

# Family, Home, and Job: Prepare for Your Marriage

## Filing Guide

IRS Publication 501:  
[Exemptions, Standard Deduction, and Filing Requirements](#)

## Tax Savers

Be sure to notify the IRS and Social Security Administration if you plan to change your name. This helps prevent delays in processing a refund from your first joint return.

Congratulations! You've found "the one." As you move forward with wedding plans, don't forget to plan how the nuptials will affect your taxes:

- Marital status is determined as of December 31. If you're married by midnight, you can file jointly for the entire year.
- Be sure to file new W-4s with your employers (or calculate new quarterly withholdings) as soon as possible in the year you plan to marry.
- The 2017 Tax Cuts and Jobs Act essentially eliminates the much-maligned "marriage penalty," except for couples with taxable incomes over \$383,900 (2024). You may owe more together than you would separately if your combined taxable income tops that amount.
- Most married couples fare better filing jointly than separately. If one of you has high itemized deductions relative to your income, it may make sense to file separately. However, filing separately costs you several tax breaks regardless of your income. These include: low-income housing tax credits, American Opportunity and Lifetime Learning credits, the income exclusion for U.S. Savings Bonds used for college costs, Roth IRA conversions, and the rental real estate loss allowance.
- Phase-outs for deductible IRAs and Roth IRAs, child and dependent care credits, college credits, and other deductions and credits change after marriage:

Single vs. Married Phaseouts

