 8379, Injured Spouse Allocation.

Deposit of refund to only one account. If you want your refund deposited to only one account, don't complete this form. Instead, request direct deposit on your tax return.

Account must be in your name. Don't request a deposit of your refund to an account that isn't in your name, such as your tax return preparer's account. Although you may owe your tax return preparer a fee for preparing your return, don't have any part of your refund deposited into the preparer's account to pay the fee.

The number of refunds that can be directly deposited to a single account or prepaid debit card is limited to three a year. After this limit is reached, paper checks will be sent instead. Learn more at www.irs.gov/Individuals/Direct-Deposit-Limits.

Amended return. Don't attach Form 8888 to Form 1040-X. A refund on an amended return can't be directly deposited to an account or used to buy savings bonds.

Why Use Direct Deposit?

- You get your refund faster by direct deposit than you do by check.
- Payment is more secure. There is no check that can get lost or stolen.
- It saves tax dollars because it costs the government less.
- It is more convenient. You don't have to make a trip to the bank to deposit your check.

IRA

You can have your refund (or part of it) directly deposited to a traditional IRA, Roth IRA, or SEP-IRA, but not a SIMPLE IRA. You must establish the IRA at a bank or other eligible financial institution before you request direct deposit. Make sure your direct deposit will be accepted. You must also notify the trustee or custodian of your account of the year to which the deposit is to be applied (unless the trustee or custodian won't accept a deposit for 2020). If you don't, the trustee or custodian can assume the deposit is for the year during which you are filing your return. For example, if you file your 2020 return during 2021 and don't notify the trustee or custodian in advance, the trustee or custodian can assume the deposit to your IRA in 2021 is for 2021. If you designate your deposit to be for 2020, you must verify that the deposit was actually made to the account by the due date of the return (without regard to extensions). If the deposit isn't made by that date, the deposit isn't an IRA contribution for 2020. In that case, you must file an amended 2020 return and reduce any IRA deduction and any retirement savings contributions credit you claimed.



You and your spouse, if filing jointly, each may be able to contribute up to \$6,000 (\$7,000 if age 50 or older at the end of 2020) to a traditional IRA or Roth IRA for 2020. You may owe a penalty if your total contributions exceed these limits, and these limits may be reduced depending on your compensation and income. For more information on IRA contributions, see Pub. 590-A. If the limits on IRA contributions change for 2021, Pub. 590-A will have the new 2021 limits.

TreasuryDirect® Account

You can request a deposit of your refund (or part of it) to a TreasuryDirect® online account to buy U.S. Treasury marketable securities and savings bonds. For more information, go to <http://go.usa.gov/3KvcP>.

U.S. Series I Savings Bonds

You can request that your refund (or part of it) be used to buy up to \$5,000 in series I savings bonds. You can buy them electronically by direct deposit into your TreasuryDirect® account. See instructions under *Part I* for details. Or, if you don't have a TreasuryDirect® account, you can buy paper savings bonds. See the instructions under *Part II* for details.

Specific Instructions

Part I



If you are filing Form 8888 only to buy paper series I savings bonds, skip Part I and go to Part II.



If you file a joint return and complete Form 8888, your spouse may get at least part of the refund.

Lines 1a, 2a, and 3a

Enter the portion of your refund you want directly deposited to each account. Each deposit must be at least \$1.

Your entire deposit may be deposited in one account. If there are any delays in the processing of your return by the IRS, your entire refund will be deposited in the first account listed on Form 8888. Make sure the first account you list on Form 8888 is an account you would want the entire refund deposited in if this happens.

An account can be a checking, savings, or other account such as an IRA, HSA, Archer MSA, ESA, or TreasuryDirect® online account.

Lines 1b, 2b, and 3b

The routing number must be nine digits. The first two digits must be 01 through 12 or 21 through 32. On the sample check below, the routing number is 250250025. Tony and Jennifer Maple would use that routing number unless their financial institution instructed them to use a different routing number for direct deposits.

Sample Check

TONY MAPLE
JENNIFER MAPLE
123 Pear Lane
Anyplace, GA 00000
PAY TO THE
ORDER OF

ROUTING number **Account number**

ANYPLACE BANK
Anyplace, GA 00000

For

1234
15-0000/0000

\$

DOLLARS

Don't include the check number.

| : 250250025 | : 202020''86'' . 1234

Note: The routing and account numbers may be in different places on your check.

Ask your financial institution for the correct routing number to enter if:

- The routing number on a deposit slip is different from the routing number on your checks,
- Your deposit is to a savings account that doesn't allow you to write checks, or
- Your checks state they are payable through a financial institution different from the one at which you have your account.

Lines 1c, 2c, and 3c

Check the appropriate box for the type of account. Don't check more than one box for each line. If your deposit is to an account such as an IRA, HSA, brokerage account, or other similar account, ask your financial institution whether you should check the "Checking" or "Savings" box. You must check the correct box to ensure your deposit is accepted. If your deposit is to a TreasuryDirect® online account, check the "Savings" box.

Lines 1d, 2d, and 3d

The account number can be up to 17 characters (both numbers and letters). Include hyphens but omit spaces and special symbols. Enter the number from left to right and leave any unused boxes blank. On the sample check in these instructions, the account number is 20202086. Don't include the check number.

Reasons Your Direct Deposit Request Will Be Rejected

If any of the following apply, your direct deposit request will be rejected and a check will be sent instead.

- You are asking to have a joint refund deposited to an individual account, and your financial institution(s) won't allow this. The IRS isn't responsible if a financial institution rejects a direct deposit.
- The name on your account doesn't match the name on the refund, and your financial institution(s) won't allow a refund to be deposited unless the name on the refund matches the name on the account.
- Three direct deposits of tax refunds have already been made to the same account or prepaid debit card.
- You haven't given a valid account number.
- You file your 2020 return after November 30, 2021.

If your financial institution rejects one or two but not all of your direct deposit requests, you may get part of your refund as a paper check and part as a direct deposit.

Example. You complete lines 1 and 2 correctly but forget to enter an account number on line 3d. You will get a paper check for any amount shown on line 3a. The parts of your refund shown on lines

1a and 2a will be directly deposited to the accounts you indicated.



The IRS isn't responsible for a lost refund if you enter the wrong account information. Check with your financial institution to get the correct routing and account numbers and to make sure your direct deposit will be accepted.

Changes in Refund Due to Math Errors or Refund Offsets

The rules below explain how your direct deposits may be adjusted.

Math Errors

The following rules apply if your refund is increased or decreased due to a math error.

Refund increased. If you made an error on your return and the amount of your refund is increased, the additional amount will be deposited to the last account listed. If you asked that your refund be split among three accounts, any increase will be deposited to the account on line 3. If you asked that your refund be split among two accounts, any increase will be deposited to the account on line 2.

Example. Your return shows a refund of \$300 and you ask that the refund be split among three accounts with \$100 to each account. Due to an error on the return, your refund is increased to \$350. The additional \$50 will be added to the deposit to the account on line 3.

Refund decreased. If you made an error on your return and the amount of your refund is decreased, the decrease will be taken first from any deposit to an account on line 3, next from the deposit to the account on line 2, and finally from the deposit to the account on line 1.

Example. Your return shows a refund of \$300, and you ask that the refund be split among three accounts with \$100 to each account. Due to an error on your return, your refund is decreased by \$150. You won't receive the \$100 you asked us to deposit to the account on line 3, and the deposit to the account on line 2 will be reduced by \$50.

Note: If you appeal the math error and your appeal is upheld, the resulting refund will be deposited to the account on line 1.

Refund Offset

The following rules apply if your refund is offset (used) to pay past-due federal tax or certain other debts.

Past-due federal tax. If you owe past-due federal tax and your refund is offset by the IRS to pay the tax, the past-due amount will be deducted first from any deposit to an account on line 3, next from the deposit to the account on line 2, and finally from the deposit to the account on line 1.

Other offsets. If you owe other past-due amounts (such as state income tax, child support, spousal support, or certain federal nontax debts, such as student loans) that are subject to offset by the Treasury Department's Bureau of the Fiscal Service, the past-due amounts will be deducted first from the deposit to the account with the lowest routing number. Any remaining amount due will be deducted from the deposit to the account with the next lowest routing number and then from the deposit to the account with the highest routing number.



If the deposit to one or more of your accounts is changed due to a math error or refund offset, and that account is subject to contribution limits, such as an IRA, HSA, Archer MSA, or Coverdell ESA, or the deposit was deducted as a contribution to a tax-favored account on your tax return, you may need to correct your contribution or file an amended return.

Example. You deduct \$1,000 on your 2020 tax return for an IRA contribution. The contribution is to be made from a direct deposit of your 2020 refund. Due to an offset by the Bureau of the Fiscal Service, the direct deposit isn't made to your IRA. You need to correct your contribution by contributing \$1,000 to the IRA from another source by the due date of your return (determined without regard to any extension) or file an amended return without the IRA deduction.

Part II

You may request up to three different savings bond registrations. However, each registration must be a multiple of \$50, and the total of lines 4, 5a, and 6a can't be more than \$5,000 (or your refund amount, whichever is smaller).



You can skip line 4 if you want to buy bonds for someone other than yourself (and your spouse, if filing jointly).

Line 4

Enter the portion of your refund you want to use to buy bonds for yourself (and your spouse, if filing jointly). These bonds will be registered in the name(s) shown on your return.

Lines 5a and 6a

Enter the portion of your refund you want to use to buy bonds for yourself, your spouse, or someone else. This amount must be a multiple of \$50.

Lines 5b and 6b

Enter the owner's name for this bond registration. This can be you, your spouse, or someone else. However, enter only one name. Enter the first name followed by the

last name and place one space in between them. Use the person's given name and don't use nicknames. Use only letters and print clearly. Don't use symbols.

Lines 5c and 6c

If you want to add a co-owner or beneficiary to this registration, enter their name. This can be you, your spouse, **or** someone else. However, enter only one name. Enter the first name followed by the last name and place one space in between them. Use the person's given name and don't use nicknames. Use only letters and print clearly. Don't use special symbols.

If this is a beneficiary designation, also check the box on line 5c or 6c. Otherwise, co-ownership will be assumed.

The bonds will be issued in the names you have requested and mailed to you.

If you have determined that the IRS processed your refund and placed the order for your bonds, you can contact the Treasury Retail Securities site at **844-284-2676** to ask about the status of your bonds.

When your bonds won't be issued. Your bonds won't be issued if any of the following apply.

- The bond request isn't a multiple of \$50.
- Your refund is decreased because of a math error.
- You enter more than one name on line 5b, 5c, 6b, or 6c.
- Your refund is offset for any reason.

Instead, your refund will be sent to you in the form of a check.

Math errors that increase your refund. If you made an error on your return and the amount of your refund is increased, the additional amount will be sent to you in the form of a check. However, if you requested direct deposit in *Part I*, the rules under *Changes in Refund Due to Math Errors or Refund Offsets* will apply.

Part III

Line 7

If any portion of your refund remains after completing Parts I and II, you can request this portion be sent to you in the form of a check. Enter the amount on line 7 that you would like to be sent by check.

Part IV

Line 8

The total on line 8 must equal the total amount of the refund shown on your tax return. It must also equal the total of the amounts on lines 1a, 2a, 3a, 4, 5a, 6a, and 7. If the total on line 8 is different, a check will be sent instead.



Don't file a Form 8888 on which you have crossed out or whited out any numbers or letters. If you do, the IRS will reject your allocation of refund and savings bond purchases, and send you a check instead.