

BNSF CONDUCTOR PRACTICE EXAM (SAMPLE)

STUDY GUIDE



SAMPLE STUDY GUIDE WITH LIMITED QUESTIONS

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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

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- 1. What should a train crew do immediately after overrunning a stop signal?**
 - A. Prepare to call the maintenance team
 - B. Call the train dispatcher
 - C. Increase speed to the next block
 - D. Conduct a physical inspection of the area
- 2. What is required if a train is to meet an opposing train on the main track?**
 - A. Delay until the opposing train has left the block
 - B. Leave the switch lined for the opposing train to pass
 - C. Switch to the nearest siding available
 - D. Notify other trains of the intention to meet
- 3. In moving equipment, what should employees avoid?**
 - A. Waiting for signals before moving
 - B. Fouling adjacent tracks or causing injury
 - C. Switching at high speeds
 - D. Communicating with other crew members
- 4. What should crew members do if they receive a track warrant that is over four hours old?**
 - A. Continue the journey as planned
 - B. Contact the dispatcher to verify additional bulletins
 - C. Assume it is still valid
 - D. Void the track warrant immediately
- 5. Which of the following is a prohibited activity for railroad operating employees regarding electronic devices?**
 - A. Using for health-related applications
 - B. Using for necessary communication in emergencies
 - C. Using when performing safety-related duties
 - D. Using when stationary for break time

- 6. Under what condition can a crew move a train into a main track outside yard limits against the current of traffic?**
- A. When all signals indicate clear
 - B. When track permit is issued
 - C. With verbal permission from the dispatcher
 - D. During scheduled maintenance hours
- 7. What should a crew member do if a safety device becomes defective en route?**
- A. Ignore it until the next stop
 - B. Inform the train dispatcher and mechanical department
 - C. Attempt to repair the device immediately
 - D. Cut out the device if it interferes with operations
- 8. What is required before proceeding after adding cars during a transfer train movement?**
- A. Verify brake pipe pressure is restored
 - B. Ensure no delays are experienced
 - C. Complete a full inspection of the cargo
 - D. Check weather conditions
- 9. What is the first step to apply a vertical wheel brake?**
- A. Turn the brake wheel counterclockwise
 - B. Place the release lever in the OFF position
 - C. Place the release lever or pawl in the ON position
 - D. Pull the brake wheel freely without a plan
- 10. What must crew members refrain from doing when going between rail equipment?**
- A. Operating controls without permission
 - B. Leaving tools outside the train
 - C. Using sound signals
 - D. Making physical contact with the rail

Answers

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

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Explanations

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1. What should a train crew do immediately after overrunning a stop signal?

- A. Prepare to call the maintenance team
- B. Call the train dispatcher**
- C. Increase speed to the next block
- D. Conduct a physical inspection of the area

Calling the train dispatcher is the appropriate immediate action for a train crew after overrunning a stop signal. This step is crucial because it ensures that the dispatcher is aware of the situation and can take necessary actions to prevent potential collisions or other safety incidents in the area. The dispatcher will coordinate further actions, instruct the crew on how to proceed safely, and may need to alert other trains to prevent additional overruns. Reporting the situation promptly helps maintain safety standards and allows for a quick response to mitigate any risks associated with the incident. The dispatcher can provide guidance specific to the circumstances and direct the crew to follow correct emergency procedures, such as stopping the train or moving it to a safer position. Other options, while potentially relevant to follow-up actions, do not address the immediate need for communication and safety management. Preparing to call maintenance, increasing speed, or conducting a physical inspection should be part of later procedural steps once the immediate safety concerns are communicated to the dispatcher.

2. What is required if a train is to meet an opposing train on the main track?

- A. Delay until the opposing train has left the block
- B. Leave the switch lined for the opposing train to pass**
- C. Switch to the nearest siding available
- D. Notify other trains of the intention to meet

When a train is to meet an opposing train on the main track, it is essential to leave the switch lined for the opposing train to pass. This action ensures that the train will be able to proceed safely and that the switch position is set appropriately for the intended movement. Aligning the switch correctly is vital for preventing accidents and ensuring smooth operations when two trains are interacting on the same track. The requirement to line the switch is a standard safety protocol that mitigates risks associated with train meetings. It allows each train to navigate the junction or switch without confusion or conflict. Properly aligned switches help maintain the flow of operations and contribute to the overall safety of railway operations. While it may seem important to delay until the opposing train has left the block or switch to the nearest siding, these actions are secondary to ensuring the switches are appropriately set. Notifying other trains can be relevant in some circumstances, but it is less critical than ensuring that the switch is correctly lined for safe passage. Thus, ensuring the switch is lined for the passing train is the most crucial step in this scenario.

3. In moving equipment, what should employees avoid?

- A. Waiting for signals before moving
- B. Fouling adjacent tracks or causing injury**
- C. Switching at high speeds
- D. Communicating with other crew members

Employees should avoid fouling adjacent tracks or causing injury because safety is the paramount concern while moving equipment. Fouling adjacent tracks can lead to collisions or accidents involving other trains or workers. Maintaining a safe distance from operational areas ensures that everyone is protected from potential hazards. Furthermore, by avoiding actions that could lead to injury, employees contribute to a safer working environment, promoting responsible practices in rail operations. In contrast, waiting for signals before moving is a necessary safety protocol to ensure that it is safe to proceed. Switching at high speeds can be dangerous but is usually regulated, while effective communication among crew members is essential for operational safety and efficiency. Therefore, avoiding fouling adjacent tracks is crucial for preventing accidents and ensuring the safety of all personnel involved.

4. What should crew members do if they receive a track warrant that is over four hours old?

- A. Continue the journey as planned
- B. Contact the dispatcher to verify additional bulletins**
- C. Assume it is still valid
- D. Void the track warrant immediately

When crew members receive a track warrant that is over four hours old, the recommended action is to contact the dispatcher to verify additional bulletins. This is essential because a track warrant can become outdated due to changes in conditions, newly issued bulletins, or operational updates that could affect the safety and legality of the train's movement. Verifying with the dispatcher ensures that the crew is aware of any potential changes that could impact their operations or the status of the track they are authorized to use. This verification process highlights the importance of staying informed and maintaining communication within the operational framework, especially in a dynamic environment like rail transport, where conditions can shift rapidly. Continuing the journey as planned or assuming the warrant is still valid could lead to unsafe situations if new restrictions or issues have been introduced since the warrant was issued. Voiding the track warrant immediately does not take into consideration the legitimate need to verify current operating conditions, which can provide important context and guidance for safe operations. Thus, contacting the dispatcher is the appropriate action to confirm the status and ensure safety in the operation.

5. Which of the following is a prohibited activity for railroad operating employees regarding electronic devices?

- A. Using for health-related applications
- B. Using for necessary communication in emergencies
- C. Using when performing safety-related duties**
- D. Using when stationary for break time

The correct answer is based on the stringent safety protocols that govern railroad operating employees' use of electronic devices. The regulations aim to minimize distractions that could potentially compromise the safety of train operations. When performing safety-related duties, any use of electronic devices is considered a significant distraction that could lead to errors or lapses in attention. Therefore, railroad operating employees must refrain from using electronic devices during these critical moments to ensure the safety of themselves, their colleagues, and the passengers they serve. In contrast, the other options describe scenarios where the usage of electronic devices is either permitted or acceptable under specific conditions. For example, using electronic devices for health-related applications or necessary communication during emergencies acknowledges the importance of health and safety responses. Additionally, using devices while stationary during break time does not interfere with the performance of safety-related duties, as the employee is not actively engaged in conducting operations during that time. Overall, the focus remains on maintaining the highest safety standards while operating trains.

6. Under what condition can a crew move a train into a main track outside yard limits against the current of traffic?

- A. When all signals indicate clear
- B. When track permit is issued**
- C. With verbal permission from the dispatcher
- D. During scheduled maintenance hours

The correct answer emphasizes the importance of rules and protocols that govern train movements, especially when it comes to safety and operational efficiency. A track permit serves as a formal authorization from the proper authorities, indicating that specific conditions have been met for a train to move into a main track outside yard limits against the current of traffic. This ensures that the crew conducts the movement safely, being aware of any potential conflicts with other trains or maintenance activities that may be occurring on the track. The issuance of a track permit typically involves a thorough check of track occupancy, signal status, and any other operational considerations that may impact safety. While signals indicating clear might seem like an adequate condition for movement, they do not provide the comprehensive assurance that a track permit does. Likewise, while verbal permission from the dispatcher might seem sufficient, protocols usually require written documentation for such movements to ensure clarity and accountability. Maintenance hours, although they provide a time frame when certain operations may be restricted, do not inherently grant permission for such a movement. Thus, a track permit is the most reliable method to ensure that all safety considerations are accounted for before proceeding.

7. What should a crew member do if a safety device becomes defective en route?

- A. Ignore it until the next stop
- B. Inform the train dispatcher and mechanical department**
- C. Attempt to repair the device immediately
- D. Cut out the device if it interferes with operations

When a safety device becomes defective while en route, it's crucial to prioritize safety and proper protocol. Informing the train dispatcher and mechanical department is the appropriate action because they are responsible for assessing the situation and providing guidance on how to proceed. This communication ensures that qualified personnel can evaluate the safety implications of the defect and decide on the best course of action, which can include arranging for repairs or necessary safety checks. Engaging the dispatcher and mechanical team also allows for proper documentation of the incident and ensures compliance with regulations, which are essential for maintaining operational safety. The dispatcher may also know the planned route and any potential risks associated with continuing operations without the safety device functioning properly. Thus, this approach not only protects the crew but also upholds the safety of passengers and cargo during transit.

8. What is required before proceeding after adding cars during a transfer train movement?

- A. Verify brake pipe pressure is restored**
- B. Ensure no delays are experienced
- C. Complete a full inspection of the cargo
- D. Check weather conditions

Before proceeding after adding cars during a transfer train movement, it is crucial to verify that the brake pipe pressure is restored. This step is essential because proper brake function is critical for the safe operation of any train. If the brake pipe pressure is not restored, the braking system may not function correctly, which could lead to dangerous situations, especially with the additional weight and potential complexities introduced by the new cars. By confirming that the brake pipe pressure is at the required level, the crew ensures that the entire train will have the necessary braking force to stop safely when needed. This verification is a crucial part of maintaining safety standards during train operations. The other factors, while they might be important in different contexts or situations, do not specifically address the immediate safety concerns involved in confirming the readiness of the train's braking system after modifications.

9. What is the first step to apply a vertical wheel brake?

- A. Turn the brake wheel counterclockwise
- B. Place the release lever in the OFF position
- C. Place the release lever or pawl in the ON position**
- D. Pull the brake wheel freely without a plan

To apply a vertical wheel brake, the initial action involves placing the release lever or pawl in the ON position. This action is essential because it allows the brake mechanism to engage correctly, ensuring that the brakes will be applied effectively when the brake wheel is turned. Understanding this process is crucial for safe train operation; the release lever serves as a switch for the brake's function. If the lever is not correctly positioned to engage the brakes, trying to turn the wheel will not result in the intended braking action, which could lead to dangerous situations. While the other choices may involve actions related to the braking process, they do not represent the correct first step to ensure that the brakes are applied properly. Proper procedure is vital in railroad operations, and following the correct sequence ensures both safety and efficiency during maneuvers involving the train's braking system.

10. What must crew members refrain from doing when going between rail equipment?

- A. Operating controls without permission**
- B. Leaving tools outside the train
- C. Using sound signals
- D. Making physical contact with the rail

Crew members must refrain from operating controls without permission when going between rail equipment to maintain safety and avoid accidents. Operating controls can lead to unintended movement of the equipment, which can dangerously affect crew members who might be between trains or near the equipment. It is crucial for personnel to communicate and coordinate actions to ensure everyone's safety. This practice protects not only the crew but also prevents any disruption or hazard that could arise from unauthorized equipment operation. Other practices, while important for overall safety, do not encompass the immediate risks associated with operating train controls. For instance, leaving tools outside the train can lead to trip hazards, and using sound signals is essential for communication, especially in a noisy environment. Making physical contact with the rail can vary in safety depending on the situation, but it is not as directly related to potential accidents as unauthorized control operation. Therefore, ensuring that crew members do not operate controls without permission is critically important for the safe management of rail equipment.

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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.

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

<https://bnsfconductor.examzify.com>

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

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