Stock Sale Tax Worksheet

A practical sale-to-return worksheet for ordinary U.S. taxable stock sales. Use it with your broker records and the final IRS instructions for your filing year.

How to use this worksheet

- Work from the transaction facts first: account, sale, adjusted basis, and holding period.
- Then net short- and long-term results, check the reporting path, and only then review the annual rate layer.
- This is a routing and recordkeeping worksheet, not a complete tax-return calculation.

1. Account and transaction scope

Use this page only after confirming the sale belongs in an ordinary taxable brokerage workflow.

- [ ] Taxable brokerage account
- [ ] Retirement / tax-advantaged wrapper involved
- [ ] A sale or exchange actually occurred
- [ ] Gift, inheritance, QOF, option, or other special case

If a special wrapper or special transaction applies, stop and confirm the special rule before continuing.

2. Sale details

Copy these values from your trade confirmation and broker records. Use trade dates for the ordinary established-market holding-period check.

Stock / ticker

Brokerage firm

Purchase trade date

Sale trade date

Sale proceeds / amount realized

Shares sold

Notes or documents to retrieve

Basis and Holding Period

Resolve these inputs before netting or choosing a tax rate. A weak basis number contaminates every later step.

3. Adjusted basis

Start with the broker-reported basis, then document any reason the tax basis may differ. Do not silently overwrite a broker-reported figure on a tax form; follow the final filing-year adjustment instructions.

Broker-reported basis

Your supportable adjusted basis

Basis difference / adjustment amount

Basis reported to IRS?

☐ Yes ☐ No / unsure

Why might basis differ?

☐ Acquisition costs or fees
☐ Stock split / corporate action
☐ Other
☐ Gift or inheritance
☐ Wash-sale or other adjustment

Basis evidence / correction notes

4. Holding period

For securities traded on an established market, the ordinary federal holding period begins the day after the purchase trade date and runs through the sale trade date. Special rules can override this.

☐ Short-term: held 1 year or less
☐ Long-term: held more than 1 year
☐ Special holding-period rule may apply

Holding-period notes

Checkpoint

- Basis is supportable, and the holding-period classification is either resolved or flagged for a special-rule check.

Annual Netting and Reporting Path

One sale does not determine the final capital-gain amount. Combine the year's capital results before applying the rate layer.

5. Annual capital-gain and loss netting

Enter the relevant annual totals from your records. Keep short-term and long-term results separate before the final netting step.

Other short-term gains

Other short-term losses

Other long-term gains

Other long-term losses

Net short-term result

Net long-term result

Capital losses can offset capital gains through the annual netting rules.
The $3,000 limit ($1,500 if married filing separately) applies to an excess net capital loss deducted against other income after netting - not to losses used to offset capital gains.

6. Broker-to-return reporting path

Use the final Form 8949 and Schedule D instructions for your filing year. The questions below are routing prompts, not a substitute for the full Exception 1 test.

- ☐ Broker basis appears correct
- ☐ A basis correction or other reportable adjustment is needed
- ☐ All current Form 8949 Exception 1 conditions have been verified
- ☐ One or more Exception 1 conditions are not met / not yet verified

Likely reporting route to verify

- ☐ Form 8949 detail / adjustment path
- ☐ Direct Schedule D line 1a / 8a aggregation may apply

Reporting notes / form-year questions

2026 Rate Layer

Only use the annual rate layer after the transaction facts, netting, and reporting path are understood.

7. 2026 long-term capital-gain reference bands

These are taxable-income thresholds used in the 2026 IRS capital-gain worksheet. They are not a flat tax on the total gain; long-term gains stack within taxable income.

Filing status	0% band upper threshold	15% band upper threshold
Single	$49,450	$545,500
Married filing jointly / QSS	$98,900	$613,700
Married filing separately	$49,450	$306,850
Head of household	$66,200	$579,600

Filing status

Estimated taxable income

☐ Net result includes short-term gain - ordinary-income rate layer also matters

☐ Collectibles / unrecaptured section 1250 / other special-rate gain may be involved

NIIT check

The Net Investment Income Tax is 3.8% of the lesser of the applicable net investment income amount or the excess of MAGI over the statutory threshold. Capital gains can be included in net investment income.

☐ NIIT may need to be checked for this return

Final Review and Filing-Year Notes

Use this last page as a clean handoff from your records to the return-preparation step.

8. Final review

Stop at the first item you cannot support and resolve it before treating the worksheet as complete.

- [ ] Taxable account and realized sale confirmed
- [ ] Adjusted basis supported by records
- [ ] Holding period classified
- [ ] Annual short- and long-term netting completed
- [ ] Final filing-year Form 8949 / Schedule D route checked
- [ ] Current-year rate layer and NIIT checked as needed

Questions to resolve before filing

Documents or source records to keep with this worksheet

Scope and source note

Educational worksheet for ordinary U.S. federal stock-sale mechanics. Special basis rules, unusual transactions, state taxes, and filing-year form details can change the result. Verify the final IRS instructions for your filing year or use a qualified tax professional when your facts fall outside this simplified path.

Prepared from IRS Publication 505 (2026), Form 8949 / Schedule D instructions, and IRS NIIT guidance. Updated Aug. 14, 2026.