

CPA Pathway Decision Guide

Which Route Fits You?

All paths lead to the CPA license—what matters is choosing the one that fits your goals, learning style, and career timeline.

Ask Yourself...

If yes...

Consider this pathway

Do you want to specialize in a specific area like tax, audit, or analytics?



While specialized knowledge can be gained in a number of ways, a master's degree or additional courses help you hone that focus before entering the workforce.



**Master's + 1 Path
or
Bachelor's + 30 hrs + 1 Path**

Would additional exposure to communications, data analytics, or business skills boost your confidence before you begin your job search?



Coursework focused on skills/competencies valued by employers can set you apart and prepare you for your career.



**Master's + 1 Path
or
Bachelor's + 30 hrs + 1 Path**

Are you interested in seeing the country and moving a few times before putting down roots?



Having 150 credit hours gives your CPA license the most national flexibility. As more states adopt the bachelor's path, more flexibility will exist under that route.



**Master's + 1 Path
or
Bachelor's + 30 hrs + 1 Path**

Did you change your major and now you need to complete some accounting and business courses?



Getting your bachelor's may take more than 120 credit hours.



Bachelor's + 30 hrs + 1 Path

Ask Yourself...

If yes...

Consider this pathway

Are you a transfer student, or a double major that will be close to 150 credit hours when you finish your bachelor's degree?



If you are already going to be close to 150 credit hours, additional courses to boost your career readiness while reaching the 150-credit hour threshold may be the best route.



Bachelor's + 30 hrs + 1 Path

Would you prefer to gain professional experience right after earning your bachelor's?



On-the-job learning might suit you best.



Bachelor's + 2 Path (New)

Is minimizing education costs a high priority for you?



Getting into the workforce early and gaining extra experience might be your best path.



Bachelor's + 2 Path (New)

Have you completed an internship during your undergraduate studies and feel you are ready to enter the workforce?



Consider transitioning from classwork to career now and gaining skills through the required two years of supervised work experience for licensure.



Bachelor's + 2 Path (New)

Is entering the workforce as soon as possible important to you?



Completing your bachelor's with an accounting concentration and then getting two years of supervised experience could put you on the path to licensure.



Bachelor's + 2 Path (New)

Already have your eyes set on your dream employer? Know where you want your first job?



Ask your future employer if they have a preferred or required pathway to licensure.



TBD based on your future employer's preference

Next Steps



Talk with your **state board, state society**, educator, employer or academic advisor about licensure options in your state.



Think about your career goals—both short-term and long-term.



Have questions? Check out the **FAQs** to learn more about the new pathway.

Note: For simplification for this guide, the pathways have been abbreviated. The following key will help you understand the full requirements of the Uniform Accountancy Act, a model accountancy law states can adopt:

- **Master's + 1 Path** = A **post-baccalaureate degree** with an accounting concentration and **one year** of supervised experience
- **Bachelor's + 30 hrs + 1 Path** = A **baccalaureate degree** with an accounting concentration supplemented by an **additional 30 semester credit hours** (to reach 150 credit hours) and **one year** of supervised experience
- **Bachelor's + 2 Path** = A **baccalaureate degree** with an accounting concentration and **two years** of supervised experience

For licensure, all of the pathways require passing the CPA Exam and, in some jurisdictions, an ethics exam.