

Watch For IRS Tax-Related Scams

It's not only tax season at the IRS; it's also tax season for scammers. Since tax-related scams are becoming increasingly common and more sophisticated, the IRS has issued these tips to help you spot potential fraud and reduce your exposure to identity theft:



1. **Be wary of any unexpected communications claiming to be from the IRS.** If you receive any tax notices, take them to the person who prepared your income tax return to determine their validity and to create a necessary course of action if the notice is legitimate.
2. **Don't talk to anyone claiming to be from the IRS on the phone.** The agency will not call you on the phone.
3. **The IRS will never send emails to taxpayers.** If you receive an email supposedly from the IRS, forward it to phishing@irs.gov and do not open any attachments.
4. **The IRS will never ask you for your bank account PIN number, passwords, or other similar confidential information such as mother's maiden name for bank accounts or credit card accounts.**
5. **Don't carry your Social Security card** or any documents that include your Social Security number or Individual Taxpayer Identification Number. Keep them stored in a safe place away from the eyes of others.
6. **Don't give a business your Social Security number or ITIN** just because they ask. Give it only when required. If you are self-employed providing services to other businesses, you may be required to provide this information on IRS Form W9 for 1099 purposes. For this reason, it may be prudent to apply for a Federal ID number to further ensure the security of your Social Security number.
7. **Secure personal information** in your home in a safe place.
8. **Check your credit report every 12 months** to make sure there's no unusual activity or illegitimate credit lines.
9. **Protect your personal computers** by using firewalls and anti-spam/virus software, updating security patches, and changing passwords for Internet accounts.
10. **Don't give personal information** over the phone, through the mail, or on the Internet unless you have initiated the contact and are sure of the recipient.
11. **Be careful when you choose a tax preparer.** Most preparers provide excellent service but there are a few who are unscrupulous.

For more on this topic, see the special [identity theft section on IRS.gov](#).