

START HERE,  
GO PLACES.  
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AICPA<sup>®</sup>

# ACCOUNTING CAREERS:

A handy guide to the good,  
the better and the best one for you.



# EVERY BUSINESS NEEDS A CPA. SO, NO MATTER WHAT YOU'RE INTO, THERE'S A CPA FOR THAT.

Once you earn those three letters,  
the possibilities are nearly limitless.

Certified Public Accountants (CPA) come in all shapes, sizes, personalities and proficiencies. But they do all have a few things in common. CPAs are:

**SMART** (after all they passed the CPA Exam)

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**BUSINESS SAVVY** (without them most would fail)

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**MONEY MAKERS** (no slouchy salaries here)

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**HIGHLY RESPECTED** (not everyone has what it takes to be one)

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**IN DEMAND** (money makes the world go 'round)

Once you've earned your degree in accounting and have passed the CPA Exam, doors will open and an exciting career (not to mention a very respectable paycheck) await. Think it may be for you? Take this little quiz-a-roo:

When you think about your dream job, would you like to



**BE IN CHARGE OF MAJOR BUSINESS DEALS?**

(See how on page 14)



**BE PART OF A STARTUP?**

(Fast forward to page 4)



**CARRY A BADGE?**

(Make a beeline to page 11)



**HELP SUPERSTARS MANAGE THEIR WEALTH?**

(Flip to page 5)



**SEE THE WORLD ON THE COMPANY DIME?**

(Scoot over to page 7)



**MAKE A DIFFERENCE?**

(Start now at page 6)

If you circled any of the checks above, being a CPA may be right up your alley. Use this handy guide to check out the variety of jobs that could await you as a CPA.



**SOUND GOOD?  
START HERE**

“ You need to be passionate about what you do, and to feel that you’re having an impact on the world. That’s why I became a CPA.

—Donny Shimamoto,

*Intraprise TechKnowlogies, Hawaii*



## TECHNOLOGY



### Meet the new-school side of accounting.

These days technology rules our lives—and our businesses. Without it, pretty much everything would grind to a halt. Systems have to run smoothly and money has to be well protected. That’s where tech-savvy CPAs come into play. They are so in demand there is even a designation called CITP (Certified Information Technology Professional) that makes you more specialized and known for your superior financial and technological prowess.

## FINANCIAL ANALYST, GLOBAL SOFTWARE COMPANY

You’re responsible for keeping software projects on track and on budget. That analytical brain of yours will help you spot and price the mistakes, too. It’s a pretty cool gig.

**\$94,750 – \$129,750**

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## VP FINANCE, INTERNATIONAL CELLULAR COMPANY

Whether it’s retail sales or investments, you increase profits as much as possible. And your phone addiction won’t be an issue since unlimited data plans are one of the perks.

**\$231,750 – \$375,750**

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## OWNER/CEO, WEBSITE STARTUP

It is all on you. Finding the startup money. Figuring out your business model. Getting things off the ground. Hiring. Firing. Excelling under pressure will take you (and your biz) far.

**\$ Write your own paycheck \$**

## PERSONAL FINANCIAL PLANNER FOR A CELEBRITY

Everyone listens when celebrities talk, but they'll hang off your every word when you're telling them how to spend their money (or not to). Invest in a red-carpet outfit, just in case.

**\$100K+**

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## PAYROLL MANAGER, NATIONAL THEME PARK

It's about more than roller coasters, although that's what keeps people coming back. So, making sure the folks running those adrenaline-pumping rides get paid is of the utmost importance.

**\$58,000 – \$91,500**

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## TAX ACCOUNTANT, VIDEO GAME COMPANY

International gaming notoriety means paying international taxes. Make sure they're done right and you could get asked to help beta test the next big game. Win-win.

**\$92,500 – \$129,250**

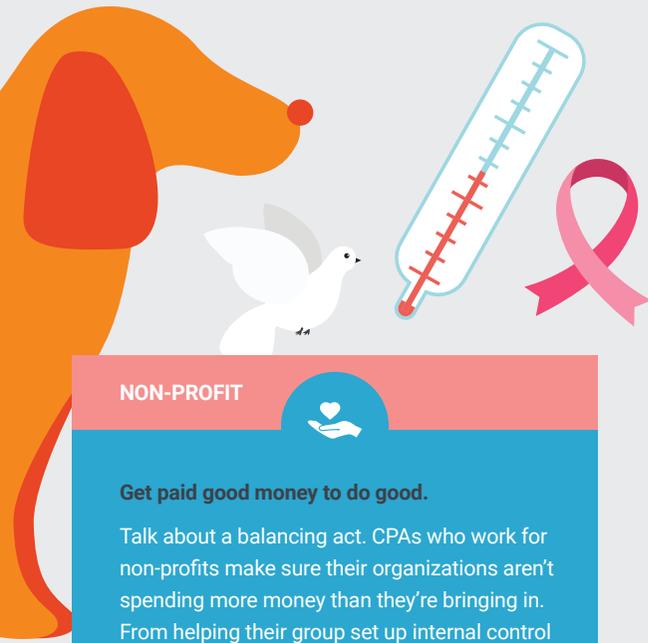


### ENTERTAINMENT



**From Broadway to the big screen,  
CPAs keep the action rolling.**

Everyone knows there is big money in the entertainment industry. And it doesn't just go to the folks with the names and faces we all know and love. CPAs are sprinkled all over the industry doing everything from advising the rich and famous on their financials to negotiating contracts and keeping TV shows and video games on budget. This CPA behind-the-scenes is what keeps the productions profitable.



## NON-PROFIT



### Get paid good money to do good.

Talk about a balancing act. CPAs who work for non-profits make sure their organizations aren't spending more money than they're bringing in. From helping their group set up internal control systems to managing the budget and preparing financial data for the Board of Directors and tax purposes, CPAs do it all. These do-gooder, super accountants allow non-profits to do what they do best: make money for good causes.

## ACCOUNTING MANAGER, CHILDREN'S MUSEUM

Ticket sales, concessions, the gift shop and much more—all revenue and spending has to be tracked and recorded. It won't be child's play, but it will be pretty cool.

**\$67,000 – \$88,750**

## SENIOR ACCOUNTANT, EMERGENCY RESPONSE ORGANIZATION

You keep track of donations coming in and going out to those who need it most—and ensure those donations are doled out properly to make the most of relief missions.

**\$61,250 – \$79,750**

## CONTROLLER, PET SHELTER

Finding homes for four-legged friends is tough work. But without you, taking care of all the financials behind the scenes, it wouldn't even be possible. Purrs and tail wags all around.

**\$79,250 – \$106,000**

## GLOBAL CONTROLLER, CANDY COMPANY

Ah, the sweet, sweet taste of financial success. The many accountants under your management will be scattered across the globe. Want a full passport to prove it?

**\$159,000 – \$224,750**

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## FINANCIAL ANALYST, ONLINE TRAVEL COMPANY

Keeping track of financial trends. Properly pricing promotions. Tweaking things to keep profits from going south for the winter. Hello, frequent flyer miles!

**\$94,750 – \$129,750**

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## DIRECTOR OF FINANCIAL REPORTING, INTERNATIONAL HOTEL CHAIN

You're the boss of financial reports and sharing them with top-tier executives. Your expertise keeps profits sitting pretty. You'll have your bags packed for whenever duty calls.

**\$154,000 – \$217,500**

“

I knew I wanted a job that would allow me to live anywhere in the country.

—Jeffrey DeBolt, Controller, Indiana

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### TRAVEL



**So many places to go. So many audits to do.  
So many CPAs on the next flight.**

Hotels. Airlines. Travel agencies. Rental car companies. Does the mere mention of these make you ready to pack your bags? They hope so, because all of them need help managing their software, sales figures and year-end-budgets. There's plenty of travel and tourism opportunities for you to choose your own adventure as a CPA in the travel industry.



## GOVERNMENT



**Be all that you can be—  
in governmental accounting.**

Checks and balances is the name of this patriotic accounting game. CPAs who work for the government help keep local, state and national government departments honest, making sure these agencies are being fiscally responsible with all that taxpayer money. Financial reporting, auditing, management accounting, advising key decision makers and even investigating financial crimes—it's all done by civil servant CPAs who are responsible for the financial state of the union.

## AUDITOR GENERAL, ANY STATE, USA

Now you look at tourists in a whole new light. After all, they bring money in and leave it behind when they go. You manage it all and keep state spending in check.

**\$86,000 – \$141,000**

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## PAYROLL ACCOUNTANT, U.S. ARMY

You'll be on the frontline of making sure every single "Army of One" across the organization gets paid. Without you who would protect our life, liberty and pursuit of happiness?

**\$53,000 – \$83,000**

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## INTERNAL AUDITOR, DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE

Every major U.S. agency needs a CPA to sniff out suspicious financial information. You'll also ensure proper spending and keep financial records safe. You're welcome, Mr. President.

**\$80,000 – \$106,250**

## DIRECTOR OF ACCOUNTING, RENEWABLE ENERGY COMPANY

You fuel the entire accounting department and keep it running smoothly. Whether it's the profitability of biodiesel or solar panel sales, you're ensconced in our energy future.

**\$99,250 – \$132,250**

## SENIOR ACCOUNTANT, NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

Love the great outdoors? Blaze a financially healthy trail for our nation's wild wonders. Accounting for donations, admission fees and more can save more than trees.

**\$57,500 – \$70,000**

## ENVIRONMENTAL ACCOUNTANT, NATURAL FOODS COMPANY

Gluten-free pizza. All-natural cheese puffs. Free-range eggs. When it comes to hyphenated oxymoron foods, you make sure they're good for business and the planet.

**\$61,250 – \$79,750**



### ENVIRONMENT



**Be green. Save green. Keep everyone happy.**

As global warming increases and ocean water levels continue to rise, it's no wonder environmental accounting is one of the fastest growing areas of accounting. Companies are trying to be more responsible in ways that are good for the planet and profitability. Setting up systems to ensure compliance with regulations and becoming more proactively earth-friendly takes the specialized skill set of an all-natural CPA.



## SPORTS



**From soccer to surfing, it's CPAs who are really calling the shots.**

While it's important for athletes to keep their eye on the ball, sports industry CPAs are responsible for watching much more than that. Representing the financial needs of pro athletes and franchises takes skills in everything from analyzing the financial implications of drafting a new player to pricing box seats and negotiating the best deal for whichever budding star you happen to be financially representing at the time. It's all about the win.

## CEO, SPORTS APPAREL COMPANY

You're like the head coach of an all-star team. You call the financial shots and work closely with your top players to develop marketing plays that will lead everyone to victory.

**\$207,000 – \$306,500**

## STAFF ACCOUNTANT, SURF SHOP

Price merchandise, develop tubular promotions and balance those books like you would on the surfboard to keep financials looking as rad as possible. Wear your sunscreen.

**\$42,750 – \$52,250**

## ACCOUNTING MANAGER, NATIONAL TENNIS ASSOCIATION

Serve up expertise in overseeing a team of accountants, keeping track of revenue and setting aside some of it for tennis education programs. Like tennis? Then you'll love this job.

**\$74,500 – \$97,500**

## FRAUD EXAMINER, POLICE DEPARTMENT

Bust bank robbers, catch criminals and scare the living daylights out of fiscal wrong-doers. Enjoy all the benefits of being a cop, without having to wear the uniform.

**\$68,000 – \$91,750**

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## SPECIAL AGENT, FBI

Help keep our country safe from people committing bank fraud and even international terrorists. Plus, you'll have a pretty sweet badge to go along with this high-prestige gig.

**\$69,300 – \$112,200**

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## FORENSIC ACCOUNTANT, BIG 4 ACCOUNTING FIRM

Work for one of the big guys helping put the bad guys away for good. Solve financial mysteries, uncover shady business and take home a handsome paycheck for doing it.

**\$71,500 – \$111,500**



### CRIMINAL INVESTIGATION



#### **Busting felons while making bank.**

CPAs working on criminal investigations use their accounting expertise and sleuthing skills to catch people committing fraud and other financial crimes. Following the paper trail—and there's always a paper trail—detective CPAs sniff out criminal activity. Some testify in court, while others have been known to go undercover to catch embezzlers, thieves and other unsavory scoundrels. It's a high-stakes job and it's all about justice.

“ When people find out about my accounting background, they always tell me how lucky I am to have the tools I need to make my business successful.

—Shelley Hughes, Owner, Java Roasting Café of Hot Springs, Arkansas

## FOOD & FASHION



### From hot dogs to haute couture. CPAs keep profits smoking.

The food and fashion industries lean on CPAs to ensure they're making the best decisions when it comes to the business side of things. These CPAs answer the big questions to keep businesses in the black. Will outsourcing overseas save us money? Should our next location be in Austin or Atlanta? CPAs are involved with tons of business decisions—everything from what's on the menu to what walks down the runway.

## ACCOUNTING MANAGER, NATIONAL JEWELRY CHAIN

Keep count of everything from inventory to advertising spending. Whether it's coming in or going out, you're the one who's responsible for the business of baubles and bling.

**\$67,000 – \$88,750**

## TREASURER, INTERNATIONAL COFFEE COMPANY

Tall, skinny, half-caf or extra hot, the profit margins on coffee beverages are huge. You handle all the money coming in from 20,000+ stores. Perk: unlimited coffee breaks.

**\$291,100 – \$453,750**

## GLOBAL CONTROLLER, SPORTS DRINK COMPANY

On top of keeping athletes hydrated so they can perform their best, you'll be in charge of making sure your profits do the same. Manage a team of global experts.

**\$159,000 – \$224,750**

## PROFESSOR, LOCAL COLLEGE OR UNIVERSITY

Share your invaluable wisdom on things like general accounting principals, audit and international tax law with the accountants of tomorrow. Plus... summers off. Score!

**\$112,000 – \$182,000**

## STAFF ACCOUNTANT, LOCAL SCHOOL DISTRICT

Help future generations get the best public education possible by keeping track of school finances, staying within budget and making sure all the teachers get paid.

**\$57,750 – \$70,000**

## FUND ACCOUNTANT, UNIVERSITY ENDOWMENT FOUNDATION

Monetary gifts from friends, families, companies and alumni are always flowing in. You keep track of it all and make sure it's always used according to donors' wishes.

**\$61,250 – \$79,750**



### EDUCATION



#### Schooling school systems on their accounting acumen.

Accounting teachers and professors cover everything from financial literacy to ethics in their courses. College deans and department heads oversee students' grasp of these fiduciary concepts. But if teaching doesn't sound like your calling, there are always opportunities behind the scenes in school districts and accounting departments of colleges and universities—think payroll and approving investments in education.

“ You might be surprised, but auditing is enjoyable because it’s not a ‘check-the-box’ type of exercise. You need to be able to think creatively.

—Jeff Dotti, *Partner, Pyne, Waltrip, Decker & McCoy, LLP, California*

## PUBLIC



**Turns out variety is the spice of life for CPAs, too.**

CPAs who work for public firms do all kinds of things for all kinds of companies. They work as an unbiased third party financial advisor to their clients and can either work at their firm or onsite at a client’s office, depending on what they’re doing. The 46,000 accounting firms in the U.S. range from small one-person shops to large international operations. And the accountants who work for them learn every angle of business.

## PRESIDENT, YOUR OWN ACCOUNTING FIRM

The good thing is you don’t have to work for “The Man”. On the flip side, you are “The (Wo)Man.” And as such, it’s all you—big decisions and an even bigger office.

**\$ Write your own paycheck \$**

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## AUDIT MANAGER, REGIONAL ACCOUNTING FIRM

Finally, a job where you get paid to be nosey. And to travel. Hop on a jet to travel to clients’ offices and review their financial information to uncover things that don’t add up. Better you than the IRS.

**\$87,500 – \$121,250**

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## DIRECTOR OF FINANCE, INTERNATIONAL ACCOUNTING FIRM

You’re the one who makes sure your worldwide offices are all operating within budget, no matter what currency they work in. (No pressure or anything).

**\$159,250- \$236,500**



## So, what steps do you need to take to become a CPA and make the big bucks?

First things first: Know that while all CPAs are accountants, not all accountants are CPAs. That's because CPAs are accountants who have gone the extra mile to prove their smarts and savvy to attain the highly-coveted CPA license. The path might seem daunting, but the many rewards—including an average 15% higher salary for starters—are well worth the work.

- Apply, get accepted and begin college
- Get an accounting-related internship
- Graduate with a degree in accounting
- Study for the CPA Exam
- Pass all four sections of said Exam
- Fulfill your state's specific CPA licensure requirements
- Celebrate the victory of officially becoming a CPA
- Enjoy an enviable career, filled with tons of opportunity

## Ready to get started?

Then head over to [StartHereGoPlaces.com](http://StartHereGoPlaces.com), where you can:

- Learn more about how exciting the CPA profession can be
- Discover even more accounting career options
- Build a FutureMe™
- Create a personalized timeline for getting your dream job
- Compare the future career you want with your friends
- Access scholarship opportunities
- Find the college that's right for you
- Get job shadowing information... and much more

It's never too soon to start thinking about your future. And with the many career paths the CPA profession provides, you know—whichever one you choose—you'll be going places.

[STARTHEREGOPLACES.COM](http://STARTHEREGOPLACES.COM)

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