

AS SOMEONE WHO IS WORKING, WHAT ISSUES SHOULD I CONSIDER WHEN REVIEWING MY 2019 TAX RETURN?



FAMILY AND FILING ISSUES	YES	NO
<p>Did you take the standard deduction of \$12,200 (single) or \$24,400 (MFJ) listed on Form 1040, Line 9? If so, consider bunching charitable contributions into one year and/or bunching, accelerating, or prepaying certain expenses (such as medical expenses and property taxes).</p>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<p>Are you married and want to protect yourself against liability issues, have a large disparity between your incomes, have large itemized deductions, or have income-based student loans? If so, consider preparing your tax return as both Married Filing Jointly and Married Filing Separately to compare the net tax liabilities. MFS may generate a smaller tax liability.</p>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<p>Are you recently divorced or has your spouse passed away recently? If so, review your filing status (located at the top of Form 1040).</p>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<p>Do you have dependents (first page of Form 1040)? If so, consider the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ If you have children under age 17, your MAGI is below \$200,000 (single) or \$400,000 (MFJ), you may be able to claim the Child Tax Credit on Form 1040, Line 13. ■ If you paid expenses for the care of a qualifying individual (e.g. a dependent child under age 13) to enable you (and your spouse, if MFJ) to work or actively pursue work, you may qualify for the Child and Dependent Care Credit on Form 1040, Line 13 and Schedule 3, Line 2. 	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<p>Are you (or your dependent children) in college? If so, consider the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ If MAGI is below \$68,000 (single) or \$136,000 (MFJ), check Schedule 3, Line 3 to see if the Lifetime Learning Credit has been claimed. Credit is calculated on Form 8863. ■ If MAGI is below \$90,000 (single) or \$180,000 (MFJ), check Form 1040, Lines 18c to find if the refundable portion of American Opportunity Tax Credit has been claimed. Credit is calculated on Form 8863. (continue on next column) 	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

FAMILY AND FILING ISSUES (CONTINUED)	YES	NO
<p>Was there any AMT (Form 6251)? If so, consider the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Review strategies to reduce AMT, such as minimizing large capital gains or lowering income by maxing out retirement contributions. ■ If you paid a significant amount of AMT in 2018, check Form 8801 to see if you received a credit. 	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<p>Did you owe more tax (Form 1040, Line 23) or did you receive a higher refund (Form 1040, Line 20) than expected? If so, determine if this is due to a unique circumstance (such as the sale of a highly appreciated investment) by comparing taxable income from the last two years' tax returns.</p>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<p>Did you fail to withhold enough taxes (Form 1040, Line 24)? If so, review Form 2210 to see the amount of the penalty. For most taxpayers, you must pay at least 90% of the tax due in the current year, or 100% of the tax due in the prior year, whichever is smaller.</p>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

INVESTMENT INCOME ISSUES	YES	NO
<p>Is any interest being reported (Form 1040, Line 2a and 2b) or are dividends being reported (Form 1040, Line 3a and 3b)? If so, reference Schedule B to understand which accounts are generating the interest and whether the dividends are ordinary or qualified.</p>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<p>Is your earned income (e.g. wages or earnings from self-employment) above \$200,000 (single) or \$250,000 (MFJ)? If so, you may be subject to the Additional Medicare Tax of 0.9% (calculated on Form 8959).</p>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<p>Is your MAGI above \$200,000 (single) or \$250,000 (MFJ), and you have significant Net Investment Income (calculated on Form 8960)? If so, you may be subject to the Net Investment Income Tax of 3.8%. If your MAGI is close to the thresholds, consider reduction strategies to avoid this surtax.</p>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<p>Were there any capital gains (or losses) reported (Form 1040, Line 6)? If so, see Schedule D, Line 13, for Capital Gain Distributions. See Schedule D, Line 6 and Line 14, for short-term and long-term loss carryovers, ensuring that they have been carried over from previous tax returns.</p>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

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QUALIFIED PLAN ISSUES	YES	NO
Are you making contributions to a traditional IRA (Schedule 1, Line 19)? If so, the maximum IRA contribution in 2019 IRA contribution limits are \$6,000 (\$7,000 if you are age 50 or over). Reference "Can I Make a Deductible IRA Contribution" flowchart.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Are you making contributions to a Roth IRA? If so, contributions are not reported on Form 1040, unless you are taking advantage of the Retirement Savings Contribution Credit. The maximum Roth IRA contribution in 2019 is \$6,000 (\$7,000 if you are age 50 or over). Reference the "Can I Contribute to My Roth IRA?" flowchart.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Do you have an inherited IRA? If so, make sure that your RMD has been satisfied and that it has been reported (Form 1040, Lines 4a and 4b) and check to see if you are eligible for the IRD deduction.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Are you making contributions to an HSA (reported on Form 8889 Lines 2 or 9)? If so, consider the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ The maximum HSA contribution in 2019 is \$3,500 for a single plan and \$7,000 for a family. See "Can I Make a Deductible Contribution to my HSA" flowchart to see how much you can save in the HSA. ■ If you contribute to your HSA through payroll, it will be reflected in lower wages reported on Form 1040, Line 1, and your W-2, along with your pay stubs. 	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Did you make a non-deductible traditional IRA contribution (Form 8606)? If so, make sure the cost basis is being tracked properly.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Did you take an early, non-qualifying distribution from an IRA (Form 1040, Line 4b)? If so, the penalty is calculated on Form 5329 and carried over to Schedule 2, Line 6.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Did you take a non-qualified distribution from a 529 account? If so, file Form 5329 to calculate the penalty. The penalty is carried over to Schedule 2, Line 6. Reference "Is The Distribution From My 529 Plan Taxable?" flowchart.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Did you convert amounts from a traditional IRA to a Roth IRA? If so, check Form 8606 to ensure that the amount converted is reported and any non-deductible IRA contributions which were converted are treated as non-taxable. (continue on next column)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

QUALIFIED PLAN ISSUES (CONTINUED)	YES	NO
Did you roll over retirement funds during the tax year from one account to another (e.g., 401(k) to IRA)? If so, ensure that it is treated as a rollover and not a distribution by verifying that Form 1040, Line 4a, shows the amount of the rollover. Form 1040, Line 4b, should be \$0 if no distributions occurred.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

INCOME RELATED ISSUES	YES	NO
Are you a W-2 employee? If so, consider reviewing your W-2 to look for the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ HSA & FSA contributions from both yourself and your employer. ■ Retirement plan contributions and employer matching. 	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Do you have stock options & equity compensation (ISOs, RSUs)? If so, consider the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Review your W-2 and Schedule D to understand your tax on exercising and on eventual sale (if applicable). ■ If you filed an 83(b) election, review your tax return to make sure you attached an 83(b) election form. 	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

OTHER ISSUES	YES	NO
Are there state-specific issues that should be considered? Some states offer tax credits and/or deductions for 529 plan contributions. Review your state's rules to see if you qualify.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Do you own rental real estate? If so, review Schedule E to see what expenses you deducted on the rental property.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Did you make payments on any student loans? If so, check to see if interest has been deducted (Schedule 1, Line 20). Subject to eligibility.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

ABOUT US:



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Founder Ben Smith has been featured in national publications including The New York Times, USA Today, CNBC, Business Insider, Investment News, Financial Planning Magazine, Investor's Business Daily, MarketWatch, NerdWallet and Bustle.

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Ben Smith, CFP®, CSRIC™, Founder & Financial Planner

ben@coveplanning.com | 952-807-4060 | www.coveplanning.com