

Tax Lawyer

Law meets accounting. A long training, a small field, and some of the highest pay in law.

TYPICAL PAY

\$160,000

a year, full time

PAY RANGE

\$90k to \$500k

starting to experienced

TIME TO QUALIFY

7 to 8 years

after high school

DEMAND

Good

job outlook

LICENCE NEEDED

Yes

regulated job

WHERE YOU WORK

Big law firms, Big Four accounting firms, government, Tax Court

How you get there

- 1 High school** Grades 11 and 12
 Math, accounting and English.
- 2 Bachelor's degree** 3 to 4 years
 Commerce or accounting is the classic start, and some finish the CPA (chartered professional accountant) designation before law school. Any degree works. Write the LSAT (law school admission test).
- 3 Law school (JD, juris doctor)** 3 years
 Take every tax course offered: income tax, corporate tax, international tax, estates. Osgoode Hall and the University of Toronto have the deepest tax offerings.
- 4 Articling** About 1 year
 8 to 10 months in a firm's tax group or at the Department of Justice, plus the barrister and solicitor licensing exams. Ontario's Law Practice Program is the alternative.
- 5 Specialty training** 2 to 3 years, while working
 Most new tax lawyers then do the CPA (chartered professional accountant) In-Depth Tax Program, 3 years part-time, or a part-time LLM (master of laws) in tax at Osgoode Hall.

Pros and cons

- + Among the highest pay in law, with a clear path to it
- + Intellectual puzzles every day
- + Wanted by law firms, accounting firms and government alike
- Years of extra training after law school
- The rules change every federal budget
- Dense, dry material that many people find unbearable

Good to know

The Income Tax Act runs to thousands of pages

With its regulations it is one of the longest laws in Canada, and Parliament changes it every year. No tax lawyer has read all of it. The skill is knowing where to look.

Why accounting firms hire lawyers

Advice from a lawyer is protected by solicitor-client privilege. Advice from an accountant is not, and the CRA (Canada Revenue Agency) can demand it. Putting a lawyer on the file changes what the govern...

Optional boosts

CPA (chartered professional accountant) designation. International tax and transfer pricing. Tax litigation. Estate planning.

Where these numbers come from

Job Bank: Lawyers and Quebec notaries, wages (updated Nov 2025)

Law Society of Ontario: Becoming a lawyer

CPA Canada: In-Depth Tax Program admissions and fees

Osgoode Professional Development: tuition and fees

Numbers checked September 2026. Pay figures are typical full-time annual amounts in Canadian dollars, based on Government of Canada Job Bank wage data and published salary grids. They vary by province, employer and experience. Tuition is for domestic students. Sources, links and the click-through version: <https://career.help/ca/careers/tax-lawyer>



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