



# Salary Trends for Accountants

What is the average starting salary for accountants...and their potential for earnings as experience is gained? The information below was taken from the **Robert Half 2009 Salary Guide: Accounting & Finance**. This information is based on thousands of job searches conducted through the US offices of Robert Half International. The salary ranges are based on actual starting compensation for 2008 and an extrapolation of current data into 2009. These ranges may vary according to geographic area, type of industry, company size, local economy, employee benefits offered, and the education and experience of the job candidate.

## Public Accounting

### Audit / Assurance Services

Position	Small Firms	Medium Firms	Large Firms
(0-1 year)	41,000 – 49,000	42,500 – 53,000	49,000 – 59,250
(1-3 years)	46,000 – 56,000	50,500 – 62,250	55,500 – 69,250
Senior	53,750 – 69,750	59,250 – 78,750	66,250 – 85,500
Manager	69,000 – 86,250	76,750 – 98,000	82,750 – 111,750
Sr. Mgr./Director	83,750 – 110,750	91,750 – 135,250	102,000 - 159,500

### Tax Services

Position	Small Firms	Medium Firms	Large Firms
(0-1 year)	41,000 – 49,000	42,750 – 52,750	48,750 – 59,500
(1-3 years)	45,750 – 56,000	50,000 – 62,500	55,500 – 69,250
Senior	54,000 – 69,250	59,500 – 78,500	66,750 – 86,000
Manager	68,500 – 86,250	76,500 – 98,500	82,500 – 111,750
Sr. Manager/Director	83,250 – 111,250	91,250 – 135,750	101,750 - 159,250

### Management Services

Position	Small Firms	Medium Firms	Large Firms
(0-1 year)	41,500 – 49,000	43,000 – 53,000	102,250 – 159,250
(1-3 years)	46,000 – 55,750	50,250 – 62,000	82,750 – 111,500
Senior	54,250 – 69,000	59,500 – 79,750	66,250 – 86,750
Manager	69,000 – 86,000	76,500 – 98,500	80,000 – 106,250
Sr. Manager/Director	83,000 – 111,250	91,000 – 135,500	98,750 - 151,500

# Corporate Accounting

## Information Technology Auditor

Position	Small Company	Medium Company	Large Company
(0-1 year)		46,750 – 58,250	49,750 – 63,000
(1-3 years)		56,500 – 71,750	59,750 – 78,250
Senior		71,250 – 89,250	79,750 – 102,750
Manager		85,750 – 112,250	92,250 – 127,000

## Internal Auditors

Position	Small Company	Medium Company	Large Company
(0-1 year)		41,500 – 51,500	43,250 – 52,750
(1-3 years)		48,500 – 62,250	51,500 – 67,500
Senior		61,000 – 77,250	67,500 – 87,250
Manager		73,750 – 95,750	84,250 – 114,750

## Cost Accountants

Position	Small Company	Medium Company	Large Company
(0-1 year)		38,000 – 45,250	39,500 – 47,750
(1-3 years)		42,500 – 54,250	45,750 – 58,000
Senior		53,000 – 66,750	58,750 – 74,750
Manager		63,750 – 82,250	72,250 – 95,500

## Tax Accountants

Position	Small Company	Medium Company	Large Company
(0-1 year)		38,500 – 45,750	39,500 – 48,250
(1-3 years)		43,750 – 55,000	45,750 – 60,000
Senior		51,000 – 69,750	61,000 – 77,500
Manager		65,000 – 86,250	76,500 – 100,750

## Operational Support

Position	Small Company	Medium Company	Large Company
Accounting Clerk	27,250 – 36,000	27,250 – 36,000	27,250 – 36,000
Payroll Clerk	27,750 – 34,750	29,750 – 38,250	30,500 – 39,000
AR/AP Clerk	27,250 – 35,500	29,250 – 38,000	29,750 – 39,250
Bookkeeper	31,750 – 40,750	31,750 – 40,750	31,750 – 40,750
Collections Clerk	28,000 – 35,500	29,250 – 37,500	31,750 – 41,000
Assist Credit Manager	36,000 – 45,000	40,250 – 52,500	49,000 – 66,250
AR/AP Manager	37,250 – 48,250	42,500 – 55,750	47,000 – 67,750
Payroll Manager	37,250 – 47,500	40,000 – 50,750	50,500 – 74,000
Credit Manager	42,250 – 56,500	50,250 – 67,500	62,750 – 88,000

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## Advanced Careers

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Position	Small Company	Medium Company	Large Company
Director of Finance	84,500 – 123,000	101,250 – 136,250	118,500 – 166,750
Controller	66,000 – 101,500	91,750 – 120,500	108,000 – 167,750
Director of Accounting	73,750 – 110,250	96,000 – 125,250	115,000 – 176,000
Chief Compliance Officer	97,000 – 125,250	119,500 – 157,500	143,250 – 195,500
Tax Director	-	97,000 – 143,750	133,250 – 221,250
Internal Audit Director	96,000 – 129,500	115,500 – 162,000	145,250 – 221,500
Vice President of Finance	84,750 – 141,000	130,250 – 177,500	169,500 – 320,000
Chief Financial Officer	94,250 – 143,500	125,750 – 175,750	183,250 – 384,000

*Small companies/ firms = up to 25 million plus in sales;  
 Medium companies/ firms = 25 to 250 million in sales;  
 Large companies/ firms = 250 million plus in sales.*

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## Regional Differences

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**In the South Atlantic region** (Delaware, District of Columbia, Florida, Georgia, Maryland, North Carolina, South Carolina, Virginia, West Virginia), salaries for accountants are typically higher than the US average. In larger cities such as Miami, the salary range is currently averaging up to 13% higher and in Orlando, 1.5% higher. Keep in mind that the smaller cities and rural areas typically fall below the US average.

***Fastest-Growing Industries – S. Atlantic***

- Healthcare
- Government
- Financial services

***Positions in Demand - South Atlantic***

- Financial Analyst
- Staff Accountant
- Senior Accountant

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## Getting the Job

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**Advanced education and certification** continue to be highly valued by employers. The Certified Public Accountant (CPA) designation remains the most frequently sought professional accreditation for accounting or finance positions. Other highly marketable credentials include the chartered financial analyst (CFA), certified internal auditor (CIA) and certified information systems auditor (CISA) designations. Job seekers who have earned a master's degree in business administration (MBA) also have an edge in obtaining senior positions and increasing their overall earnings potential by 10 percent.

**Technology expertise** is in strong demand as well. Advance knowledge of Microsoft Excel and Access is a common requirement. In particular, companies seek candidates

who are proficient with the general ledger, accounts payable and accounts receivable, and payroll modules of popular software packages. Experience with financial planning and reporting applications such as Hyperion and Crystal Reports is desirable.

**Soft skills**, such as communication and leadership abilities, remain a critically important hiring consideration. To ensure they bring in individuals who are a good fit with the work environment and position, some employers are screening candidates with personality tests before extending an offer.

In a Robert Half survey, more than 1400 CFO's were asked this question, "**Would you be willing to hire someone with fewer technical skills if the candidate had stronger soft skills, such as communication and interpersonal abilities?**" Their responses were:

- 53% - Yes
- 39% - No
- 8% - Don't know

**Most valuable experience/education attributes for entry-level candidates:**

*(source: Robert Half survey of 1,400 CFOs)*

- 50% - Internship experience
- 24% - Referral from trusted contact or employee
- 8% - College or university attended
- 5% - Grade point average
- 1% - Work experience / previous experience
- 10% - Other / don't know



Source: *2009 Salary Guide: Accounting & Finance* from Robert Half International ©

Compiled by: Florida Institute of Certified Public Accountants, 2009.