

IRAS e-Tax Guide

**GST: Guide For Retailers
(Second edition)**



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Table of Contents

	Page
1 Aim	1
2 At a Glance	1
3 Price Display.....	1
4 Invoicing	2
5 Absorbing GST.....	2
6 Discounts.....	2
7 Rounding Adjustments.....	3
8 Consignment Sales.....	3
9 Concessionaire Sales	4
10 Trade-in.....	5
11 Deposits.....	5
12 Returned Goods	5
13 Rebates	6
14 Vouchers Given Away Free	7
15 Vouchers Sold For Consideration	7
16 Third Party Vouchers.....	8
17 Phone Cards	8
18 Stamps, Parking Coupons & Newspapers.....	9
19 Goods Sold Under Hire-purchase.....	9
20 Contact Information	10
21 Updates and Amendments	10
Appendix 1: Information Required On A Tax Invoice.....	11

1 Aim

- 1.1 This e-Tax Guide provides details on the GST treatment applicable to common scenarios encountered by retailers (businesses that sell goods to end consumers) and also addresses frequently asked questions¹.
- 1.2 You should read this guide if you are a GST-registered person in the retail business.

2 At a Glance

- 2.1 GST-registered businesses are required to comply with various requirements, such as price displays and invoicing. They may face specific scenarios where they are concerned about the GST treatment, such as consignment sales, concessionaire sales, vouchers that are sold for consideration and given away free, or hire-purchase arrangements.

3 Price Display

- 3.1 You must show GST-inclusive prices on all your price displays to the public, which include price tags, price lists, brochures, websites, advertisements and quotations (both written and verbal). This is so that the customer can know upfront the final price payable.
- 3.2 From 1 Apr 2015, if you choose to display both GST-inclusive and GST-exclusive prices, the GST-inclusive price must be at least as prominent as the GST-exclusive price. Failure to comply with any of these requirements is an offence that can result in a fine of up to \$5,000.
- 3.3 Where your price is subject to bargaining, the price displayed or quoted must still be inclusive of GST. The GST amount is then calculated using the prevailing tax fraction (i.e. 7/107) multiplied by the final price paid by the customer.

For example:

The price displayed is \$107 for a given product. The product is subsequently sold at \$90 after bargaining.

$$\text{GST} = 7/107 \times \$90 = \$5.89$$

- 3.4 If a separate charge for services (e.g. delivery, installation) is displayed, it must similarly be inclusive of GST.

¹ This e-Tax guide replaces the IRAS's e-Tax guide on "GST: Guide for Retailers" published on 18 Jan 2012.

4 Invoicing

- 4.1 If you sell to end consumers who are mainly not GST-registered, you may issue a serially printed receipt instead of a tax invoice to the customer.
- 4.2 The receipt must show your name, address, GST registration number, date of issue, total amount payable including GST, and the words "Price payable includes GST".
- 4.3 For sales value (including GST) of more than \$1000, you must issue a separate tax invoice if a GST-registered customer so requests. This is to enable the customer to make an input tax claim.
- 4.4 The tax invoice must show the GST amount and include your GST registration number and the customer's name and address. Please refer to Appendix 1 for the information required on a tax invoice.
- 4.5 Where the sales value (including GST) is not more than \$1000, you may issue a simplified tax invoice instead of a tax invoice to the GST-registered customer.
- 4.6 A simplified tax invoice only needs to show your name, address, GST registration number, invoice date, invoice number, description of the goods and services supplied, total amount payable including GST, and the words "Price payable includes GST".

5 Absorbing GST

- 5.1 If you choose to absorb the GST payable by your customer, you have to treat the price paid by the customer as inclusive of GST.
- 5.2 The GST amount is calculated using the prevailing tax fraction (i.e. 7/107) multiplied by the price paid. For example, if a customer pays \$100 for a product, the GST is $7/107 \times \$100 = \6.54 .
- 5.3 Your tax invoice should still show the GST as a separate amount. For receipts and simplified tax invoices, you can show the GST-inclusive prices with the words "Price payable includes GST".

6 Discounts

- 6.1 You may give customers a discount on the purchases from your store during a sales promotion or when customers make purchases with a VIP card. You may also tie up with banks to give an upfront discount when customers make purchases with a particular credit card.
- 6.2 If the discount is wholly borne by you, GST is calculated based on the net discounted price.

For example:

The retail price of a sofa set is \$2,000 (inclusive of GST). Giving a 10% discount would mean the net discounted price is \$1,800 (inclusive of GST).
 $GST = 7/107 \times \$1,800 = \117.76

- 6.3 However, if you are able to subsequently seek reimbursement from the bank for the discount given, GST should be calculated on the gross selling price before discount.

7 Rounding Adjustments

- 7.1 You may round off the GST amount to be shown on a tax invoice or receipt to the nearest whole cent (i.e. two decimal places).
- 7.2 For example, if the GST computed is \$1.144, the amount shown may be rounded down to \$1.14. On the other hand, if the GST computed is \$1.145, the amount shown may be rounded up to \$1.15.
- 7.3 With the discontinuation of the issuing of 1 cent coins, you may round your bills to the nearest 5 cents to facilitate cash payment by your customers. However, whether a bill should be rounded up or rounded down to the nearest 5 cents is a business decision.

8 Consignment Sales

- 8.1 If you sell goods sold on consignment, it means you have agreed to sell the goods without first buying those goods from the owner.
- 8.2 The GST treatment for consignment sales depends on whether the sale is a 'sale or return' or an 'agency' sale.
- 8.3 'Sale or return' sales
- 8.3.1 You are making a 'sale or return' sale when you purchase the goods from their owner at the time when you find a buyer for those goods. This means you are selling the goods to the buyer in your own right because you are first purchasing the goods from the owner and then selling them to the buyer. In this case, you have to charge and account for GST on the full selling price of the goods.
- 8.4 'Agency' sales
- 8.4.1 You are making an 'agency' sale when you sell consigned goods on behalf of the owner of the goods as their agent. In this case, you have to charge and account for GST only on the commission you receive.

8.4.2 If the owner of the goods is registered for GST and is selling the goods in the course of running a business, he has to charge and account for GST on the sale of the goods.

9 Concessionaire Sales

9.1 You may operate concessionaire counters within stores belonging to other retailers or you may allow other retailers or businesses to operate concessionaire counters within your own stores.

9.2 Customers who buy from the concessionaire can usually pay for their purchases at any cash register within the host store.

9.3 The GST treatment for concessionaire sales depends on the contractual arrangement between the host store and the concessionaire.

9.4 Scenario 1

9.4.1 The concessionaire sells the goods to the host store at an agreed price, which is usually at a discount from the retail price. The host store then on-sells the goods to the customer at the retail price.

9.4.2 In this case, there are two supplies:

- (a) The concessionaire's sale of goods to the host store; and
- (b) The host store's sale of goods to the customer.

9.4.3 The concessionaire must charge and account for GST on the sale of goods to the host store, if he is GST-registered. The host store, if he is GST-registered, must charge and account for GST on the sale of goods to the customer.

9.5 Scenario 2

9.5.1 The host store sells the goods to the customer at the same price as the concessionaire has sold them to him. The host store then collect a fee or commission, which is usually a percentage of the concessionaire sales, from the concessionaire.

9.5.2 In this case, there are three supplies:

- (a) The concessionaire's sale of goods to the host store;
- (b) The host store's sale of goods to the customer; and
- (c) The fee/commission collected by the host store from the concessionaire.

9.5.3 The concessionaire must charge and account for GST on the sale of goods to the host store, if he is GST-registered. On the other hand, the host store must charge and account for GST on both the sale of goods to the customer and the fee/commission collected from the concessionaire, if he is GST-registered.

9.6 Scenario 3

9.6.1 The host store provides a licence to the concessionaire to occupy and trade in the store. The concessionaire operates his own cash register at the store.

9.6.2 In this case, there are two supplies:

- (a) The concessionaire's sale of goods to the customer; and
- (b) The licence fee collected by the host store from the concessionaire.

9.6.3 The concessionaire must charge and account for GST on the sale of goods to the customer, if he is GST-registered. The host store, if he is GST-registered, must charge and account for GST on the licence fee collected from the concessionaire.

10 **Trade-in**

10.1 A customer trades in his old equipment for a new equipment. The retail price of the new equipment is \$400. The trade-in value of the old equipment is \$300. The customer pays only \$100.

10.2 In a trade-in situation, there are two supplies:

- (a) Your sale of new equipment at \$400 to the customer; and
- (b) The customer's sale of old equipment at \$300 to you.

10.3 You should charge and account for GST on \$400 for your sale of the new equipment. If the customer is GST-registered, he has to charge you GST on the \$300 trade-in value of the old equipment.

11 **Deposits**

11.1 When a sale is made and a deposit is collected from the customer, you must charge and account for GST on the deposit if the deposit forms part payment for the selling price.

11.2 However, if the deposit acts as a security and is refundable, GST is not chargeable.

12 **Returned Goods**

12.1 When a customer returns some goods which he finds unsatisfactory, it is considered an abortive sale.

12.2 If you have issued a tax invoice earlier, you should issue a credit note and make a refund to the customer. If it was a sale made to a non GST-registered

customer where a receipt was issued, you should cancel the original receipt and make a refund to the customer.

- 12.3 The credit note must make reference to the tax invoice issued earlier and you must retain and keep a record of the cancelled receipt. You can then reduce the value of your standard-rated supplies and output tax accordingly.
- 12.4 When the returned goods are sold subsequently, it is a separate supply. You have to charge and account for GST on the sale.

13 Rebates

- 13.1 You may receive 'money back' in the form of rebates from your suppliers when certain conditions are satisfied. Rebates may also be known as discounts or incentives.
- 13.2 The GST treatment for rebates depends on the circumstances in which the rebate is given.

13.3 Volume rebates

- 13.3.1 You may receive a rebate from your supplier when you achieve certain volume or value of purchases from the supplier within a specified period. In this case, the rebate is equivalent to a discount given for past purchases.
- 13.3.2 If the supplier is GST-registered, he should issue a credit note showing GST to you. You must then reduce your input tax claim based on the credit note received.
- 13.3.3 Alternatively, the supplier may reflect the rebate in the tax invoice for your next purchase by offsetting it against the value of your purchase. In this case, GST should be charged on the net purchase value after deducting the rebate.

13.4 Promotional rebates

- 13.4.1 If you need to meet certain obligations imposed by your supplier (e.g. ensure a certain level of shelf space is dedicated to the supplier's brands or undertake advertising and marketing activities) in order to receive a rebate, you are providing a separate supply of services to your supplier. This is so even if the rebate is calculated based on the volume or value of goods you purchase from the supplier over a period of time.
- 13.4.2 In this case, you have to issue a tax invoice to your supplier and account for GST on the rebate received.

14 Vouchers Given Away Free

- 14.1 You may give away free cash vouchers that entitle the holder to redeem for any goods in your store.
- 14.2 You do not have to account for GST when you give away free vouchers. However, when a customer subsequently presents the free voucher at your store to redeem for goods and does not provide any consideration in addition to the voucher, you have to account for deemed output tax if the goods are worth \$200 or more.
- 14.3 If consideration in addition to the voucher is received from the customer at the time of redemption, you have to account for GST on the consideration received.

For example:

A customer uses a free \$5 cash voucher to redeem for goods worth \$20 (inclusive of GST) and makes payment of \$15 in cash.

GST to be accounted = $7/107 \times \$15 = \0.98

15 Vouchers Sold For Consideration

- 15.1 You may sell gift vouchers that entitle the holder to redeem for any goods in your store up to the value stated on the vouchers. When you must account for GST depends on whether you are able to track the redemption of the vouchers.
- 15.2 Redemption can be tracked
- 15.2.1 Where you are able to track the redemption of the voucher, you do not have to account for GST at the point of sale of the voucher if the voucher is sold at or below the value stated on the voucher.
- 15.2.2 When a customer subsequently presents the voucher at your store to redeem for goods and services, you have to charge and account for GST on the value of the goods and services redeemed, i.e. the value stated on the voucher plus any additional consideration received at the time of redemption.
- 15.2.3 If the voucher is not redeemed and it expires on or after 1 Jan 2010, you have to account for GST on the unredeemed amount when it is recognised in the Income Statement.

15.3 Redemption cannot be tracked

15.3.1 Where you are unable to track the redemption of the voucher sold, you may account for GST at the time when the voucher is sold. The GST charged should be on the actual consideration received from the voucher sale.

15.4 Product vouchers

15.4.1 You may sell product vouchers that entitle the holder to redeem for a specific product (e.g. a kettle worth \$100) from your store. You have to account for GST when payment is received as the consideration received from the voucher sale is treated as a prepayment for the goods and services to be supplied.

15.5 Discount vouchers

15.5.1 You may sell discount vouchers which entitle the holder to enjoy discount on purchases from your store. You have to account for GST on the consideration received from the sale of the voucher.

15.5.2 When a customer subsequently uses the voucher to obtain a discount on the purchase of goods and services, you have to charge and account for GST on the net discounted price of the goods and services supplied.

16 Third Party Vouchers

16.1 You may accept third party vouchers (e.g. vouchers issued by the shopping mall or your supplier) as payment for goods and services and will subsequently seek reimbursement from the issuer.

16.2 When a customer presents a third party voucher at your store to redeem for goods and services, you should charge and account for GST on the value of the goods and services redeemed, i.e. the value stated on the voucher plus any additional consideration received at the time of redemption.

16.3 When you subsequently seek reimbursement from the issuer, you do not have to account for GST again since GST has been accounted for when the goods and services are supplied.

17 Phone Cards

17.1 If you sell prepaid phone cards including top-up phone cards, the GST treatment depends on whether you are buying and selling the phone cards as an agent or a principal.

17.2 Agent

17.2.1 Where you act as an agent in selling the phone card on behalf of the issuer and earn a distribution fee or commission from the phone card sale, you are making a supply of service to the issuer. Therefore, you have to account for GST on the distribution fee or commission earned.

17.3 Principal

17.3.1 Where you act as a principal in buying the phone card and on-selling it at a higher price, you have to account for GST on the margin earned from the purchase and sale of the phone card with effect from 1 Jan 2010.

17.3.2 Since tax is accountable only on the margin earned, you cannot claim any GST incurred on the purchase of the phone card.

18 Stamps, Parking Coupons & Newspapers

18.1 If you are merely acting as an agent and earning a commission from the sales of postage stamps, parking coupons and newspapers, you have to charge and account for GST only on the commission you receive.

19 Goods Sold Under Hire-purchase

19.1 For GST purposes, the sale of goods under a hire-purchase agreement results in two separate supplies – a supply of goods and a supply of credit.

19.2 You have to charge and account for GST on the selling price of the goods. GST is not chargeable on the hire-purchase interest if it is separately disclosed to the hirer.

19.3 When you repossess goods under a hire-purchase agreement, there is no supply for GST purposes. Therefore, no GST is to be charged.

19.4 When you subsequently sell the repossessed goods, the sale is treated as being made by the hirer. Therefore, if the hirer is a GST-registered person, you have to charge and account for GST on the sale on behalf of the hirer². If the hirer is not a GST-registered person, you do not have to charge GST on the sale of the repossessed goods.

² Under regulation 58 of the GST (General) Regulations, when an asset owned by a GST registered person is sold in satisfaction of debt, the person selling the asset is required to collect GST on the selling price and pay the tax directly to IRAS.

20 Contact Information

20.1 For enquiries on this e-Tax guide, please contact:

Goods & Services Tax Division
Inland Revenue Authority of Singapore
55 Newton Road
Singapore 307987

Tel: 1800 356 8633
Fax: (+65) 6351 3553
Email: gst@iras.gov.sg

21 Updates and Amendments

	Date of amendment	Amendments made
1	6 Mar 2015	Revised paragraph 3.2 in line with amended Regulation 77 taking effect on 1 Apr 2015.

Appendix 1: Information Required On A Tax Invoice

TAX INVOICE

The words 'tax invoice'

Supplier's name and address
 Gallery Photo Supplier
 888 Jalan Ang Teng
 Singapore 560009

GST registration number
 GST Reg No: M2-1234567-K

Customer's name
 (Customer's Name)

Customer's address
 (Customer's Address)
 (Customer's Address)
 (Customer's Address)

Invoice date
 Date: 01/07/2007

Invoice number
 Invoice No: F012345

Type of Supply: Cash / Credit Sale

S/No	Description	Qty	Unit Price (\$)	Total (\$)	Discount (\$)	Total (\$)
1	Yashica MG2	10	90	900	45	855.00
2	Pentax Z-1 Body	20	1,000	20,000	1,000	19,000.00
3	Nikon W35	30	200	6,000	300	5,700.00
4	Canon Prima 5	40	220	8,800	440	8,360.00
Total						33,915.00
Add GST @ 7%						2,374.05
Amount Due:						36,289.05

Description of goods and services

Total amount payable excluding GST

Total GST

Total amount payable including GST

GST rate

Thank you. We look forward to being of service to you again.