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# Discover the Lighter Side of Life With a Career in Cartooning

## What is Cartooning?

Cartooning is the process of drawing still cartoons, which are usually meant to be humorous. These cartoons are often featured in print publications, like magazines and newspapers, as well as online publications, like blogs and websites. Sometimes cartoons will consist of just one picture, while others will consist of several pictures. This type of cartoon is often referred to as a comic strip. A very long series of cartoons, on the other hand, is often referred to as a graphic novel.

Characters and scenes in most cartoons are generally not drawn realistically. Instead, most features are exaggerated, and people and animals may appear to be caricatures or “cartoonish.” Many cartoons also have some sort of caption, or speech and thought bubbles can be used to make the characters’ words or actions apparent.

Cartooning is much more than drawing funny pictures, however. Most cartoons are meant to convey a certain message or point out some type of irony. Depending on the intended audience, cartoons might either be very complex or they may be a little simpler. For instance, political cartoons may depend on dry humor and subtle irony, and they are usually meant to put a more serious political situation in a somewhat humorous light. On the other hand, cartoons depicting married life are usually a little simpler, and they often exaggerate common marital problems, which can make these situations humorous.

The process of cartooning can also be used to create storyboards, which are used when producing animated films and video games.



## What Does a Cartoonist Do?

A cartoonist is the person that illustrates, or draws, cartoons. Sometimes, cartoonists will also add the captions, speech bubbles, and thought bubbles as well. Other times, these words are added by separate writers.

Many cartoonists have a different perspective on life than most other people. For instance, they are often able to see the humor in everyday life or more serious situations. One of the most important characteristics that any cartoonist should have is a good sense of humor.

When drawing a cartoon, many cartoonists will typically use the traditional method of a paper and pen. Later, they may scan their cartoons into a computer and edit them or add other elements, like color and words. Some cartoonists, on the other hand, will use computer software from start to finish.

Cartoonists who create storyboards will usually illustrate how an animated story will come together. Typically, a storyboard cartoonist will interpret a script, and draw pictures to represent different scenes. This helps actors or animators, along with directors, see how a story should look and progress.

## What is the Average Salary of a Cartoonist?

The Bureau of Labor Statistics does not have any hard information regarding the specific career of cartooning. Some sources, however, suggest that the annual salary of a cartoonist is around \$30,000 to \$60,000 a year.

Many cartoonists do not make a livable wage from their cartooning, however. Instead, they will usually hold a “day job” in order to make ends meet. Cartoonists who are lucky enough to have their cartoons or comic strips syndicated, on the other hand, may be able to make a decent wage.

A cartoonist that creates storyboards will also usually make a good annual salary.



## What are the Education Requirements for a Cartooning Career?

Technically, there are no strict education requirements for a career in cartooning. Generally, though, cartoonists are gifted artists. They may also take a few courses in drawing or illustration in order to hone their skills.

Cartoonists who are interested in creating storyboards, however, will usually need to earn a degree in fine art or story-boarding.

## What Can I do With a Cartooning Career?

The majority of self-professed cartoonists are considered to be freelancers. They will typically draw cartoons and submit them to different print and digital publications, in hopes that those publications will accept them. Depending on how talented or successful cartoonists are, their cartoons or comic strips may get syndicated, meaning that they will appear in a certain publication every day, week, or month.

Cartoonists who create storyboards are often hired by small and large production studios.

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Source: <http://www.theartcareerproject.com/discover-the-lighter-side-of-life-with-a-career-in-cartooning/7617/>

## Vocabulary

**dry (adjective)**

subtle

**storyboards (noun)**

illustrated scripts

**day job (noun)**

a job that occurs in the daytime between 8:00 am and 5:00 pm

**syndication (noun)**

simultaneous distribution of materials in numerous publications

**to hone (verb)**

to perfect

**freelancers (noun)**

people who work from contract to contract

## Questions

### Question 1

What is the difference between a comic strip and a graphic novel?

### Question 2

What does a cartoonist do with cartoons to make them not appear realistic?

### Question 3

Give the two purposes for most cartoons.

### Question 4

Name two types of media that use storyboards.

### Question 5

Who adds captions to cartoons? Give two categories.

### Question 6

What is one of the most important qualities that a cartoonist should have?

### Question 7

Give three changes that a cartoonist can make to images once they have been scanned into a computer.

### Question 8

List two tasks that a storyboard cartoonist does.

### Question 9

How much do cartoonists make?

### Question 10

How can cartoonists make a decent salary?

### Question 11

What education is required to become a cartoonist?



**Question 12**

Name two options for degrees that artists who create storyboards are likely to need.

**Question 13**

Who hires cartoonists who create storyboards?

# Answers

## Answer 1

A comic strip consists of several pictures and a graphic novel is a long series of cartoons.

## Answer 2

Most features are exaggerated so the characters don't look realistic.

## Answer 3

1. convey a certain message
2. point out some type of irony

## Answer 4

1. animated films
2. video games

## Answer 5

1. the cartoonist
2. a separate writer

## Answer 6

A good sense of humor.

## Answer 7

1. edit the image
2. add colour
3. add words

## Answer 8

1. interpret a script
2. draw pictures to represent different scenes

## Answer 9

They make around \$30,000 to \$60,000 a year.

**Answer 10**

They can have their cartoons or comic strips syndicated.

**Answer 11**

No education requirement.

**Answer 12**

1. a degree in fine art
2. a degree in story-boarding

**Answer 13**

Small and large production studios hire cartoonists who create storyboards.