

POSSIBILITY,  
PRESTIGE &  
POTENTIAL:



AN INTRO TO THE ACCOUNTING PROFESSION



# WHAT'S AN ACCOUNTANT and what, exactly, DO THEY DO?

- ✓ They're the backbone of the business world
- ✓ They keep finances in check—for everyone
- ✓ They can be generalized or very specialized
- ✓ Their roles and responsibilities can vary widely



# ACCOUNTANT VS. CPA: WHAT'S THE DIFFERENCE?

## CPAs are accountants who:

- ✓ Have met their state's requirements for:
  - higher education, work experience and ethics
  - have passed all four sections of the CPA Exam
  - are licensed by their state's board of accountancy
- ✓ Make 5%-15% higher salaries than their non-CPA counterparts
- ✓ Often get more frequent and higher-level promotions
- ✓ Experience greater job security
- ✓ Garner more respect and trust
- ✓ Have a competitive edge over non-CPAs
- ✓ Are able to start their own firm and be their own boss
- ✓ Can become even more specialized

# Benefits of CPA licensure



## Prestige and respect

Respected and admired by their peers, clients and society, CPAs are often viewed as an elite group of professionals.



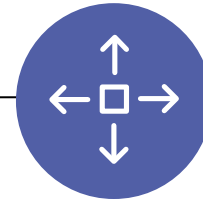
## Competitive edge

Earning a CPA license demonstrates a commitment to the profession and often highlights potential candidates for leadership and management positions.



## Career security

Due to a shortage of experienced accounting professionals in business today, CPAs are in more demand than ever before.



## Job satisfaction and variety

CPAs have a plethora of career paths to choose from, and have above-average flexibility and upward mobility.\*



## Income potential

For new college graduates, a CPA license can mean a difference of 10% between them and their non-licensed peers.

\*Source: U.S. News Career Rankings, Best Business Jobs, [money.usnews.com/careers/best-jobs/accountant](https://money.usnews.com/careers/best-jobs/accountant)

# Eligibility to become a CPA

A candidate is an applicant for a CPA license.

Additional requirements vary by the candidate's



**Education**



**Employer(s)**



**Type of work**

Requirements vary by state/jurisdiction

All state boards of accountancy require **150** semester hours to get licensed.



Many states require the candidate to have **1–2 years experience** under a CPA.

# The world needs skilled accountants.

Here's what they're willing to pay<sup>7</sup> to get them.



Controllers oversee the accounting department, implement controls and internal audits across the entire company, as well as ensure financial plans align with organizational goals.



Internal auditors provide an independent and objective assessment of how their company operates—ensuring employees follow procedures and their organization complies with laws.



Forensic accountants investigate, audit and analyze financial records and accounts for evidence of fraud. They often provide expert testimony, present evidence and relay their conclusions in court.



Senior tax accountants handle tax reporting, keep up with changes in tax law, identify areas for tax savings and advise their accounting firm's clients on the tax implications of their proposed corporate strategies.



CFOs are the head of financial operations for an organization. They are responsible for its strategic direction, risk management and developing and monitoring control systems tied to assets.



Financial analyst managers use current and historical financial data to forecast future revenues, compile complex financial reports and present their analyses and insights to management.

## \$\$\$\$\$ SKY'S THE LIMIT \$\$\$\$\$

### ENTREPRENEUR

As a CPA, you'll be better positioned to own your own business, and be more in control of your earning potential.

<sup>7</sup>Source for all salary ranges: Robert Half, 2021 Accounting & Finance Salary Guide

### ★ ★ ★ WANT TO MAKE EVEN MORE? ★ ★ ★

Add up to 15% to these salaries for accountants with graduate degrees, CPA licenses and other certifications and designations. Also, as your organization's revenue grows, so can your salary.

# WHAT QUALITIES AND SKILLS MAKE A GREAT CPA?



**It's way more than math. Soft skills are important, too. Even more so the further a CPA climbs the corporate ladder.**



## Skills CPAs rely on:

COMMUNICATION

CREATIVE PROBLEM SOLVING

RELATIONSHIP BUILDING

LEADERSHIP

CRITICAL THINKING

PROJECT MANAGEMENT

GOOD JUDGEMENT

BIG-PICTURE THINKING

COLLABORATION

DECISION MAKING





# Ready to start your CPA journey?

Below are a few helpful resources to get you started.



## [ThisWayToCPA.com](https://www.thiswaytopcpa.com)

A site for college students and recent graduates to explore CPA career pathways, state and territory requirements and better understand the exam and licensure process.



## [AICPA.org](https://www.aicpa.org) / [Become a CPA](#) / [CPA Exam](#)

Learn more about what the Exam tests and get access to news and announcements, sample tests, score release dates and general exam FAQs.



## [ThisWayToCPA.com](https://www.thiswaytopcpa.com) / [Join](#)

Sign up for free student membership to be eligible for AICPA Legacy Scholarships, access to industry news and publications, exclusive deals and discounts and more.

