

Three tips to streamline your tax return

By [Christo Davel](#)

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In South Africa, August brings about chilly weather and a chilling reality - the 2015 tax season. The thought of reporting to SARS sends some people into a spin whilst they try to frantically complete log books and gather slips to document their expenses. Here are a couple of tips to get your financial life in order and tackle your tax return with poise.



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1. **Submit a return, no matter what**

A recent communication from SARS says that individuals that earn less than R350,000 per annum, and fulfil a series of criteria, may not have to file a return in 2015. There are many reasons why you should always file your return with SARS, here are two of them:

- If you don't file a return then you won't be eligible for any kind of tax refund. A refund is money you overpaid on your taxes and it belongs to you.
- If you wish to borrow money from a South African bank (mortgage or loan) you are required to have a Tax Clearance Certificate. This can only be obtained if all of your returns are up to date and filed appropriately.

2. **An IRP5 is not an ITR12**

Your ITR12 is the form that you have to complete and submit to SARS. An IRP5 is one of the documents you need to do this. What you'll also need to complete the ITR12 form are details of what you've spent on and earned from your employer, or your investments. An IRP5 is a summary of all the payslips you got from your employer during the tax year (1 March 2014 - 28 February 2015). It shows how much income you earned and all the deductions you've paid to SARS.

3. **Use a tool that assists in tracking your expenses**

Historically, when it comes to your tax return you procrastinate, then gather all of your invoices, receipts and other records from the year, and manually add it all up. Using a tool like 22seven helps to gather all the information you need within minutes. The tool gives you monthly totals for every category making it simple to see what you spent. If you're calculating your total fuel spend, you can just look for "Transport & Fuel" for each month of the tax year and add those up. This is the same for any other category that's relevant to your return. All the information from your 22seven profile is easily exportable to excel.

The important dates for the 2015 tax season are:

30 September 2015 - Manual/postal submissions
27 November 2015 - At a SARS branch (non-provisional)
27 November 2015 - eFiling (non-provisional)
29 January 2016 - Provisional taxpayers via eFiling

For more information visit the [22seven blog](#).

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Christo Davel is the founder and CEO of 22seven.

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