

CALIFORNIA CDL CLASS A PRACTICE EXAM (SAMPLE)

STUDY GUIDE



SAMPLE STUDY GUIDE WITH LIMITED QUESTIONS

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THE FULL VERSION STUDY GUIDE

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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. When is it permissible to use a cell phone while driving a commercial vehicle?**
 - A. Only when using a hands-free device and not actively driving.
 - B. At any time as long as it's for business purposes.
 - C. When driving on rural roads.
 - D. While stopped at traffic lights only.

- 2. How long should it take to build air pressure from 85 to 100 psi in a dual air system?**
 - A. 30 seconds
 - B. 45 seconds
 - C. 60 seconds
 - D. 90 seconds

- 3. What does hazmat class 7 signify?**
 - A. Corrosive
 - B. Oxidizing
 - C. Radioactive
 - D. Explosive

- 4. What is an essential pre-trip inspection item?**
 - A. Vehicle cleanliness
 - B. Fuel level only
 - C. Brakes and lights functionality
 - D. Passenger comfort features

- 5. What indicates a successful test of the service brakes?**
 - A. No pulling to one side
 - B. Delayed stopping
 - C. Unusual feel
 - D. All of the above

- 6. What should you do to prevent tire blowouts?**
- A. Regularly check tire pressure and tread condition.
 - B. Only check tires when light is low.
 - C. Have tires rotated only at specific intervals.
 - D. Ignore pressure and focus on tread only.
- 7. Which requirement must be met for drivers to avoid violating hours of service limits?**
- A. Log all driving hours in a single-entry system
 - B. Record hours in duplicate for inspection
 - C. Only report driving hours weekly
 - D. Use electronic logbook systems exclusively
- 8. What does the "N" endorsement allow you to drive?**
- A. A flatbed truck
 - B. A tanker vehicle
 - C. A passenger vehicle
 - D. A box truck
- 9. What is the gross weight limit on two consecutive sets of tandem axles?**
- A. 30,000 pounds
 - B. 34,000 pounds
 - C. 38,000 pounds
 - D. 40,000 pounds
- 10. What is the cutoff pressure for the air compressor during a pressure test?**
- A. 100 psi
 - B. 110 psi
 - C. 130 psi
 - D. 140 psi

Answers

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

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Explanations

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1. When is it permissible to use a cell phone while driving a commercial vehicle?

- A. Only when using a hands-free device and not actively driving.**
- B. At any time as long as it's for business purposes.
- C. When driving on rural roads.
- D. While stopped at traffic lights only.

Using a cell phone while driving a commercial vehicle is regulated to ensure the safety of the driver, passengers, and other road users. The correct response emphasizes that it is permissible to use a cell phone only when utilizing a hands-free device. This approach is designed to minimize distractions while still allowing drivers to communicate when necessary. Hands-free technology allows drivers to keep both hands on the wheel and maintain their focus on the road, which is essential for safe driving, especially when operating larger vehicles that require greater attention and longer stopping distances compared to smaller cars. Additionally, this requirement aligns with regulations established by the Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration (FMCSA), which aims to reduce accidents caused by distracted driving. While there are other choices that suggest different circumstances under which cell phone use might be permissible, none of them comply with the strict regulations regarding cell phone use in commercial settings. Thus, emphasizing hands-free use when not actively driving reflects both a legal standard and a best practice for road safety.

2. How long should it take to build air pressure from 85 to 100 psi in a dual air system?

- A. 30 seconds
- B. 45 seconds**
- C. 60 seconds
- D. 90 seconds

Building air pressure from 85 to 100 psi in a dual air system should ideally take around 45 seconds. This timeframe is crucial as it is a standard benchmark for the performance of air brake systems in commercial vehicles. A well-functioning dual air system should be capable of achieving a sufficient pressure build-up quickly to ensure safe braking. The importance of reaching this pressure efficiently lies in the fact that delays can indicate potential issues with the compressor or other components of the air system. If the pressure takes significantly longer than 45 seconds, it may mean there is a problem that could affect braking effectiveness, and this could pose a safety risk while driving. Understanding the specific time required for pressure build-up is vital for CDL drivers, as it reflects the overall health of the air brake system and is a key safety inspection criterion. Knowing this helps ensure that drivers are aware of the performance characteristics of their vehicle's braking system and can identify potential issues early on.

3. What does hazmat class 7 signify?

- A. Corrosive
- B. Oxidizing
- C. Radioactive**
- D. Explosive

Hazmat class 7 signifies radioactive materials, which include a range of substances that emit radiation and pose risks to health and safety. The classification system used for hazardous materials, including that of the U.S. Department of Transportation (DOT) and the United Nations, places these materials in class 7 due to the specialized handling and transportation requirements they impose. Radioactive materials can be found in various forms, such as medical isotopes used in treatments and diagnostics, or in materials used in research and nuclear energy. Because they can cause significant harm to human health and the environment, there are strict regulations governing their packaging, marking, transport, and disposal. Awareness of this classification is crucial for drivers who are licensed to haul hazardous materials, ensuring they understand the specific protocols needed to handle radioactive substances.

4. What is an essential pre-trip inspection item?

- A. Vehicle cleanliness
- B. Fuel level only
- C. Brakes and lights functionality**
- D. Passenger comfort features

An essential pre-trip inspection item is the functionality of brakes and lights. This is critical because both components are vital for safe vehicle operation. Properly functioning brakes ensure that the driver can stop the vehicle effectively, which is crucial for safety. Similarly, working lights are necessary for visibility and signaling to other drivers, especially at night or in poor weather conditions. Without verifying that these systems are operational, a driver could be putting themselves and others at risk on the road. While vehicle cleanliness and passenger comfort features are important for overall vehicle maintenance and user experience, they do not directly impact the safety and operability of the vehicle in the same way that brakes and lights do. Checking the fuel level is also valuable, but it is secondary concerning the immediate safety considerations that brakes and lights address. Thus, focusing on brakes and lights during a pre-trip inspection ensures that a vehicle is ready for safe operation on the road.

5. What indicates a successful test of the service brakes?

- A. No pulling to one side**
- B. Delayed stopping
- C. Unusual feel
- D. All of the above

A successful test of the service brakes is indicated by the vehicle not pulling to one side when the brakes are applied. This is an essential aspect of brake functionality because if the brakes are unevenly applied or if there is a mechanical issue, the vehicle may veer off in one direction, which can be dangerous when controlling a large vehicle like a Class A truck. Ensuring that the vehicle stops in a straight line demonstrates that the brakes are functioning properly and evenly distributed, which is crucial for maintaining control and safety while driving. In contrast, a delayed stopping response suggests a problem with the brake system that needs to be addressed. Similarly, an unusual feel when applying the brakes can indicate issues such as air in the brake lines, worn brake pads, or other mechanical failures. These conditions highlight potential safety risks and do not represent successful brake operation.

6. What should you do to prevent tire blowouts?

A. Regularly check tire pressure and tread condition.

B. Only check tires when light is low.

C. Have tires rotated only at specific intervals.

D. Ignore pressure and focus on tread only.

To prevent tire blowouts, regularly checking tire pressure and tread condition is essential. Maintaining the correct tire pressure ensures that the tires can handle the weight of the vehicle and provide optimal grip. Under-inflated tires can overheat or wear unevenly, leading to potential blowouts. Additionally, monitoring the tread condition is crucial because tires with inadequate tread depth are less effective in providing traction and can also be more susceptible to damage from road hazards. By routinely checking both the tire pressure and tread, you can spot any issues early, such as uneven wear or low pressure, and address them before they lead to more serious problems like tire blowouts. Regular maintenance helps ensure the safety and reliability of your vehicle on the road.

7. Which requirement must be met for drivers to avoid violating hours of service limits?

A. Log all driving hours in a single-entry system

B. Record hours in duplicate for inspection

C. Only report driving hours weekly

D. Use electronic logbook systems exclusively

To comply with hours of service requirements, drivers must accurately record their driving hours to ensure they do not exceed the regulated limits. Keeping a log in a format that is accessible for inspection is crucial for transparency and regulatory compliance. Recording hours in duplicate allows for verification and helps maintain accurate records, which can be inspected by law enforcement or regulatory agencies. This redundancy ensures that even if one log is lost or damaged, there is still a reliable record available for review. Other options do not adequately meet compliance requirements. A single-entry system may lead to errors or inaccuracies, while only reporting hours weekly might not capture daily driving data necessary for compliance with limits. Exclusively using electronic logbooks could be beneficial, but it does not inherently satisfy the requirement of ensuring logs are ready for inspection unless they are also clear and accurate.

8. What does the "N" endorsement allow you to drive?

A. A flatbed truck

B. A tanker vehicle

C. A passenger vehicle

D. A box truck

The "N" endorsement specifically allows a driver to operate tank vehicles that transport liquids in bulk. This endorsement is crucial because tank vehicles have unique handling characteristics and may pose additional risks due to the shifting liquid cargo. Therefore, it is essential for drivers to have proper training and knowledge related to the operation of these vehicles, including understanding the dynamics of the load and the specific regulations governing tankers. In contrast, options involving flatbed trucks, passenger vehicles, and box trucks do not require the "N" endorsement. Each of these vehicle types has its own set of requirements and classifications that do not pertain to the handling of tank vehicles, making them distinct from the purpose of the "N" endorsement.

9. What is the gross weight limit on two consecutive sets of tandem axles?

- A. 30,000 pounds
- B. 34,000 pounds**
- C. 38,000 pounds
- D. 40,000 pounds

The gross weight limit on two consecutive sets of tandem axles is 34,000 pounds. This regulation is established to ensure safe operations on highways, as it helps prevent excessive road wear and improves vehicle control. Tandem axles, which typically consist of two axle sets located close together, have specific weight limits set by the Federal Bridge Formula to account for factors like axle spacing and distribution of weight. Adhering to these limits is crucial for maintaining the integrity of road infrastructure and preventing accidents due to overloading. By keeping the weight of two consecutive sets of tandem axles within the 34,000-pound limit, drivers can ensure safer transport of goods while complying with regulations.

10. What is the cutoff pressure for the air compressor during a pressure test?

- A. 100 psi
- B. 110 psi
- C. 130 psi**
- D. 140 psi

The correct answer, 130 psi, is significant because it aligns with standard pressure specifications for air brake systems used in commercial vehicles. During a pressure test, the air compressor is designed to build air pressure to a certain level, referred to as the cutoff pressure, where it will automatically stop compressing air. Typically, this cutoff pressure is set to 130 psi to ensure the system operates effectively while allowing the brakes to function properly without exceeding safety limits. A cutoff pressure of 130 psi helps maintain the reliability and integrity of the air brake system. It ensures that there is adequate air supply for braking actions but also keeps the system from reaching pressures that could cause damage or reduce the effectiveness of the braking system. Understanding this pressure limit is crucial for drivers as it impacts safety and performance. Knowing the correct cutoff pressure also prepares drivers for troubleshooting and maintenance practices, ensuring that regular inspections can be performed to check if the air compressor is operating correctly at the specified pressure levels. This understanding reinforces the importance of following manufacturer specifications and regulatory requirements for commercial driver's license holders.

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:

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

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