

California BAR Smog Technician 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

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- 1. A military vehicle not registered in California enters for a smog check. If it passes, what document is issued?**
 - A. No report is issued.**
 - B. A vehicle inspection report is issued.**
 - C. A temporary clearance is issued.**
 - D. A special out-of-state exemption is granted.**

- 2. Which vehicle type is not compatible with ASM testing?**
 - A. Motorhomes under 4,000 pounds**
 - B. Passenger cars with GVWR under 3,000 pounds**
 - C. Motorhomes over 8,500 pounds**
 - D. Pickup trucks under 6,000 pounds**

- 3. For a government fleet vehicle that fails as a gross polluter, which testing location is authorized to certify?**
 - A. STAR station only**
 - B. Any certified test station**
 - C. Mobile testing unit only**
 - D. Out-of-state facility**

- 4. Who is correct regarding the dynamometer test?**
 - A. Technician B is correct; there is no load applied.**
 - B. Both technicians are incorrect; the test is idle only.**
 - C. The test is irrelevant to driving conditions.**
 - D. Technician A is correct; the dynamometer test applies a load to simulate actual driving conditions.**

- 5. For a specially constructed SPCN vehicle, which vehicle make should be entered into the Emission Inspection System (EIS)?**
 - A. The original make of the vehicle**
 - B. The SPCN designation**
 - C. The manufacturer of the aftermarket converter**
 - D. Unknown**

- 6. For BAR inspection records, how long must a station keep records pertaining to smog checks and repairs?**
- A. 2 years**
 - B. 3 years**
 - C. 5 years**
 - D. 1 year**
- 7. If the under-hood emissions label states that the ignition timing is 'non-adjustable', what is the correct inspection action?**
- A. Pass the vehicle during the Functional Inspection.**
 - B. Document the label and proceed.**
 - C. Fail the vehicle during the Functional Inspection.**
 - D. Request a timing check by a supervisor.**
- 8. What must the owner do now that it has failed again?**
- A. Spend at least \$450.00 and apply for a cost waiver**
 - B. Replace the catalytic converter**
 - C. Ignore the failure and drive as usual**
 - D. Submit an automatic waiver regardless of cost**
- 9. How should a technician enter a finding of a bypassed EGR solenoid?**
- A. Record the EGR as bypassed.**
 - B. List the EGR as modified.**
 - C. Note the EGR as functioning.**
 - D. Remove the EGR from the report.**
- 10. In the Crankcase Visible Smoke Test, what letter is entered for a defective vehicle?**
- A. F**
 - B. P**
 - C. D**
 - D. N**

Answers

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

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Explanations

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1. A military vehicle not registered in California enters for a smog check. If it passes, what document is issued?

- A. No report is issued.**
- B. A vehicle inspection report is issued.**
- C. A temporary clearance is issued.**
- D. A special out-of-state exemption is granted.**

When a vehicle that isn't registered in California comes in for a smog check and it passes, a temporary clearance is issued. This special document serves as short-term proof that the vehicle has met the smog requirement, allowing it to be driven while the owner completes California registration or any other required steps. It's used for out-of-state or military vehicles because the standard California registration paperwork isn't yet in place, so the temporary clearance covers the interim period. This isn't a permanent certificate, and it's not a general report or an exemption—the temporary clearance specifically accommodates the situation of a non-CA registered vehicle undergoing the test and awaiting final registration.

2. Which vehicle type is not compatible with ASM testing?

- A. Motorhomes under 4,000 pounds**
- B. Passenger cars with GVWR under 3,000 pounds**
- C. Motorhomes over 8,500 pounds**
- D. Pickup trucks under 6,000 pounds**

ASM testing is designed for light-duty vehicles, with a weight limit that keeps it within the range of typical cars, light trucks, and smaller motorhomes. When a vehicle exceeds that limit—specifically motorhomes with a GVWR over 8,500 pounds—the ASM method isn't suitable because the testing equipment and procedures aren't designed for such heavy weights and their different emissions characteristics. That's why motorhomes over 8,500 pounds aren't compatible with ASM testing. The lighter options listed (smaller motorhomes, passenger cars, and pickup trucks under the specified GVWRs) fit within the lightweight category that ASM is meant to handle.

3. For a government fleet vehicle that fails as a gross polluter, which testing location is authorized to certify?

- A. STAR station only**
- B. Any certified test station**
- C. Mobile testing unit only**
- D. Out-of-state facility**

When a vehicle is flagged as a gross polluter, only STAR-certified testing stations have the authority to re-test and certify it after repairs. These stations are equipped to perform the enhanced procedures needed to verify that the emissions problem was truly corrected and that the vehicle now meets the required standards. This safeguard ensures the high-emitting issue is resolved before the vehicle returns to the normal testing cycle. Other options aren't authorized for this certification step: non-STAR stations, mobile units, or facilities out of state don't have the approval to certify gross polluter repairs under California's Smog Check rules.

4. Who is correct regarding the dynamometer test?

- A. Technician B is correct; there is no load applied.**
- B. Both technicians are incorrect; the test is idle only.**
- C. The test is irrelevant to driving conditions.**
- D. Technician A is correct; the dynamometer test applies a load to simulate actual driving conditions.**

Dynamometer testing uses controlled resistance to mimic the road load the vehicle experiences during driving. By applying a load with the rollers, the engine experiences real torque and power demands as it goes through a drive cycle, so emissions are measured under conditions close to how the vehicle actually operates. That's why Technician A's view is correct: the test applies a load to simulate actual driving conditions. Saying there's no load, that the test is idle only, or that it's irrelevant to driving conditions misses the purpose of the drive-cycle test. The whole point is to reproduce real-world operating conditions so emissions readings reflect what happens on the road, not just at idle.

5. For a specially constructed SPCN vehicle, which vehicle make should be entered into the Emission Inspection System (EIS)?

- A. The original make of the vehicle**
- B. The SPCN designation**
- C. The manufacturer of the aftermarket converter**
- D. Unknown**

For an SPCN (specially constructed) vehicle, the Emission Inspection System uses the original vehicle make to determine the proper test parameters and to record the inspection history. The system relies on the original manufacturer's make to apply the correct standards, even if the vehicle has been modified or converted. The SPCN designation itself is administrative and does not change the make that the EIS uses. The aftermarket converter's manufacturer is a component detail and not used to define the vehicle's make, and leaving the make as unknown isn't the standard practice. So, you should enter the original vehicle's make. For example, if the vehicle started as a Ford, you enter Ford.

6. For BAR inspection records, how long must a station keep records pertaining to smog checks and repairs?

- A. 2 years**
- B. 3 years**
- C. 5 years**
- D. 1 year**

Keeping BAR inspection records for smog checks and related repairs for three years is required. This duration creates an auditable trail for BAR audits and for customers who need to review test results and any repairs performed to bring a vehicle into compliance. In practice, you should retain the test result, date, station and technician identifiers, and any repair documentation or receipts tied to that smog check. Store these records in a location that's easy to access and keep them for the full three-year period.

7. If the under-hood emissions label states that the ignition timing is 'non-adjustable', what is the correct inspection action?

- A. Pass the vehicle during the Functional Inspection.**
- B. Document the label and proceed.**
- C. Fail the vehicle during the Functional Inspection.**
- D. Request a timing check by a supervisor.**

Ignition timing information on the under-hood emissions label may indicate whether timing can be adjusted. When the label says non-adjustable, there is no on-site adjustment possible to bring the timing into any acceptable range. In the Functional Inspection, you must be able to verify and, if needed, adjust timing to meet the standard. If you cannot adjust timing and the vehicle cannot be shown to meet emission requirements as-is, the vehicle fails the inspection. So, the correct action is to fail the vehicle during the Functional Inspection because there's no allowable adjustment to achieve compliance. Documenting the label and proceeding or asking for a supervisor timing check wouldn't change the fact that you can't adjust the timing to verify compliance, and passing would be inappropriate.

8. What must the owner do now that it has failed again?

- A. Spend at least \$450.00 and apply for a cost waiver**
- B. Replace the catalytic converter**
- C. Ignore the failure and drive as usual**
- D. Submit an automatic waiver regardless of cost**

After a smog check failure, California allows an exception if you've already tried repairs and spent a substantial amount. If two repair attempts have failed again, you may qualify for a cost waiver. The owner must spend at least \$450 on qualifying emissions-related repairs and then apply for the waiver with BAR/DMV. If the waiver is approved, the vehicle can be registered despite the failure. This option is the correct one because the cost waiver hinges on reaching that \$450 repair threshold and submitting the waiver application. Replacing the catalytic converter isn't a mandated step for the waiver, ignoring the failure isn't allowed, and there isn't an automatic waiver without the cost criterion being met.

9. How should a technician enter a finding of a bypassed EGR solenoid?

- A. Record the EGR as bypassed.**
- B. List the EGR as modified.**
- C. Note the EGR as functioning.**
- D. Remove the EGR from the report.**

When a vehicle's emissions system has been altered, the finding should show that status as a modification to the emissions control system. Bypassing the EGR solenoid means the system is no longer in its original OEM configuration, so the correct entry is to list the EGR as modified. This communicates clearly that the EGR system has been changed from how the manufacturer designed it, which can affect emissions performance and inspection eligibility and may require repair to restore proper function. Saying the EGR is bypassed would describe a condition but not the proper reporting category used for nonstandard alterations; noting it as functioning would be incorrect since bypassing disables proper EGR operation; removing it from the report would hide a noncompliance issue.

10. In the Crankcase Visible Smoke Test, what letter is entered for a defective vehicle?

- A. F**
- B. P**
- C. D**
- D. N**

In this test, inspectors record results with a simple code that reflects the outcome. If there is visible smoke from the crankcase and the vehicle doesn't pass, the result is entered with the code that means Fail. That code clearly communicates that the vehicle is defective and must be repaired before it can pass the Smog Check. A passing result would use the code that means Pass, while other codes (like not tested or deferred) are used in different administrative situations. So, the letter entered for a defective vehicle is the one that stands for Fail.

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://californiabarsmogtech.examzify.com>

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

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