



“IRA, CPA, 1040EZ— that sounds a little like alphabet soup, doesn’t it? Believe it or not, these letters and numbers have a lot of meaning to accountants.”



- **Education needed:** Bachelor’s degree in accounting or related field
- **Salary range:** \$36,700 – \$102,400 annually
- **Related jobs:** Actuary, auditor, budget analyst, revenue agent

Accountant

➤ **What I do every day**

I analyze and maintain financial information for clients and make sure their financial records are prepared and reported accurately. I specialize in preparing individual tax returns. Other accountants advise companies about tax laws, investigate bankruptcies, audit financial statements, examine employer compensation plans, and analyze employee health care benefits. Using software programs, I organize records and financial data easily.

Accountant

➤ The best part of my job

Working with numbers is an activity I enjoy. My clients are grateful when I help them save tax dollars and make good financial decisions.

➤ The worst part of my job

I'm not a people person, so I feel awkward and uncomfortable when clients question my work. I feel defensive when I can't give an answer right away.

Accountant

➤ What I need to know and be able to do

Accountants need an aptitude for numbers so they can interpret facts and figures. They must be detailed, organized, and knowledgeable about tax laws that change each year. Because individuals and large corporations reveal private financial information to them, accountants need a high level of integrity and confidentiality. They also need excellent computer skills.

➤ How I prepared to be an accountant

People considered me the math whiz when I was in high school. My parents even asked me to help prepare their federal income tax forms. After graduating from high school, I enrolled in a 4-year college and earned my bachelor's degree in accounting. I also passed a national examination to become a certified public accountant (CPA).

Accountant

➤ How I could have prepared better

Training in how to build relationships with clients would have been helpful. I need to be able to get beyond the numbers part of my job so I can “read” people better.

► Skill Check 1

You are the accountant for the Hanley Jenkins Company. The company has debts of \$254,987 and a tax bill of \$31,914. Assets total \$456,989. By how much do the assets exceed the funds needed to pay off all financial obligations?

Answer: _____

► Skill Check 2

You review customer records for First Bank. When a customer takes money from an account, the amount is recorded as a debit. When money is added, the amount is recorded as a credit.

Information about Anthony Guerra's account is shown below. Calculate Mr. Guerra's balance for each day. Debits should be subtracted from the balance and credits should be added to the balance.

Anthony Guerra

Date	Debit	Credit	Balance
11/1/20xx			1,324.96
11/2/20xx	135.50		
11/3/20xx	116.56		
11/4/20xx		127.00	
11/5/20xx	36.67		
11/6/20xx		50.00	
11/8/20xx	66.33		

► Skill Check 1

Assets are everything a company owns, including money that is owed to it. Liabilities are what the company owes to others, including loans and taxes owed to the government.

As the accountant for the American Supply Company you must prepare a balance sheet that shows the financial condition of the company. Recreate the balance sheet below on a computerized spreadsheet. Using the Σ (SUM) function, calculate the company's total assets and total liabilities. If you do not have access to a computerized spreadsheet, total the assets and liabilities on the lines in the chart.

American Supply Company Balance Sheet 12/31/20xx	
Assets	
Cash	26,500
Accounts Receivable	78,900
Real Estate	577,600
Inventory	175,800
Total Assets	
Liabilities	
Accounts Payable	56,200
Loans	250,000
Total Liabilities	

► Skill Check 2

As an accountant, you prepare taxes for many of the same customers year after year. Using the spreadsheet program provided with your computer, enter each name in the order shown in the chart on the next page. Create headings for the columns. In Column 1, show the person's last name; in Column 2, show the first name; in Column 3, show the name of the city where the person lives; and in Column 4, show the name of the state where the person lives.

Alphabetize the names A-Z by sorting on the Last Name column. Be sure to highlight all the columns before you sort, so each piece of information in the remaining columns stays with the name it matches.

If you do not have access to a spreadsheet program, alphabetize and enter the names in the chart that follows.

(continued)

► Skill Check 2

(continued)

Sandra Alloway, Mason, IN
Jamie Wilkins, Lebanon, IN
Dyrina Boyer, Wayne, IN
Paul Georges, Bloomfield, IN
Marks Richards, Gary, IN
Candice Davis, Muncie, IN

Shannon Grey, Mason, IN
K. V. Ziegfield, Bloomington, IN
Charles Sheffield, Wayne, IN
Tara Elkins, Gary, IN
Brandon Shoenley, Gary, IN
Jules Gallen, Bloomfield, IN
