

American Safety Council Defensive Driving Practice Exam (Sample)

Study Guide



Everything you need from our exam experts!

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SAMPLE

Questions

- 1. When may you park in a bicycle lane?**
 - A. Whenever you need to**
 - B. Only during nighttime hours**
 - C. When your vehicle does not block a bicyclist and there are no parking signs**
 - D. When there are less than three bicycles on the road**
- 2. What action can you take to improve your alertness while driving?**
 - A. Drink coffee only**
 - B. Leave the windows closed**
 - C. Take regular breaks**
 - D. Drive with the radio off**
- 3. What is a characteristic of a safe driver?**
 - A. Frequently checking their phone while driving**
 - B. Driving with one foot on the dashboard**
 - C. Maintaining focus and avoiding distractions**
 - D. Always exceeding speed limits**
- 4. Which type of drugs can influence your driving?**
 - A. Only prescription drugs**
 - B. Only recreational drugs**
 - C. Only stimulants**
 - D. Prescription drugs and over-the-counter medications**
- 5. What does impaired driving refer to?**
 - A. Driving without a valid license**
 - B. Driving under the influence of drugs or alcohol**
 - C. Driving with a suspended registration**
 - D. Driving during a storm**

- 6. Which of the following is NOT a way that alcohol can influence your body?**
- A. Increased alertness**
 - B. Impaired judgment**
 - C. Slowed reflexes**
 - D. Distorted perception**
- 7. What is the primary factor utilized to determine speed limits?**
- A. The average speed of all drivers**
 - B. The 85th percentile speed**
 - C. The speed of the fastest vehicle**
 - D. The manufacturer's recommendation**
- 8. What action should you take if you're involved in an accident?**
- A. Stop, check for injuries, and call emergency services if necessary**
 - B. Drive away quickly**
 - C. Argue about who is at fault**
 - D. Take pictures of the scene**
- 9. What is the penalty for a person under 21 who refuses to take a sobriety test?**
- A. License suspension for 3 months**
 - B. License revocation for 1 year**
 - C. Fine without license action**
 - D. Community service requirement**
- 10. What percentage of economic costs occur where drivers have a BAC of .10 or greater?**
- A. 50%**
 - B. 60%**
 - C. 75%**
 - D. 88%**

Answers

SAMPLE

1. C
2. C
3. C
4. D
5. B
6. A
7. B
8. A
9. B
10. C

SAMPLE

Explanations

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1. When may you park in a bicycle lane?

- A. Whenever you need to
- B. Only during nighttime hours
- C. When your vehicle does not block a bicyclist and there are no parking signs**
- D. When there are less than three bicycles on the road

Parking in a bicycle lane is generally discouraged because these lanes are designated for cyclists to ensure their safety and clear passage. The correct answer highlights a specific circumstance under which parking may be permissible: when your vehicle does not obstruct a bicyclist's path and there are no posted parking restrictions. This means that if the bicycle lane is clear enough for cyclists to safely navigate around your vehicle and there are no signs indicating that parking is prohibited in that lane, then it is acceptable to park there. This option emphasizes the importance of being considerate of bicycle traffic and ensuring that your actions do not compromise the safety of others on the road. The other choices suggest less careful or appropriate circumstances for parking in a bicycle lane. For example, needing to park whenever or during specific times overlooks the essential requirement of not blocking cyclists, while referring to the number of bicycles on the road does not take into account the safety and rights of all cyclists. Therefore, the correct choice reflects a balanced approach to parking that prioritizes safety and adherence to traffic regulations.

2. What action can you take to improve your alertness while driving?

- A. Drink coffee only
- B. Leave the windows closed
- C. Take regular breaks**
- D. Drive with the radio off

Taking regular breaks is a vital action to enhance your alertness while driving. Long periods of driving can lead to fatigue, resulting in decreased concentration and slower reaction times. By stopping to take breaks, you allow your body and mind to rest, which can help revitalize your focus and reduce the risk of drowsiness. Regular breaks not only provide an opportunity to stretch and hydrate but also offer a chance to engage in brief periods of physical activity, which can further improve alertness. Other options, while they might have some merits, do not effectively address the problem of fatigue and reduced alertness over extended driving periods. For instance, merely drinking coffee may provide a temporary boost in alertness due to caffeine, but it does not combat the physical fatigue that comes from prolonged driving. Similarly, leaving the windows closed or driving with the radio off may create a more controlled environment but does not actively refresh the driver or help prevent fatigue. Regular breaks, on the other hand, are a proactive approach to maintaining alertness and ensuring safe driving practices.

3. What is a characteristic of a safe driver?

- A. Frequently checking their phone while driving
- B. Driving with one foot on the dashboard
- C. Maintaining focus and avoiding distractions**
- D. Always exceeding speed limits

Maintaining focus and avoiding distractions is a hallmark characteristic of a safe driver. A safe driver prioritizes their attention on the road and the surrounding environment, which is crucial for making quick and accurate decisions while driving. This focus helps in anticipating potential hazards, responding to changes in traffic conditions, and ensuring the safety of all road users. Distractions such as using a phone or engaging in activities that take attention away from driving significantly increase the risk of accidents. Keeping both hands on the wheel and being fully engaged with the driving task contributes to overall road safety, making it easier to react appropriately to unforeseen circumstances. Safety on the road hinges on the ability to concentrate and remain mindful of the driving environment, which is why this characteristic is essential for any responsible driver.

4. Which type of drugs can influence your driving?

- A. Only prescription drugs
- B. Only recreational drugs
- C. Only stimulants
- D. Prescription drugs and over-the-counter medications**

The correct answer highlights that both prescription drugs and over-the-counter medications can significantly influence your driving abilities. Many people may not realize that various medications, even those that are legally obtainable without a prescription, can have side effects that impair judgment, reaction times, and overall driving performance. For instance, certain prescription pain relievers, anti-anxiety medications, and even allergy medications may cause drowsiness or affect concentration. Over-the-counter medications, such as those for colds or allergies, can also lead to similar impairments. It is essential for drivers to be aware of these risks and to read labels or consult with healthcare providers about the potential effects of any medication they plan to take before driving. By understanding that both types of drugs can pose risks, drivers can make more informed decisions about their fitness to operate a vehicle, enhancing safety for themselves and others on the road.

5. What does impaired driving refer to?

- A. Driving without a valid license**
- B. Driving under the influence of drugs or alcohol**
- C. Driving with a suspended registration**
- D. Driving during a storm**

Impaired driving specifically refers to operating a vehicle while under the influence of substances that can affect a person's ability to drive safely, such as drugs or alcohol. These substances can impair judgment, coordination, reaction times, and overall motor skills, significantly increasing the risk of accidents. Laws in many jurisdictions define impaired driving with a focus on the driver's level of intoxication, commonly measured by blood alcohol concentration (BAC) levels for alcohol consumption. The focus on drugs and alcohol is critical because these substances are known to directly impact cognitive and physical abilities necessary for safe driving. By understanding impaired driving in this context, drivers can recognize the serious risks associated with driving under the influence and make safer choices for themselves and others on the road.

6. Which of the following is NOT a way that alcohol can influence your body?

- A. Increased alertness**
- B. Impaired judgment**
- C. Slowed reflexes**
- D. Distorted perception**

When discussing how alcohol influences the body, increased alertness is not a typical effect. In fact, alcohol is a depressant that negatively affects the central nervous system, leading to a decrease in overall alertness and awareness. It can impair cognitive functions, including decision-making and responsiveness, ultimately giving the false impression of increased confidence or alertness when, in reality, the individual becomes less aware of their surroundings and less capable of responding to events as they occur. On the other hand, impaired judgment, slowed reflexes, and distorted perception are all well-documented effects of alcohol consumption. These effects can severely hinder a person's ability to drive safely or make sound decisions, illustrating the significant risks associated with alcohol intake in situations requiring full cognitive and motor function.

7. What is the primary factor utilized to determine speed limits?

- A. The average speed of all drivers**
- B. The 85th percentile speed**
- C. The speed of the fastest vehicle**
- D. The manufacturer's recommendation**

The primary factor utilized to determine speed limits is the 85th percentile speed. This concept is based on traffic engineering principles, which assert that the speed at or below which 85% of drivers travel under free-flowing conditions is a reasonable indicator of the safe and appropriate speed for that road segment. By setting the speed limit at this percentile, authorities aim to establish a limit that reflects the natural behavior of drivers, ensuring it is both safe and enforceable. This method acknowledges that most drivers will comply with the limits if they are aligned with their driving habits, enhancing the overall efficiency of traffic flow and safety on the roads. Other options may suggest methods of determining speed limits, but they do not focus on the empirical and data-driven approach that the 85th percentile offers. For example, the average speed of all drivers can over-represent slower drivers and under-represent faster drivers, while the speed of the fastest vehicle could encourage unsafe driving behavior. Manufacturer recommendations are not usually relevant since they pertain to vehicle performance rather than roadway safety considerations.

8. What action should you take if you're involved in an accident?

- A. Stop, check for injuries, and call emergency services if necessary**
- B. Drive away quickly**
- C. Argue about who is at fault**
- D. Take pictures of the scene**

If you are involved in an accident, the appropriate action is to stop, check for injuries, and call emergency services if necessary. This response is crucial for several reasons. First, stopping at the scene is legally required in most jurisdictions. Failing to do so can result in criminal charges, including hit-and-run penalties. Second, checking for injuries is vital, as it allows you to assess the well-being of all parties involved. This step underscores the importance of safety and can facilitate prompt medical assistance if needed. Lastly, calling emergency services ensures that professional help is on the way. Law enforcement can document the accident, which may help clarify liability later, and medical personnel can provide immediate care for injuries, potentially saving lives. The other choices involve actions that could complicate the situation or exacerbate the outcomes of the accident. Driving away quickly is not only illegal but could also leave injured individuals without help. Arguing about fault distracts from addressing any injuries or from handling the incident responsibly. While taking pictures of the scene is helpful for documentation later, it should not take precedence over ensuring safety and calling for help.

9. What is the penalty for a person under 21 who refuses to take a sobriety test?

- A. License suspension for 3 months**
- B. License revocation for 1 year**
- C. Fine without license action**
- D. Community service requirement**

The penalty for a person under 21 who refuses to take a sobriety test is a license revocation for 1 year. This consequence is a reflection of the zero-tolerance policy aimed at underage drinking and driving. Law enforcement treats refusal to submit to a sobriety test as an implicit admission of guilt regarding intoxication. The one-year revocation serves as a strong deterrent to prevent underage driving under the influence and ensures the safety of all road users. In most jurisdictions, these strict measures reinforce the legal framework designed to discourage behaviors that lead to impaired driving, particularly among younger, less experienced drivers. The goal is to emphasize accountability and the importance of adhering to laws that safeguard public safety.

10. What percentage of economic costs occur where drivers have a BAC of .10 or greater?

- A. 50%**
- B. 60%**
- C. 75%**
- D. 88%**

The correct answer highlights a significant issue regarding the impact of higher Blood Alcohol Concentration (BAC) levels on economic costs associated with traffic incidents. Research indicates that when drivers operate a vehicle with a BAC of .10 or greater, a substantial portion of the economic costs from accidents—such as medical expenses, property damage, and lost productivity—can be attributed to these impaired drivers. By stating that 75% of economic costs occur at this BAC level, it underscores the gravity of impaired driving. The data reveal that as BAC levels increase, the likelihood of accidents also rises, resulting in severe repercussions not solely for those directly involved but also for society as a whole, including insurance costs and emergency response expenses. This statistic emphasizes the importance of understanding the risks of driving under the influence and the rationale behind stricter laws and regulations aimed at reducing impaired driving incidents.