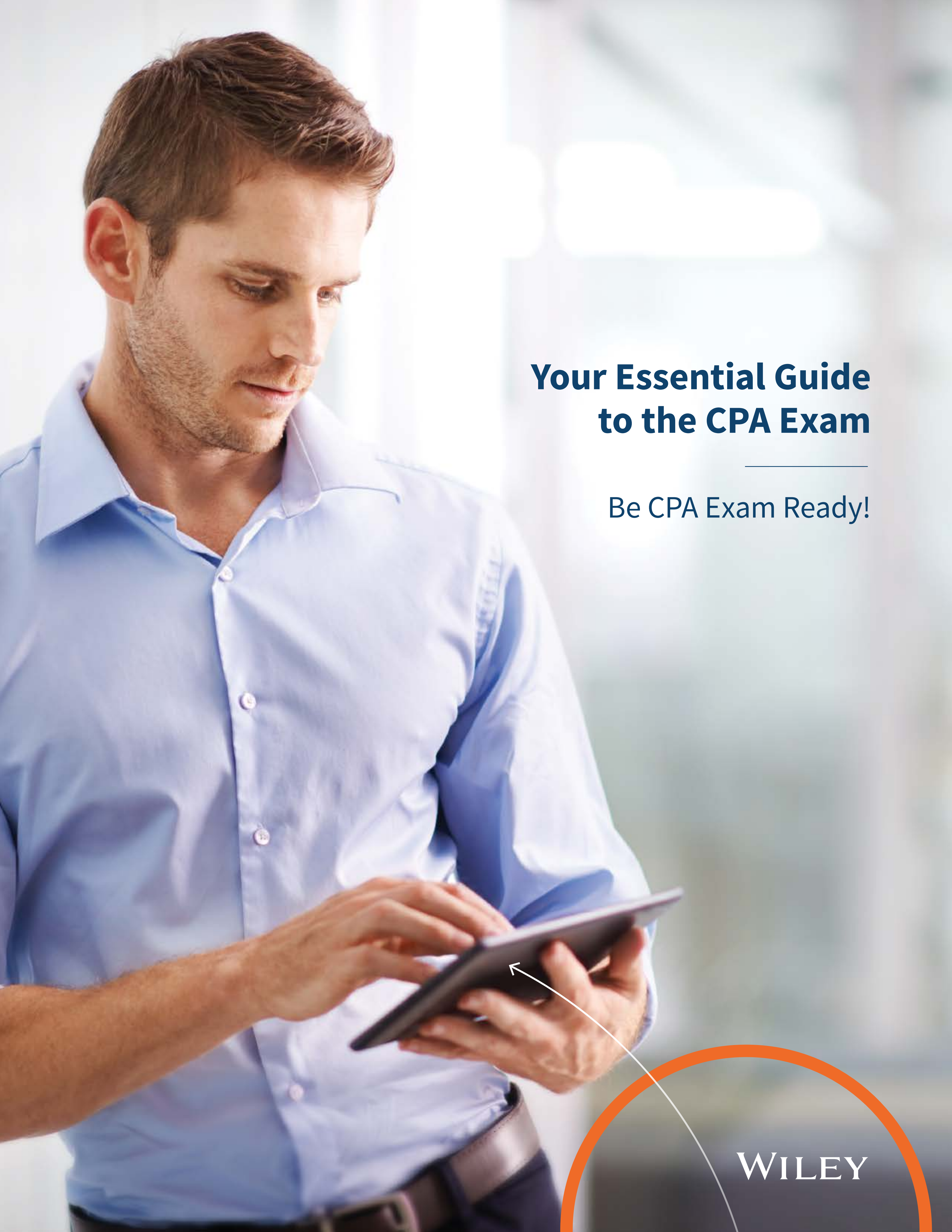


Your Essential Guide to the CPA Exam

Be CPA Exam Ready!

WILEY

The Four CPA Exam Sections

FINANCIAL ACCOUNTING AND REPORTING (FAR)

Encompasses financial accounting and reporting frameworks used by business entities (public and nonpublic), not-for-profit entities and state and local government entities. The major content areas include:

- Conceptual Framework, Standard-Setting and Financial Reporting 25–35%
- Select Financial Statement Accounts 30–40%
- Select Transactions 20–30%
- State and Local Governments 5-15%

AUDITING AND ATTESTATION (AUD)

Covers the entire audit process and other services, including:

- Preparation, compilation, and review engagements
- Attestation engagements

Candidates must also demonstrate skills related to professional responsibilities, including ethics and independence. The major content areas include:

- Ethics, Professional Responsibilities and General Principles 15–25%
- Assessing Risk and Developing a Planned Response 20–30%
- Performing Further Procedures and Obtaining Evidence 30–40%
- Forming Conclusions and Reporting 15–25%

REGULATION (REG)

Examines business law and federal taxation as well as ethics and professional responsibilities related to tax practice. The major content areas include:

- Ethics, Professional Responsibilities and Federal Tax Procedures 10–20%
- Business Law 10–20%
- Federal Taxation of Property Transactions 12–22%
- Federal Taxation of Individuals 15–25%
- Federal Taxation of Entities 28–38%

BUSINESS ENVIRONMENT AND CONCEPTS (BEC)

Covers general business environment and concepts that candidates should know about the underlying business reasons and accounting implications transactions. The major content areas include:

- Corporate Governance 17–27%
- Economic Concepts and Analysis 17–27%
- Financial Management 11–21%
- Information Technology 15–25%
- Operations Management 15–25%

Tip

Accurate completion of applications and timely submission of all required information can help avoid delays.

Key Resources

AICPA (CPA-EXAM.ORG)

The American Institute of Certified Public Accountants is responsible for developing and scoring the CPA Exam.

NASBA (NASBA.ORG)

The National Association of State Boards of Accountancy maintains the National Candidate Database, provides candidates with the Notice to Schedule (NTS), and keeps candidate records.

PROMETRIC (PROMETRIC.COM/CPA)

Prometric test centers are where the CPA Exam is given. They are responsible for scheduling and administering the exam, as well as sending the results to the AICPA for scoring.

STATE BOARDS

Regulates the accountancy profession and serves as the licensing body.

Getting Started for the CPA Exam

ANTICIPATED CPA EXAM TESTING DATES*

Testing Windows	Blackout Dates
January 1 – March 10	March 11 - 31
April 1 – June 10	June 11 - 30
July 1 – September 10	September 11 - 30
October 1 – December 10	December 11 - 31

*As of December 1st, 2017, AICPA has not released official 2018 testing window dates.

The Important Questions. Answered.

HAVE I MET THE REQUIREMENTS?

In order to sit for the CPA Exam, you must be found eligible by one of the states or jurisdictions of the United States. Each state has its own set of fees and educational requirements.
Check your state's requirements at:
efficientlearning.com/cpa/resources/state-requirements/

Step 1:

Apply and pay a fee to either the appropriate state, jurisdiction board of accountancy or NASBA, which will determine your eligibility to sit for the exam.

Step 2:

Once it has been determined that you are eligible, you will register for your desired section(s), and receive the NTS from NASBA which is required before you can schedule an exam date.

Step 3:

In most states, you have a six-month period from when the NTS is issued during which you must schedule and sit for ALL exams that were paid for on the NTS. Refer to the table to the right for exceptions.

HOW LONG DOES THE APPLICATION PROCESS TAKE?

- Your initial application will take the longest. Depending on your state, the process may take up to six weeks.
- Candidates can typically expect a shorter turnaround for reapplications.

Exceptions to the six-month window include:

- Texas (90 days)
- California, Hawaii, Louisiana, and Utah (9 months)
- North and South Dakota, and Virginia (12 months)

WHEN SHOULD I APPLY?

- At least 4 months before you want to take the exam. For example, if you want to take the exam in May, you should start the application process in January.
- AICPA and Prometric recommend locking in a specific exam date at least 45 days in advance.
- You must schedule your test a minimum of five days in advance.
- Availability is dependent on candidate demand and site capacity.

WHERE IS THE EXAM ADMINISTERED?

The CPA Exam is offered in a computer-based format at authorized Prometric test centers located throughout the United States as well as Bahrain, Brazil, Japan, Kuwait, Lebanon, and the United Arab Emirates. It is administered year-round, five or six days each week, except during the black out periods (explained below).

MUST I MEET THE EDUCATIONAL REQUIREMENTS

- Some states have less stringent educational requirements to sit for the exam compared to the educational requirements to earn one's license. For example, many states allow candidates to sit for the exam after only completing 120 units whereas 150 units will ultimately be needed for licensure.
- Each jurisdiction is responsible for determining their own educational requirements.
- Check your state's requirements at: efficientlearning.com/cpa/resources/state-requirements/

MAY I TAKE THE EXAM OUTSIDE OF THE STATE WHERE I WANT TO GET MY LICENSE?

- You may generally sit for the exam at any Prometric location regardless of the state or jurisdiction from which you are applying. This may vary for international test takers. Check your state's requirements at: efficientlearning.com/cpa/resources/state-requirements/

HOW MUCH DOES THE EXAM COST?

- The cost of the application fee and reapplication fee varies by state and jurisdiction.
- Nearly every state charges $208.40 for each exam but there are a few exceptions. More information can be found at: nasba.org/exams/cpaexam/

WHEN CAN I TAKE THE EXAMS?

- You may sit for up to four sections during a given testing window.
- You may not take the same section more than once in a given testing window.
- If you do not pass a section you may retake it in the next testing window, provided a new NTS has been secured.

CAN I RESCHEDULE MY EXAM DATE?

- You may reschedule appointments with Prometric under the following guidelines:
  - 30+ days in advance = no additional charge
  - 29 – 6 days in advance = $35 change fee
  - Up to 5 days before exam date = full cost of the exam + rescheduled exam cost
  - If you cancel an appointment without rescheduling or fail to show at the scheduled time, you will forfeit all fees paid.

WHAT KINDS OF QUESTIONS SHOULD I EXPECT ON THE EXAM?

Each section of the CPA Exam is administered in blocks called "testlets." There are 5 testlets on each exam:

- 2 Multiple Choice Question (MCQ) testlets (all sections)
- 3 Task-Based Simulations (TBS) testlets (AUD, FAR, REG)
- 2 TBS testlets + 1 Written Communication (WC) testlet (BEC)

	MCQ		TBS		WC	
Exam	Question Count	Scoring Weight	Question Count	Scoring Weight	Question Count	Scoring Weight
AUD	72	50%	8	50%	-	-
FAR	66	50%	8	50%	-	-
REG	76	50%	8	50%	-	-
BEC	62	50%	4	35%	3	15%

Tip

Completing the exam process involves very strict deadlines and limited timeframes:

- Applying for the Notice to Schedule your exam date
- The period of time — depending on your jurisdiction — on your Notice to Schedule to take your exam
- The 18 month window that you have to successfully complete all four parts of the exam
- Wiley CPAexcel's Partner Until You Pass Guarantee will help you from day one until you pass

Tip

As you complete and submit each testlet, the next testlet will appear. You will not be able to return to a previous testlet or look ahead until the current testlet is submitted. However, within a testlet, you have the ability to "mark" questions to go back for further review before submission.

DOES THE EXAM INCLUDE ESSAYS?

The BEC section includes 3 tasks which require you to write a memorandum or letter on a specific topic.

HOW ARE QUESTIONS SCORED?

Most responses are scored by a computer grading program which is calibrated using human scorers, while others, including the essays, are scored using a network of human graders (all CPAs). If your score is close to the passing score, your WC tasks will be automatically re-graded by human graders. When there is more than one grader for a response, the average of the scores is used as the final grade.

WHAT CAN I EXPECT ON THE TASK-BASED SIMULATIONS?

Task-Based Simulations (TBSs) are condensed case studies designed to complement the multiple choice questions.

- TBSs are designed to test application, analysis, and evaluation skills.
- TBSs can cover any of the topics listed as testable on the AICPA Blueprint
- Candidates will be asked to either select the correct answer from a drop down menu or type a numeric answer into a cell
- As of April 1, 2018 candidates will have Microsoft Excel available to them as a tool to answer questions during the TBS portion of the exam.
- Refer below to the Type of Task-Based Simulations

EXAM TIME ALLOTMENT

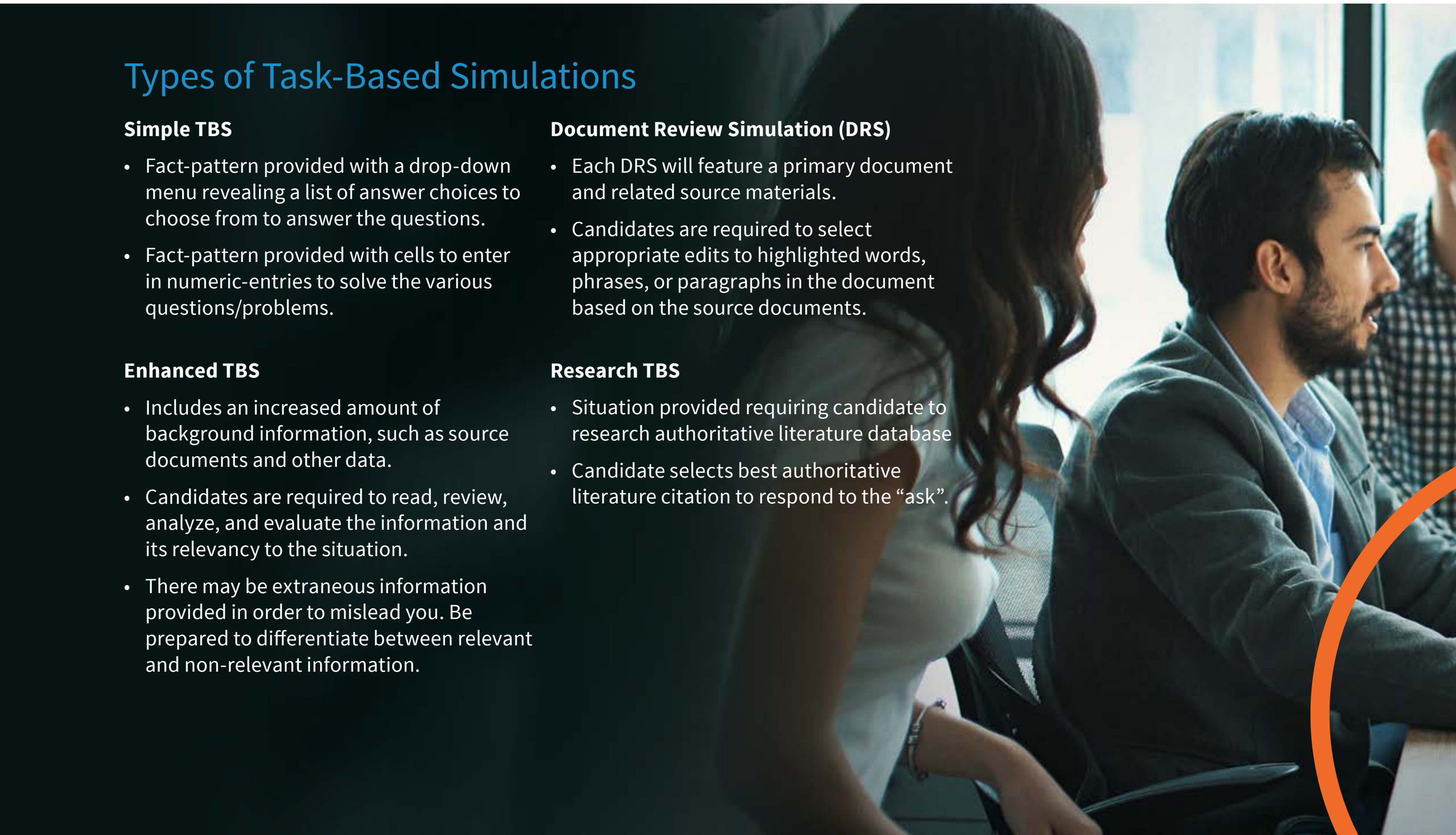
Auditing and Attestation	4 Hours
Financial Accounting and Reporting	4 Hours
Regulation	4 Hours
Business Environment and Concepts	4 Hours

HOW MUCH TIME SHOULD I ALLOCATE FOR EACH TESTLET?

- The testing computer screen countdown clock shows the overall time remaining for each section. It is key to manage your time effectively.
- For multiple-choice questions, you should allow about 1½ minutes per question (many will take less time, others may take more time).
- On average, a TBS should take about 15 to 30 minutes depending on the section, topic, and analysis required. An enhanced TBS may take up to 40 minutes.

DO I GET A BREAK DURING THE EXAM?

A 15-minute standard break is offered after the first TBS testlet, which is approximately the exam mid-point, that will not count against the candidate's testing time. Candidates may choose to take an optional break between any of the testlets but it will count against the total testing time as the exam clock will continue to run.



Types of Task-Based Simulations

Simple TBS

- Fact-pattern provided with a drop-down menu revealing a list of answer choices to choose from to answer the questions.
- Fact-pattern provided with cells to enter in numeric-entries to solve the various questions/problems.

Enhanced TBS

- Includes an increased amount of background information, such as source documents and other data.
- Candidates are required to read, review, analyze, and evaluate the information and its relevancy to the situation.
- There may be extraneous information provided in order to mislead you. Be prepared to differentiate between relevant and non-relevant information.

Document Review Simulation (DRS)

- Each DRS will feature a primary document and related source materials.
- Candidates are required to select appropriate edits to highlighted words, phrases, or paragraphs in the document based on the source documents.

Research TBS

- Situation provided requiring candidate to research authoritative literature database
- Candidate selects best authoritative literature citation to respond to the "ask".

Taking the CPA Exam

WHAT SHOULD I DO PRIOR TO TEST DAY?

- Go to the testing center prior to test day and perform a trial run.
- Find the location and room of your Prometric testing center.
- Locate where and how much you will be charged to park.
- Find the nearest bathroom, vending machines, etc. for your break time. You will not have much time!

These are all things that could slow you down on test day, so know before you go!

WHAT SHOULD I DO ON EXAM DAY?

- After a restful night of sleep, eat a good meal to jumpstart your day.
- Arrive at the exam site at least 30 minutes prior to the appointment time. Note many centers allow you to start your exam early.
- Late arrivals risk being denied permission to sit and you will not be eligible for a refund.
- **Bring your printed NTS form.** The name on the NTS must match your government-issued identification you bring to the exam. You should confirm this as soon as you receive your NTS.

WILL I BE PROVIDED WITH A CALCULATOR?

Hand-held calculators are provided upon request at the testing center. The testing software includes a computer calculator for your use. You should determine prior to test day which you will use on site.

WHAT ARE "PRETEST" QUESTIONS?

- Testlets contain operational and pretest questions.
- Operational questions are scored, while pretest questions are not scored. You will not be able to distinguish between the two.
- Pretest questions that meet certain statistical criteria are used as operational questions on future exams.
- This strategy for pretesting questions is common practice so don't be discouraged if you see something that is unfamiliar to you.

WHAT IS A PASSING SCORE?

Grades on the exam range from 0 to 99 but this is not a percentage correct but rather is a weighted combination of scaled scores from the MCQs and TBSs (as well as written communication tasks in the case of BEC).

WHAT IS THE 18-MONTH WINDOW?

Upon completion of your first exam, you have 18 months to complete the remaining three sections.

What To Bring On Exam Day

- NTS Form (printed)
- Two Forms of ID
  - Primary ID (must include photo and signature): Unexpired driver's license, state ID, passport, or military card.
  - Secondary ID (must include a signature): Any of the above mentioned items or a signed credit, ATM, or debit card.
- Limited Personal Items.
- All personal items must be placed in a locker prior to entering the test room.

Prohibited items

- Mobile phones
- Personal digital assistants
- Papers and books
- Calculators
- Writing utensil

Refer to your Prometric testing center for a full list of prohibited items.

Try the Wiley CPAexcel Review Course Today!

Register now for your 14 day free trial at
efficientlearning.com/cpatrial

During your trial, you get access to all of the online study material and most of the great features in the online courseware for 14 days.

Here's a quick overview of what you'll get:

ONLINE STUDY MATERIALS

- Digital study text
- Video lectures & slides
- CPA Exam questions with answers
- Task-based simulations
- Written communications
- Digital flash cards

ONLINE COURSEWARE

- Bite-Sized Lessons
- CPA Exam Planner
- Diagnostic Exams
- Performance Metrics
- Student Discussions
- Unlimited Practice CPA Exams
- Final Review

MOBILE APP

- Video lectures
- CPA Exam questions with answers
- Digital flash cards

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Wiley CPAexcel Author & Lecturer

"I used Wiley CPAexcel exclusively and was able to pass all four sections on the first try. The material they provide is very thorough and helped me to feel confident on exam day. The iPhone app was great and allowed me to go through practice questions at any time."

Aaron – New Canaan, Connecticut

5 Reasons
You Will Pass with Wiley CPAexcel

THE BEST CONTENT — INCLUDING 12,000+ EXAM QUESTIONS

You'll have everything you need to prepare for and pass the exam the first time—including study text, 110 hours of video lectures, 12,000 exam questions (more than any other provider), 600 Task-Based Simulations and much more.

BITE-SIZED LESSONS MAKE IT EASY

Lessons are organized into easily digestible units called Bite-Sized Lessons. Not only will you be able to master an entire lesson in about 30 to 45 minutes, you'll learn faster and remember more per study hour.

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With free online updates, upgrades, and access until you pass, you'll have the flexibility to take as long as you need and will always have access to the most up-to-date study materials.

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Learn from the leading educators in accounting. You'll have access to a full team of accredited university professors who author best-in-class study materials, deliver lectures, provide online mentoring, and lead online classes.

9 OUT OF 10 PASS WITH US

9 out of 10 students who complete the Wiley CPAexcel Course pass the CPA Exam. Compare this to the national average of less than 50%.