**Skills and Abilities**

**Accountants need to be able to:**

***Communicate***

* Listen to others, understand, and ask questions
* Express ideas clearly when speaking or writing
* Read and understand written information

***Reason and problem solve***

* Notice when something is wrong or is likely to go wrong
* Analyze ideas and use logic to determine their strengths and weaknesses
* Combine several pieces of information and draw conclusions
* Use reasoning to discover answers to problems
* Judge the costs and benefits of a possible action
* Make sense of information by studying it
* Develop rules or follow guidelines for arranging items
* Determine how a system should work. Study how changes in conditions affect outcomes
* Identify ways to measure and improve system performance
* Identify problems and review information. Develop, review, and apply solutions
* Concentrate and not be distracted while performing a task

***Use math and science***

* Use math skills to solve problems
* Add, subtract, multiply, and divide quickly and correctly

***Manage oneself, people, time, and things***

* Check how well one is learning or doing something
* Manage the time of self and others
* Decide how to spend money to get the work done and keep track of how the money was used

***Work with people***

* Be aware of others' reactions and change behavior in relation to them
* Use several methods to learn or teach new things
* Persuade others to approach things differently
* Solve problems by bringing others together to discuss differences

***Work with things***

* Analyze needs and requirements when designing products
* Determine the causes of technical problems and find solutions for them

***Perceive and visualize***

* Quickly and accurately compare letters, numbers, objects, pictures, or patterns
* Identify a pattern (a figure, object, word, or sound) that is hidden in distracting material

**Accountants**

**At a Glance:**

* Assemble, analyze, and check the accuracy of financial information
* Typically needs a Bachelor’s Degree, have public accounting experience, and pass the Uniform Certified Public Accounting (CPA) exam
* Earn a starting rate of approximately $60,000 a year

**Overview**

* Accountants and auditors assemble, analyze, and check the accuracy of financial information.
* Accountants and auditors may be known as tax accountants, internal auditors, controllers, or information systems auditors.

Accountants often specialize in one of the four major fields of accounting:

* Public
* Management
* Government
* Internal auditing

**Education**

* 2 to 5 years of education after High School
* Two-year programs prepare you for bookkeeper jobs
* Bachelor's Degree in accounting prepares you for entry-level accounting or auditing jobs

**Outlook & Growth**

Between 2012 and 2022, it is estimated that there will be 651 openings annually due to new positions and 992 openings annually from workers leaving this occupation.

The outlook depends on expansion of business, stability of the economy, and greater use of accounting services by public and private enterprises. Managers are relying more on accounting information to make business decisions, especially with changing tax laws. Many accountants are becoming advisors to management or consultants for clients.

Growth in this occupation is closely tied with growth in the economy. Stricter laws and regulations as a result of the financial crisis in 2008 has increased demand for accountants as organizations try to comply with new laws.