

Tax file numbers

A tax file number (TFN) is a unique number issued to individuals and organisations to help the Tax Office administer tax and other Australian Government systems. It's one of your most important forms of identification in Australia. It's yours for life and keeping it secure is a good defence against [identity theft](#).

While it is not compulsory to quote a TFN without one you may:

- pay more tax than necessary, or
- not be able to get government benefits you are entitled to receive.

A TFN will also help you:

- lodge a tax return
- ask the Tax Office about your tax affairs
- start or change jobs
- limit the amount of tax you pay on interest or dividends earned if you have savings accounts or investments that earn income.

! Your TFN is valuable. Don't share it with friends and don't provide it on the internet when applying for work. Keep it secure.

Applying for a TFN

If you are a permanent migrant or temporary visitor to Australia you can apply for a TFN online after you arrive in Australia if you have a:

- visa that allows work rights
- visa that allows permanent migration
- valid overseas student visa, or
- valid visa to stay in Australia indefinitely.

To apply complete the [Online individual tax file number \(TFN\) registration](#). When applying online, you do not have to physically provide proof of your identity.

! Applying for a TFN using false or other peoples' identity details, or misusing your TFN, can mean heavy fines or jail.

If you need more information about TFNs, you can:

- visit the Tax Office website at www.ato.gov.au or
- phone **13 28 61** between 8.00am and 6.00pm, Monday to Friday.