

Title: Difference between (ordinary) split and split dividend

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Although being a smooth brain, I would like to share my view on the difference between (ordinary) share split and a split dividend:

Share split:

The Number of shares is multiplied by X ($=4$) and the nominal value of the shares is divided by X ($=4$) at the same time. No new equity is issued, only the denomination of the share capital is multiplied by X .

Split dividend:

In this case, 3 new shares are issued for each existing share. The equity (=share capital) is therefore increased. The new nominal share capital (par value) of GME is now number of shares after split multiplied by the nominal value (par value) of a GME share (I think \$0.001 per share). So the share capital has increased by 3 times the number of shares before the split multiplied by the nominal value (par value) per share resulting in equity capital increase.

Normally, an equity increase involves raising new capital (from existing and new shareholders). However, GME decided to issue free shares instead. Think of it in two steps: (1) GME pays out 3 times \$0.001 as a (fictional) dividend to each existing shareholder. (2) This fictional dividend is used by each shareholder to subscribe for 3 new GME shares. In accounting terms, \$0.001 of retained earnings is converted to share capital for each new GME share issued. As the equity is increased, brokers (desperately) need new shares and cannot simply multiply the existing shares as in a ordinary split.

For Swiss shareholders for example (for whom dividends are taxable but private capital gains are generally tax-free), the ordinary split is therefore not taxable (since only the denomination is changed, but not the equity), while the split dividend is taxable as an issue of free shares (since in effect substrate, which would be taxable if distributed as a dividend, is converted into share capital, which could later be repaid tax-free).

@all smooth brain, please feel free to chime in and correct me.