2021 Tax Time Toolkit

Investors

Australian Government
Australian Taxation Office

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The 2021 Tax Time Toolkit for Investors

We encourage you to share this information with your staff, clients, members and networks.

Our investors toolkit is a great resource for anyone earning money from their investments, whether you invest in property or cryptocurrency.

While things look different this year, what hasn't changed is our commitment to provide further support for all investors to lodge their returns accurately. The resources in the toolkit provide information to help investors keep the records they need to prepare their returns now and in the future. Getting your return right avoids costly follow up, and rework down the track.

In addition to our rental property fact sheets we have expanded the topics to include information on:

- cryptocurrency
- pay as you go instalments
- capital gains tax for
  - marriage or relationship breakdowns and real estate transfers
  - inherited property
  - sale of a rental property.

While we provide help and support, we also focus on ensuring the integrity of the system and take actions to ensure all taxpayers are paying their fair share. This means we will continue to review returns where we have indicators the claims are incorrect, or income has been omitted. We will also deal with those who choose to do the wrong thing, which may include application of penalties and prosecution.

Whilst this year has still had its challenges, your tax return doesn't need to be challenging. This toolkit has been designed to help investors and their agents understand their obligations and avoid costly mistakes in their returns. I encourage all investors and their agents to refer to this toolkit as they complete their returns. You can access other products we have available to assist, such as videos and our rental property guide at **ato.gov.au/property**

Adam O'Grady
Assistant Commissioner
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Australian Taxation Office

A helpful directory for tax time

The ATO has a range of information, tools and services available to help Australians prepare and lodge their tax return every year:

- **Tax time essentials** – an overview of the essential information individuals need to know for their tax return this year
- **Dealing with disasters** – specific advice for those affected by natural disasters
- **COVID-19** – specific advice for those affected by COVID-19
- **What's new for individuals** – changes to be aware of before you complete your tax return
- **Do you need to lodge a tax return?** – an easy tool to find out if you need to lodge a tax return this year
- **How to lodge your tax return** – lodge using myTax or a registered tax agent. If you are going to lodge your own return, myTax is the quickest and easiest way to lodge.
- **Rental properties (COVID-19)** – specific advice for rental property owners affected by COVID-19
- **Residential rental properties** – find out what you need to declare and what you can claim for your investment property
- **Deductions you can claim** – it pays to know what you can claim at tax time
- **Occupation and industry specific guides** – guides from specific industries and occupations to help you correctly claim the work-related expenses you are entitled to
- **myDeductions** – a useful way to keep track of records throughout the year to make tax time easier
- **Income you must declare** – find out what income you must declare in your tax return
- **Calculators and tools** – a range of popular calculators and tools to help you work out the answers to questions unique to your tax and super circumstances
- **Correct (amend) your tax return** – fix a mistake or amend your return
- **Online services** – access a range of tax and super services in one place, including lodging your tax return, tracking the progress of your return and making a payment or entering a payment arrangement
- **ATO Community** – ask your tax and super related questions over on the ATO's online community forum
- **Join the discussion online** – keep up to date with the latest tax and super information on the go! Follow the ATO to get tax tips and updates in seconds, share information and stay informed
- **Tax Time Toolkits** – full list of resources

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Rental properties

Interest expenses

If you take out a loan to purchase a rental property, you can claim the interest charged on that loan, or a portion of the interest, as a deduction. However, the property must be rented, or genuinely available for rent, in the income year for which you claim a deduction.

What can you claim?

You can claim the interest charged on the loan you used to:

- purchase a rental property
- purchase a depreciating asset for the rental property (for example to purchase a new air conditioner for the rental property)
- make repairs to the rental property (for example roof repairs due to storm damage)
- finance renovations on the rental property
- you can also claim interest you have pre-paid for up to 12 months in advance.

What you can't claim?

You cannot claim interest:

- for the period you used the property for private purposes, even if it's for a short period of time
- on the portion of the loan you use for private purposes when you originally took out the loan, or if you refinanced
- on a loan you used to buy a new home if you do not use the new home to produce income, even if you use your rental property as security for the loan
- on the portion of the loan you redraw for private purposes, even if you are ahead in your repayments.

If you have a loan you used to purchase a rental property and also for another purpose, such as to buy a car, you cannot repay only the portion of the loan related to the personal purchase. Any repayments of the loan are apportioned across both purposes.

Rental property owners should remember three simple steps when preparing their return:

1. Include all the income you receive
This includes income from short term rental arrangements (eg a holiday home), sharing part of your home, and other rental-related income such as insurance payouts and rental bond money you retain.

2. Get your expenses right

- Eligibility – Claim only for expenses incurred for the period your property was rented or when you were actively trying to rent the property on commercial terms.
- Timing – Some expenses must be claimed over a number of years.
- Apportionment – Apportion your claim where your property was rented out for part of the year or only part of your property was rented out, where you used the property yourself or rented it below market rates. You must also apportion in line with your ownership interest.

3. Keep records to prove it all
You should keep records of both income and expenses relating to your rental property, as well as purchase and sale records.

Example:

Claiming all interest incurred

Kosta and Jenny take out an investment loan for $350,000 to purchase an apartment they hold as joint tenants.

They rent out the property for the whole year from 1 July. They incur interest of $30,000 for the year.

Kosta and Jenny can each make an interest claim of $15,000 on their respective tax returns for the first year of the property.

Example:

Claiming part of the interest incurred

Yoko takes out a loan of $400,000 from which $380,000 is to be used to buy a rental property and $20,000 is to be used to buy a new car. Yoko's property is rented for the whole year from 1 July. Her total interest expense on the $400,000 loan is $35,000.

To work out how much interest she can claim as a tax deduction, Yoko must do the following calculation:

Total interest expenses × (rental property loan ÷ total borrowing) = deductible interest

That is:
$35,000 × ($380,000 ÷ $400,000) = $33,250

Yoko works out she can claim $33,250 as an allowable deduction.

Example:

Interest incurred on a mortgage for a new home

Zac and Lucy take out a $400,000 loan secured against their existing home to purchase a new home.

Rather than sell their existing home they decide to rent it out.

They have a mortgage of $25,000 remaining on their existing home which is added to the $400,000 loan under a loan facility with sub-accounts, that is, the two loans are managed separately but are secured by the one property.

Zac and Lucy can claim an interest deduction against the $25,000 loan for their original home, as it is now rented out.

They cannot claim an interest deduction against the $400,000 loan used to purchase their new home as it is not being used to produce income even though the loan is secured against their rental property.

Example:

Interest incurred on funds redrawn from the loan

Tyler has an investment loan for his rental property with a redraw facility. He is ahead on his repayments by $9,500 which he can redraw.

On the 1 July, Tyler decides to redraw the available amount of $9,500 and buys himself a new TV and a lounge suite.

The outstanding balance of the loan at that time is $365,000 and total interest expense incurred is $19,000.

Tyler can only claim the interest expense on the portion of the loan relating to the rental property.

Total loan balance – redraw amount = rental property loan portion

That is:
$365,000 – $9,500 = $355,500

To work out how much interest he can claim, he does the following calculation.

Total interest expenses x (rental property loan portion ÷ loan balance) = deductible interest

That is:
$19,000 x ($355,500 ÷ $365,000) = $18,505

This is a general summary only

For more information go to **ato.gov.au/rental** · Watch our short videos at **ato.gov.au/rentalvideos**
Download our free Rental properties guide at **ato.gov.au/rentalpropertyguide**
Read our Guide to capital gains at **ato.gov.au/cgtguide**

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