



# Child Tax Credit

The Child Tax Credit helps families with qualifying children get a tax break. You may be able to claim the credit even if you don't normally file a tax return.

## Who Qualifies

You can claim the Child Tax Credit for each qualifying child who has a Social Security number that is valid for employment in the United States.

To be a qualifying child for the 2023 tax year, your dependent generally must:

- Be under age 17 at the end of the year
- Be your son, daughter, stepchild, eligible foster child, brother, sister, stepbrother, stepsister, half-brother, half-sister, or a descendant of one of these (for example, a grandchild, niece or nephew)
- Provide no more than half of their own financial support during the year
- Have lived with you for more than half the year
- Be properly claimed as your dependent on your tax return
- Not file a joint return with their spouse for the tax year **or** file it only to claim a refund of withheld income tax or estimated tax paid
- Have been a U.S. citizen, U.S. national or U.S. resident alien

You qualify for the full amount of the 2023 Child Tax Credit for each qualifying child if you meet all eligibility factors and your annual income is not more than \$200,000 (\$400,000 if filing a joint return).

Parents and guardians with higher incomes may be eligible to claim a partial credit.

Use our Interactive Tax Assistant to [check if you qualify](#).

<https://www.irs.gov/credits-deductions/individuals/child-tax-credit>

## How much is the credit?

The maximum limit is \$2,000 per child. It is generally non-refundable, so it will reduce tax liability but not provide additional refund money. See Additional Child Tax Credit to learn more about the refundable credit.

# Additional child tax credit

If you qualify for the CTC but can't take full advantage because you don't owe taxes or owe less than your credit amount, you may be able to get a partial refund by claiming the additional child tax credit. To claim the ACTC, all of the above income and dependent criteria must be met, but there are also a few more rules:

- You must either have an earned income of at least \$2,500 or have three or more qualifying dependents (Earned income typically means money from jobs or self-employment. It does not include money from passive sources such as dividends, pensions, welfare or unemployment)
- You or your partner (if married filing jointly) cannot exclude foreign-earned income from your taxes by filing Form 2555 or Form 2555-EZ

The IRS figures your additional child tax credit amount by multiplying your earned income above \$2,500 by 15%. You can claim that number or however much of the CTC credit you were entitled to but couldn't fully use, whichever number is less. But keep in mind that the maximum refund for the 2023 tax year is capped at \$1,600 per qualifying dependent. If you have three or more dependent children, the math can be more complex. See Schedule 8812 for more details.

## Credit for Other Dependents

There is a \$500 credit for other dependents who do not qualify for the child tax credit. The dependent must be

- a U.S. citizen, U.S. national, or resident of the U.S
- have a valid identification number (ATIN, ITIN, or SSN)

The \$500 nonrefundable credit is available for dependents who don't qualify for the child tax credit, such as children who are age 17 and above, dependents with other relationships (such as elderly parents), or children who do not have a valid SSN. Taxpayers cannot claim the credit for themselves (or a spouse if Married Filing Jointly).

<https://www.irs.gov/pub/irs-pdf/p4012.pdf>

<https://www.nerdwallet.com/article/taxes/qualify-child-child-care-tax-credit#>

