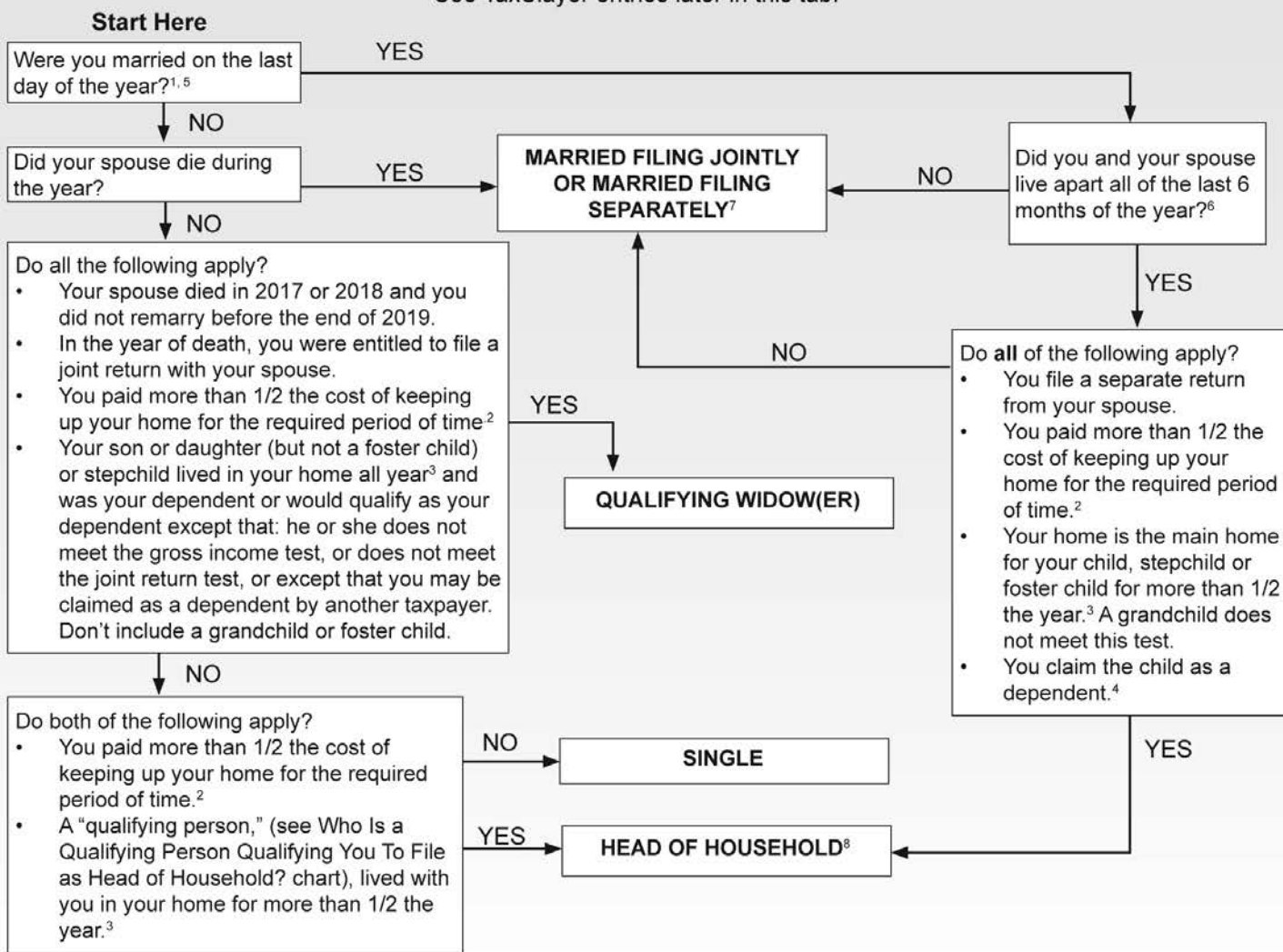


# Determination of Filing Status – Decision Tree

See TaxSlayer entries later in this tab.



## Footnotes

- <sup>1</sup> Answer "NO" to this question if, on the last day of the year, you were legally separated from your spouse under a divorce or separate maintenance decree. Answer "NO" for individuals who have entered into a registered domestic partnership, civil union, or other similar relationship that is not called a marriage under state (or foreign) law. Answer YES if taxpayer is married regardless of where the spouse lives.
- <sup>2</sup> Include in the cost of upkeep expenses such as rent, mortgage interest, real estate taxes, insurance on the home, repairs, utilities and food eaten in the home. Under proposed regulations, a taxpayer may treat a home's fair market rental value as a cost of maintaining a household instead of the sum of payments for mortgage interest, property taxes and insurance. See "Cost of Keeping Up a Home" worksheet later in this tab.
- <sup>3</sup> See Publication 17, Filing Status, for rules applying to birth, death, or temporary absence during the year. There are special rules for claiming your parent as a qualifying person for head of household. See the Who Is a Qualifying Person Qualifying You To File as Head of Household? chart later in this tab)
- <sup>4</sup> Unless the child's other parent claims him or her under rules for children of divorced or separated parents or parents who lived apart.
- <sup>5</sup> You are considered unmarried for head of household purposes if your spouse was a nonresident alien at any time during the year and you do not choose to treat your nonresident spouse as a resident alien. However, your spouse is not a qualifying person for head of household purposes. You must have another qualifying person (see the Who Is a Qualifying Person Qualifying You To File as Head of Household? chart later in this tab) and meet the other tests to be eligible to file as a head of household.
- <sup>6</sup> Your spouse is considered to live in your home even if he or she is temporarily absent due to illness, education, business, vacation, military service, or incarceration.
- <sup>7</sup> If the taxpayer wants to file MFS, emphasize the advantages to Married Filing Jointly and the possibility of filing Form 8379, Injured Spouse Claim & Allocation (if appropriate). See Pub 17, Filing Status, MFS Special Rules for list of disadvantages. Respect a taxpayer's decision to file MFS. If domiciled in a community property state see Pub 555.
- <sup>8</sup> There can be multiple households within a shared living quarters if certain requirements are met.

**Note:** If one spouse dies and the other remarries in the same year, the deceased spouse files Married Filing Separately.