

# AST Surgical Technologist Practice Exam (Sample)

## Study Guide



**Everything you need from our exam experts!**

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# Introduction

Preparing for a certification exam can feel overwhelming, but with the right tools, it becomes an opportunity to build confidence, sharpen your skills, and move one step closer to your goals. At Examzify, we believe that effective exam preparation isn't just about memorization, it's about understanding the material, identifying knowledge gaps, and building the test-taking strategies that lead to success.

This guide was designed to help you do exactly that.

Whether you're preparing for a licensing exam, professional certification, or entry-level qualification, this book offers structured practice to reinforce key concepts. You'll find a wide range of multiple-choice questions, each followed by clear explanations to help you understand not just the right answer, but why it's correct.

The content in this guide is based on real-world exam objectives and aligned with the types of questions and topics commonly found on official tests. It's ideal for learners who want to:

- Practice answering questions under realistic conditions,
- Improve accuracy and speed,
- Review explanations to strengthen weak areas, and
- Approach the exam with greater confidence.

We recommend using this book not as a stand-alone study tool, but alongside other resources like flashcards, textbooks, or hands-on training. For best results, we recommend working through each question, reflecting on the explanation provided, and revisiting the topics that challenge you most.

**Remember:** successful test preparation isn't about getting every question right the first time, it's about learning from your mistakes and improving over time. Stay focused, trust the process, and know that every page you turn brings you closer to success.

Let's begin.

# How to Use This Guide

**This guide is designed to help you study more effectively and approach your exam with confidence. Whether you're reviewing for the first time or doing a final refresh, here's how to get the most out of your Examzify study guide:**

## **1. Start with a Diagnostic Review**

**Skim through the questions to get a sense of what you know and what you need to focus on. Your goal is to identify knowledge gaps early.**

## **2. Study in Short, Focused Sessions**

**Break your study time into manageable blocks (e.g. 30 - 45 minutes). Review a handful of questions, reflect on the explanations.**

## **3. Learn from the Explanations**

**After answering a question, always read the explanation, even if you got it right. It reinforces key points, corrects misunderstandings, and teaches subtle distinctions between similar answers.**

## **4. Track Your Progress**

**Use bookmarks or notes (if reading digitally) to mark difficult questions. Revisit these regularly and track improvements over time.**

## **5. Simulate the Real Exam**

**Once you're comfortable, try taking a full set of questions without pausing. Set a timer and simulate test-day conditions to build confidence and time management skills.**

## **6. Repeat and Review**

**Don't just study once, repetition builds retention. Re-attempt questions after a few days and revisit explanations to reinforce learning. Pair this guide with other Examzify tools like flashcards, and digital practice tests to strengthen your preparation across formats.**

**There's no single right way to study, but consistent, thoughtful effort always wins. Use this guide flexibly, adapt the tips above to fit your pace and learning style. You've got this!**

## Questions

- 1. What is the fibrous white layer that gives the eye its shape?**
  - A. Sclera**
  - B. Cornea**
  - C. Iris**
  - D. Retina**
  
- 2. Which term describes a rod-shaped microorganism?**
  - A. Bacillus**
  - B. Cocci**
  - C. Spirilla**
  - D. Vibrio**
  
- 3. Which of the following is a fenestrated drape?**
  - A. Plain drape**
  - B. Incision drape**
  - C. Aperture**
  - D. Plastic sheet**
  
- 4. What topical steroid is commonly used to reduce inflammation post-eye surgery?**
  - A. Hydrocortisone**
  - B. Depo-Medrol**
  - C. Prednisone**
  - D. Betamethasone**
  
- 5. The division of the nasal cavity into two portions is caused by which anatomical structure?**
  - A. Palate**
  - B. Septum**
  - C. Turbinate bones**
  - D. Fossa**

- 6. Otoplasty is performed to correct deformities in which anatomical structure?**
- A. Nose**
  - B. Eye**
  - C. Ear**
  - D. Mouth**
- 7. What instrument is specifically used to remove the cornea during a keratoplasty?**
- A. Scalpel**
  - B. Trephine**
  - C. Forceps**
  - D. Laser**
- 8. In terms of blood pressure readings, what does the term "diastolic" refer to?**
- A. The pressure when the heart beats**
  - B. The lowest pressure in the arteries during resting phase**
  - C. The average pressure during the cardiac cycle**
  - D. The pressure before the heart contracts**
- 9. Which of the following is a non-sterile member of the surgical team?**
- A. Surgeon**
  - B. Scrub nurse**
  - C. Circulator**
  - D. First assistant**
- 10. What term describes the thread-like appendages that provide bacteria with motion?**
- A. Flagella**
  - B. Cilia**
  - C. Pseudopodia**
  - D. Fimbriae**

## **Answers**

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

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## **Explanations**

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## 1. What is the fibrous white layer that gives the eye its shape?

**A. Sclera**

**B. Cornea**

**C. Iris**

**D. Retina**

The fibrous white layer that gives the eye its shape is the sclera. This tough outer coat of the eyeball provides structural support and protection. It serves as an attachment point for the extraocular muscles, which are important for eye movement. The sclera works in conjunction with other eye components to maintain the overall integrity of the eye, ensuring that it retains its shape while allowing for various functions, such as focusing light. The cornea, while also a part of the eye's outer structure, is the transparent front part responsible for light refraction but does not contribute to the shape in the same way as the sclera. The iris, located behind the cornea, functions to control the amount of light that enters the eye through the pupil and gives the eye its color. The retina is the innermost layer of the eye that receives and processes visual information but does not play a role in giving the eye its shape. Understanding the specific roles of these components highlights why the sclera is identified as the layer responsible for the eye's shape.

## 2. Which term describes a rod-shaped microorganism?

**A. Bacillus**

**B. Cocci**

**C. Spirilla**

**D. Vibrio**

The term "Bacillus" specifically refers to rod-shaped microorganisms. Bacilli can be found in various environments and can exist as both beneficial bacteria, such as those involved in fermentation, and pathogenic species that can cause disease. Their rod-like shape is distinctive and is a key morphological characteristic used to classify and identify different types of bacteria. In contrast, cocci denote spherical-shaped bacteria and include various types such as streptococci and staphylococci. Spirilla refer to bacteria that have a spiral shape, which allows for movement via flagella and can often be seen in environments rich in moisture. Vibrio are a specific group of bacteria that are comma-shaped and are often found in aquatic environments, making them distinct from the rod shape categorized under bacilli. Thus, understanding the morphological characteristics of bacteria, such as the rod shape of bacilli, is essential for microbiological classification and can help in determining the appropriate treatment for bacterial infections.

### 3. Which of the following is a fenestrated drape?

- A. Plain drape
- B. Incision drape
- C. Aperture**
- D. Plastic sheet

A fenestrated drape is specifically designed with an opening, or "aperture," which allows for exposure of the surgical site while maintaining a sterile field around it. This type of drape is often used in surgical procedures where access to a particular area of the body is required without compromising the sterility of the surrounding tissue. In contrast, a plain drape does not have any openings and is used to cover areas not needing direct access. An incision drape may also be used during surgical procedures, but it is designed for holding incisions and may have adhesive properties without a dedicated aperture. A plastic sheet also lacks the necessary design for specific surgical access, as it generally serves as a barrier rather than providing a means to expose a surgical site adequately. Thus, the aperture in the fenestrated drape is a key characteristic that allows for precise and sterile surgical access.

### 4. What topical steroid is commonly used to reduce inflammation post-eye surgery?

- A. Hydrocortisone
- B. Depo-Medrol**
- C. Prednisone
- D. Betamethasone

Betamethasone is commonly used to reduce inflammation after eye surgery due to its potent anti-inflammatory properties. This corticosteroid effectively decreases redness, swelling, and allergic reactions that can occur postoperatively. It acts by inhibiting various immune responses and decreasing inflammation at the cellular level, making it particularly effective in the sensitive tissues of the eye. While hydrocortisone is a mild topical steroid and commonly used for less severe skin conditions, it may not be strong enough for the level of inflammation typically associated with post-surgical recovery in the ocular area. Prednisone is generally used systemically rather than topically and may not be as targeted or effective for localized ocular inflammation. Depo-Medrol is a more extended-release steroid used for joint injections or systemic treatments, making it less ideal for direct post-eye surgery care. In contrast, betamethasone's formulation is suitable for eye conditions, allowing it to be used effectively after ocular surgeries to control inflammation and promote healing.

**5. The division of the nasal cavity into two portions is caused by which anatomical structure?**

**A. Palate**

**B. Septum**

**C. Turbinate bones**

**D. Fossa**

The division of the nasal cavity into two portions is primarily due to the septum, specifically the nasal septum. The nasal septum is a vertical structure located in the midline of the nasal cavity and consists of both bone and cartilage. It serves to separate the left and right nostrils, ensuring that the airflow can be directed into both sides of the cavity, contributing to functions such as filtering, humidifying, and warming the air we breathe. While the palate is involved in separating the oral cavity from the nasal cavity, it does not directly divide the nasal cavity itself. Turbinate bones, on the other hand, are structures within the nasal cavity that help to increase the surface area for airflow and mucus production but do not create a division. The term 'fossa' generally refers to a depression or hollow, which does not describe a dividing structure within the nasal cavity. Thus, the nasal septum is the key anatomical feature responsible for creating the two distinct portions of the nasal cavity.

**6. Otoplasty is performed to correct deformities in which anatomical structure?**

**A. Nose**

**B. Eye**

**C. Ear**

**D. Mouth**

Otoplasty is a surgical procedure specifically designed to correct deformities of the ear. This includes conditions such as prominent ears, floppy ears, or ears that are misshapen due to congenital issues or trauma. The aim of this surgery is to improve the aesthetic appearance of the ears and restore a more natural shape and position. The focus on the ears in otoplasty distinguishes it from other procedures, as the other anatomical structures listed—nose, eye, and mouth—are not involved in this particular type of surgery. Thus, the correct choice highlights the specific area that otoplasty addresses.

**7. What instrument is specifically used to remove the cornea during a keratoplasty?**

- A. Scalpel**
- B. Trephine**
- C. Forceps**
- D. Laser**

The instrument specifically used to remove the cornea during a keratoplasty is the trephine. This specialized instrument is designed with a circular blade that allows for a precise and uniform cut, creating a round opening in the cornea. This technique is crucial during keratoplasty, which involves transplanting a new cornea to replace a damaged or diseased one. The trephine ensures that the cut edges of the cornea are smooth and even, which is essential for optimal healing and integration of the new tissue. Its design allows for consistency in the size and shape of the corneal graft, facilitating a better postoperative outcome. While the scalpel could be used for initial incisions in various surgical contexts, it does not provide the same precision and uniformity in circular cuts that the trephine offers. Forceps are generally utilized to grasp or manipulate tissue, but they do not have cutting capabilities appropriate for corneal excision. Lasers can also be used in some modern surgical procedures involving the eye, but they are not the primary choice for directly excising the cornea during traditional keratoplasty procedures. This highlights the specialized role of the trephine in corneal surgery, making it the correct answer for this question.

**8. In terms of blood pressure readings, what does the term "diastolic" refer to?**

- A. The pressure when the heart beats**
- B. The lowest pressure in the arteries during resting phase**
- C. The average pressure during the cardiac cycle**
- D. The pressure before the heart contracts**

Diastolic blood pressure refers to the lowest pressure in the arteries during the resting phase of the heart, specifically when the heart is between beats. This phase occurs when the heart's chambers, particularly the ventricles, are filled with blood and the heart muscle is relaxed. At this time, the pressure in the arteries decreases, allowing for a measurement of how much pressure various factors exert on the artery walls when the heart is not actively contracting. Understanding diastolic pressure is crucial for evaluating cardiovascular health, as persistently high diastolic readings can indicate underlying conditions such as hypertension. This reading, paired with the systolic measurement (the pressure during heartbeats), provides insight into overall heart function and vascular resistance. Consequently, identifying diastolic pressure as the lowest arterial pressure during this resting phase accurately captures the physiological events occurring within the cardiovascular system.

**9. Which of the following is a non-sterile member of the surgical team?**

- A. Surgeon**
- B. Scrub nurse**
- C. Circulator**
- D. First assistant**

In a surgical team, the role of the circulator is distinct as they are a non-sterile member. The circulator is responsible for managing the overall environment of the operating room, ensuring that all supplies and equipment are available and functioning properly, and serving as the liaison between the surgical team and other medical staff. This role allows them to move freely in and out of the sterile field, which is vital for maintaining the flow of the surgery and addressing any unforeseen needs that arise during the procedure. The surgeon, scrub nurse, and first assistant are all involved in direct patient care and surgical procedures within the sterile field, requiring them to maintain strict adherence to sterile techniques to prevent infections. Their roles typically restrict their movement and interaction with non-sterile surfaces. Therefore, understanding the delineation of sterile and non-sterile roles in the operating room is essential for both infection control and the overall success of surgical outcomes.

**10. What term describes the thread-like appendages that provide bacteria with motion?**

- A. Flagella**
- B. Cilia**
- C. Pseudopodia**
- D. Fimbriae**

The term that describes the thread-like appendages providing bacteria with motion is flagella. Flagella are long, whip-like structures that enable bacteria to swim through liquid environments. These appendages rotate and can propel the bacterial cell forward, allowing it to navigate towards nutrients or away from harmful substances. Cilia are similar structures, but they are typically found in eukaryotic cells and allow for more coordinated movement across surfaces rather than providing motility for individual cells like bacteria. Pseudopodia are extensions of the cytoplasm used by certain eukaryotic organisms, such as amoebas, for movement and feeding, but they do not constitute a true structure for locomotion in bacteria. Fimbriae are short, hair-like structures that help bacteria adhere to surfaces but do not aid in movement. Thus, flagella is the specific structure associated with bacterial motility.

## Next Steps

**Congratulations on reaching the final section of this guide. You've taken a meaningful step toward passing your certification exam and advancing your career.**

**As you continue preparing, remember that consistent practice, review, and self-reflection are key to success. Make time to revisit difficult topics, simulate exam conditions, and track your progress along the way.**

**If you need help, have suggestions, or want to share feedback, we'd love to hear from you. Reach out to our team at [hello@examzify.com](mailto:hello@examzify.com).**

**Or visit your dedicated course page for more study tools and resources:**

**<https://ast-surgicaltechnologist.examzify.com>**

**We wish you the very best on your exam journey. You've got this!**