

## **How to fill out a W-4**

Employers use the W-4 to calculate certain payroll taxes and remit the taxes to the IRS and state and local authorities (if applicable) on behalf of employees. How you fill out a W-4 can have a major effect on whether you'll get a refund or you'll owe taxes.

### **Step 1: Enter your personal information**

Fill in your name, address, Social Security number and tax filing status. Importantly, your tax filing status is the basis for which you might qualify for certain tax credits and deductions, and they are rules about which ones you can use.

### **Step 2: Account for multiple jobs**

If you have more than one job, or you file jointly and your spouse works, follow the instructions to get more accurate withholding.

For the highest paying job's W-4, fill out steps 2 through 4(b) of the W-4. Leave those steps blank on the W-4s for the other jobs.

If you (or you and your spouse) have a total of two jobs and make roughly the same amount at both, you can instead opt to check box 2(c) to indicate this. The catch: You'll need to do this on both W-4s.

If you don't want to reveal to your employer that you have a second job, or that you get income from other non-job sources, you have a few options:

On line 4(c), you can instruct your employer to withhold an extra amount of tax from your paycheck.

Alternatively, don't factor the extra income into your W-4. Instead of having the tax come directly out of your paycheck, send estimated tax payments to the IRS yourself instead.

### **Step 3: Claim dependents, including children**

If your total income is under \$200,000 (or \$400,000 if filing jointly), you can enter how many kids and dependents you have and multiply them by the credit amount. (See the rules about the child tax credit and for when you can claim a tax dependent.) You can also choose to not claim dependents (even if you have them) if you would like more taxes taken out of your paycheck to reduce your tax bill.

### **Step 4: Refine your withholdings**

If you want extra tax withheld, or expect to claim deductions other than the standard deduction when you do your taxes, you can note that.

### **Step 5: Sign and date your W-4**

Once completed, give the signed form to your employer's human resources or payroll team. You may also be able to fill it out online through your employer's payroll system.