

Capital Gains Tax Guide

This playbook provides a detailed guide for calculating and reporting capital gains and losses from investments and real estate. It assists individuals in understanding how to properly document and file these items on their tax returns.

Step 1: **Record Keeping**

Maintain comprehensive records of all investment purchases and sales, as well as real estate acquisitions and disposals. This includes dates of transactions, amounts invested, expenses incurred, and sales proceeds.

Step 2: **Determine Holding Period**

Determine the length of time each investment or real estate property was held. Distinguish between short-term (held for one year or less) and long-term (held for more than one year) holdings, as they are taxed differently.

Step 3: **Calculate Basis**

Calculate the cost basis for each investment or property. This is generally the purchase price plus any associated expenses like commissions or improvements.

Step 4: **Compute Gain/Loss**

Subtract the basis from the sale price of the investment or property to determine the capital gain or loss. Perform this calculation for each investment or property sold.

Step 5: **Apply Adjustments**

Identify and apply any tax code provisions that may affect the capital gains or losses. These can include exclusions, deductions, and special rates.

Step 6: **Fill Out Tax Forms**

Complete the appropriate tax forms, such as Schedule D for capital gains and losses and Form 8949 if required. Transfer the results to your Form 1040.

Step 7: **Review & File**

Carefully review all calculations and the tax return for accuracy. Once satisfied, submit the tax return to the appropriate tax authority.

General Notes

Tax Rates

Capital gains tax rates may vary based on your income level and the holding period of your investments. Ensure you apply the correct rate.

Deadlines

Be aware of the deadlines for submitting tax returns to avoid penalties. For U.S. federal taxes, it is typically April 15 of the year following the tax year in question.

Professional Advice

Consider seeking advice from a tax professional, especially if dealing with significant amounts or complex tax situations.

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