

Forensic Accountant

You have probably heard about accountants. They are the "number-crunchers" who keep track of finances for businesses and individuals. They prepare, audit, and analyze annual reports, financial statements, and tax returns. An especially important part of their job is to advise clients on tax laws and provide financial projections about investment opportunities.



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(Feel free to use the back of this sheet for longer answers)

What Do Forensic Accountants Do?

Forensic accountants start with the same focus on numbers and money. However their job is to "follow the money" to crack criminal cases such as embezzlement, fraud, and money laundering. They look through financial statements, spreadsheets, bank records, and other sources of information to find clues proving that the numbers do not add up. These types of crimes are called white-collar crimes because they usually do not involve anyone getting physically hurt. However, these crimes can cause great damage to individuals, businesses, and governments. Forensic accountants work wherever investigative accounting is needed. This includes private accounting firms, insurance companies, and police departments. But did you know that the FBI (Federal Bureau of Investigation) has a whole division of special agents who work on white-collar crimes? It even has its own "most wanted" criminal list!

CHALLENGE #1: Go online to find out...

What kind of skills you would need to do this job?

What would a typical day on the job be like?

What kinds of places could you work in?

How would you make a difference in the world?

Why would (or wouldn't) you like doing a job like this?

CHALLENGE #2: *Career Think Tank*

Accountants keep track on money as it comes in and goes out. This is called cash flow and it pretty much works the same way for a kid who gets an allowance as it does for a major corporation.

Here's how you can set up your own accounting spreadsheet. At the top of a blank sheet of paper, write how much money you have (or wish you had). Then set up two columns: one column for income (or money earned) and another column for expenses (or money spent). Keep (or make up) a list of expenses over time. Add new income to your total. Subtract expenses. Double check your numbers to keep track of your balance.