

Quick Guide: Free IFTA + Fuel Cost-per-Mile Tracker

Made for owner-operators who run more than one state and want fuel tax and fuel cost under control without paying for software.

How to use it (5 steps)

1. Open the Excel file (works in Google Sheets too). Type the quarter and your truck number at the top.
2. Every fuel stop, add a row: date, state, miles you drove in that state, gallons and dollars paid. If you drove miles in a state without buying fuel, add a row with miles only.
3. In the yellow tax rate column on the right, enter each state's current per-gallon rate from your base jurisdiction's IFTA rate table. Rates change every quarter, so check before you file.
4. The sheet works out your fleet MPG, each state's taxable gallons, and whether you owe or get a credit. Red in brackets is a credit.
5. Copy the state totals into your IFTA return. Keep your receipts and trip records for at least four years.

How the IFTA math works

IFTA charges fuel tax by the miles you drive in each state, not by where you buy fuel. $\text{Fleet MPG} = \text{total miles} / \text{total gallons}$. $\text{Taxable gallons in a state} = \text{miles in that state} / \text{fleet MPG}$. $\text{Net taxable gallons} = \text{taxable gallons} - \text{gallons you bought there}$. $\text{Tax due} = \text{net taxable gallons} \times \text{that state's rate}$. Buy more fuel than you burn in a state and you get a credit; buy less and you owe.

Your fuel cost per mile

$\text{Total fuel dollars} / \text{total miles}$. Fuel is usually your biggest variable cost, so watching this number each quarter shows you quickly when a lane, a fuel stop or a truck problem is costing you.

Good habits

- Log fuel the same day; memory is the number one cause of wrong returns.
- Keep photos of receipts in one folder per quarter.
- Do the state totals every quarter, not once a year.
- Use the same truck number every time if you run more than one unit.

Need the whole business in one place?

The full Owner-Operator Toolkit adds a cost-per-mile and break-even calculator, a load profit check, a settlement tracker and a quarterly tax set-aside planner. Details and the free calculators: axiombblueprintstore.com/trucking/

This tool is for record keeping. It is not tax, legal or accounting advice. Check current IFTA rules and rates with your base jurisdiction or a tax professional.