

# Family, Home, and Job: Charitable Gifts of Cash

## Filing Guide

IRS Publication 526:  
[Charitable Gifts](#)

IRS Publication 1771:  
[Charitable Contributions - Substantiation and Disclosure](#)

## Tax Savers

Historically, charitable deductions have been limited to those who itemize. However, beginning in 2021, non-itemizers can deduct up to \$300 (\$600 for joint filers) for charitable gifts of cash, except to private foundations and donor-advised funds. You'll need receipts to qualify for this deduction.

## Tax Savers

You can deduct the following volunteer expenses as charitable gifts on [Schedule A](#):

- Travel, meals, and entertainment related to volunteer and charitable activities (actual expenses or 14 cents per mile, plus parking and tolls)
- Office supplies
- Convention expenses
- Part of organizational dues (the organization can tell you how much)
- Uniforms and work clothes, including laundry and dry-cleaning expenses, for clothing not usable as ordinary street clothing (Girl Scout uniforms, etc.)

## Tax Savers

You can make gifts up to \$100,000 per year directly from your regular IRA, if you are at least 73 years old. These gifts will not increase your AGI, and will count towards your required minimum distributions.

## Tax Savers

You can deduct charitable gifts as a business expense *if* you can show they bear a direct relationship to your business *and* you make them with a reasonable expectation of financial return commensurate with the amount paid.<sup>1</sup>

## Sources

<sup>1</sup>Rev. Rul. 77-124.

## Potential Savings

Up to \$220 in income tax for every \$1,000 in deductible charitable gifts and donations of cash.

Charitable gifts let you do well for yourself while you do well for others. There are several ways to write off charitable gifts depending on what you give and any "strings" you keep attached. Here are the rules for cash gifts:

- You can deduct up to 60% of your AGI for cash gifts to "501(c)(3) organizations" or public charities. These include churches, symphonies and museums, schools and colleges, and traditional charities like the United Way. If your gifts exceed 60% of your AGI in a single year you can carry forward the excess for up to five years.
- You can deduct up to 30% of your AGI for cash gifts to *private* foundations. If gifts exceed 30% of AGI, you can carry forward the excess for up to five years.
- Gifts by check are deductible the year you present the check, even if it isn't cashed until the next year. This makes charitable gifts good candidates for bunching deductions.
- If your gift of \$75 or more entitles you to dinner or a banquet, the organization has to disclose the value of those benefits. You don't need to reduce your deduction for token items such as calendars and tote bags or "intangible religious benefits."
- If you give a single gift of more than \$250, you'll need a written receipt dated no later than the filing date of your return.
- If your donation to a college entitles you to buy athletic tickets, you can deduct 80% of your gift. The right to buy tickets is valued at 20% of the gift, regardless of the amount.

Charitable Gifts	
Amount	Proof
Under \$250	Dated bank record or receipt.
\$250 - \$500	Dated bank record & receipt. Receipt must show value received (dinner, etc.).
\$500 - \$5,000	Dated bank record & receipt. Receipt must show value received (dinner, etc.). Gifts of any single item of property over \$500 require Form 8283.
Over \$5,000	Dated bank record & receipt. Gifts of property worth more than \$5,000 require a written appraisal (except for publicly-traded securities, or non-public stock up to \$10,000).
Payroll Withdrawal	Pay stub, W2, or other document showing total withdrawal, plus pledge card showing name of charity.