

WHAT DOES A CAREER IN BOOKKEEPING, AND ACCOUNTING LOOK LIKE?

The career map presented here is based on the typical experiences of actual people. The information comes from real online work histories of people who started off as accounting clerks and bookkeepers in the New York City metropolitan area.

There are two clear paths. Most people remain accounting clerks and bookkeepers or become supervisors. Over time and with greater experience, they earn more in these positions. Some eventually become office managers or business managers.

On the second path, about a quarter of those who were accounting clerks and bookkeepers complete their bachelor's degrees and become professional accountants or financial managers. The earnings for this second group are significantly higher. They may move into different branches of accounting. They may go into a specialty area related to accounting.

0 TO 5 YEARS

BOOKKEEPING, ACCOUNTING, AND AUDITING CLERKS		\$38,000
+ BOOKKEEPER		
+ ACCOUNTING CLERK		

THESE ARE THE MOST COMMON JOBS.

ACCOUNTING CLERKS carry out various tasks. Their job titles often describe the work they do, such as:

- Accounts Payable Clerks make sure their companies pay their bills. These jobs are mostly entry-level and involve posting details of transactions, adding up accounts, determining interest charges, and processing payments.
- Payroll Clerks make sure employees get paid. They enter data, like employees' hours worked, and they evaluate timesheets for correctness.
- Accounts Receivable Clerks make sure their companies get paid. This job involves a higher degree of responsibility and trust, since a company must get paid in order to stay in business.

With more experience and education, accounting clerks can advance into supervisory, and eventually, managerial roles. Accounting clerks typically work for larger companies, like banks or health care systems. They may also work for payroll companies or accounting firms. Employers prefer candidates with prior experience, but a certificate in accounting or bookkeeping helps.

BOOKKEEPERS have a broader set of skills. They are often responsible for some or all of an organization's accounts, known as the general ledger. They record all transactions and post revenues and expenses. Bookkeepers prepare bank

deposits by compiling data from cashiers, verifying receipts, and sending cash, checks, or other forms of payment to the bank. They may handle payroll, make purchases, prepare invoices, and keep track of overdue accounts. They prepare

financial records for accountants to review. They may work part-time for one or several small businesses. For this type of job, it helps to have some college-level courses in accounting.

ACCOUNTANTS organize, maintain, and examine a company's financial records. Private (or corporate) accountants work directly for a company. They provide a range of accounting, auditing, tax, and consulting services. They oversee the work of accounting clerks. They make sure taxes are paid properly and on time. They work with bookkeepers

employed by their clients. Some accountants work as auditors. They make sure financial records are accurate and comply with laws and accounting principles. A bachelor's degree in accounting is required to work for an individual company or a public accounting firm. A Certified Public Accountant (CPA) license is often preferred.

5 TO 10 YEARS LATER

10 TO 15 YEARS LATER

