

# California General Contractor B 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 water supply pipe entering a building should be:**
  - A. Vertical**
  - B. Sloped away from the supply**
  - C. Sloped toward the supply**
  - D. Horizontal**
  
- 2. Why is proper drainage essential in landscaping?**
  - A. To beautify the landscape**
  - B. To control erosion**
  - C. To reduce maintenance efforts**
  - D. To promote plant growth**
  
- 3. What is the easiest insulation to install in older homes?**
  - A. Loose-fill**
  - B. Styrofoam**
  - C. Batted**
  - D. Blanket**
  
- 4. Which mortar type is medium-strength and suitable for exposed masonry above grade?**
  - A. M**
  - B. N**
  - C. S**
  - D. O**
  
- 5. What is prepared before pouring concrete slab above ground?**
  - A. Sand, gravel, and wire mesh**
  - B. Sand and wire mesh**
  - C. Wire mesh only**
  - D. Visqueen, sand and wire mesh**

- 6. What are the standard dimensions for upper kitchen cabinets?**
- A. 24" height and 24" depth**
  - B. 12" height and 24" depth**
  - C. 30" height and 12" depth**
  - D. 36" height and 12" depth**
- 7. What is the purpose of using washers in plumbing connections?**
- A. To strengthen the pipe**
  - B. To prevent leaks**
  - C. To reduce weight**
  - D. To enhance aesthetics**
- 8. What material is commonly used in the construction of interior walls?**
- A. Concrete**
  - B. Wood paneling**
  - C. Drywall**
  - D. Plywood**
- 9. What kind of brick is suitable for use in planter applications?**
- A. S**
  - B. MW**
  - C. NW**
  - D. SS**
- 10. What kind of piping should be used for an air conditioning unit?**
- A. Copper**
  - B. Aluminum**
  - C. Steel**
  - D. Galvanized**

## **Answers**

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

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## **Explanations**

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**1. A water supply pipe entering a building should be:**

- A. Vertical**
- B. Sloped away from the supply**
- C. Sloped toward the supply**
- D. Horizontal**

A water supply pipe entering a building should be horizontal for several practical reasons. When a pipe is installed horizontally, it allows for the efficient flow of water into the building by utilizing gravitational forces correctly, ensuring that the water pressure is maintained over distance. This orientation also helps to prevent the accumulation of air pockets or sediments inside the pipe, which can occur in vertical or sloped installations. Moreover, horizontal pipes are generally easier to install and maintain, as they can be run parallel to the ground structure of the building. This configuration also reduces the risk of pipe sagging or bending, which can lead to leaks over time. Proper drainage can be achieved more effectively with horizontal placement, allowing any potential moisture or condensation that forms to escape and not build up inside the pipe, which would not be effective in a vertical or improperly sloped pipe. Understanding these principles is essential for ensuring that plumbing systems function correctly, maintain water quality, and are easy to service.

**2. Why is proper drainage essential in landscaping?**

- A. To beautify the landscape**
- B. To control erosion**
- C. To reduce maintenance efforts**
- D. To promote plant growth**

Proper drainage is essential in landscaping primarily because it helps to control erosion. When water is not effectively channeled away from the landscape, it can create areas of excessive runoff, which can erode soil, wash away topsoil, and disturb the natural landscape. Erosion can lead to significant damage to planted areas, reduce the diversity of vegetation, and compromise the integrity of landscaping structures. By ensuring that there is appropriate drainage, you create a system that directs water flow in a way that minimizes soil displacement. This can involve the use of drainage systems, swales, and strategic grading to manage how water moves across and through the landscape. Ultimately, controlling erosion not only protects the landscape's appearance, but it also supports the long-term health and stability of the ecosystem being created or maintained.

### 3. What is the easiest insulation to install in older homes?

**A. Loose-fill**

**B. Styrofoam**

**C. Batted**

**D. Blanket**

Loose-fill insulation is often considered the easiest option to install in older homes due to its versatility and the way it can be applied. This type of insulation is commonly made from materials such as cellulose, fiberglass, or mineral wool, and can be blown into attics, walls, and other spaces. Its installation process typically involves using a blowing machine, which allows the installer to fill irregular spaces and voids easily, adapting to the unique shapes and configurations often found in older buildings. Unlike batts or blankets, which require fitting into specific spaces and may need additional trimming to fit snugly, loose-fill can conform to the existing structure without the need for extensive adjustments. This makes it particularly advantageous for retrofitting homes that may have non-standard framing or other obstacles that complicate installation. Additionally, loose-fill insulation can cover a larger area more quickly, further enabling efficient insulation upgrade projects in older homes. The other types of insulation, such as styrofoam, batts, and blankets, may require more precise handling and fitting, especially in homes with existing infrastructure that could complicate their installation. Batts and blankets, for example, need to be cut and shaped correctly to fit the space, which can be more labor-intensive in older homes where there might

### 4. Which mortar type is medium-strength and suitable for exposed masonry above grade?

**A. M**

**B. N**

**C. S**

**D. O**

The choice of mortar type B, which is Type N, is appropriate because it is formulated to provide a medium level of strength, typically around 750 psi. This makes it particularly suitable for exposed masonry applications above grade, such as in walls that experience regular weather exposure. Type N mortar also has good workability and flexibility, allowing it to perform well in various conditions, including areas subject to moderate weathering. Type N is often used in above-grade masonry construction because it can resist the elements while providing adequate strength to support the structure. Its composition typically includes one part Portland cement, one part lime, and six parts sand, which contributes to its durability and adaptability. Other types of mortar, such as M, S, and O, serve different purposes or have varying strength attributes. For instance, Type M is a high-strength mortar, suitable for below-grade applications or where high compressive strength is needed but is typically too strong for most above-grade work. Type S offers high strength and is used where additional strength is necessary but may also be over-specification for typical above-grade masonry. Type O is a low-strength mortar, generally used in non-load-bearing applications, making it unsuitable for exposed masonry that requires medium strength and durability.

**5. What is prepared before pouring concrete slab above ground?**

- A. Sand, gravel, and wire mesh**
- B. Sand and wire mesh**
- C. Wire mesh only**

**D. Visqueen, sand and wire mesh**

Before pouring a concrete slab above ground, it is essential to create a proper base to ensure the slab's stability and durability. The preparation commonly involves using Visqueen, sand, and wire mesh. Visqueen, a type of polyethylene sheeting, serves as a moisture barrier. This is important because it helps prevent moisture from the ground from wicking up into the concrete, which can lead to cracking and other issues over time. The inclusion of sand provides a level base for the concrete slab and helps with drainage. Wire mesh is then placed within the sand or directly under the slab to provide tensile strength. It reinforces the concrete, helping to resist cracking and improve the overall structural integrity of the slab. By using these components together, the foundation for the concrete slab is effectively prepared, promoting a strong, long-lasting finished product. The combination of these three materials is critical for ensuring that the slab performs well in various environmental conditions and loads.

**6. What are the standard dimensions for upper kitchen cabinets?**

- A. 24" height and 24" depth**
- B. 12" height and 24" depth**
- C. 30" height and 12" depth**
- D. 36" height and 12" depth**

The standard dimensions for upper kitchen cabinets are typically recognized as being 30 inches in height and 12 inches in depth. This configuration provides an optimal balance for accessing items stored in the cabinets while also accommodating standard countertop heights below. The height of 30 inches ensures that the cabinets are positioned at a convenient level for most users while allowing space above for decorative purposes or additional storage if needed. The standard depth of 12 inches provides sufficient space for most kitchen dishes and glassware, contributing to an efficient use of kitchen space without protruding too far into the kitchen area, which could restrict movement. Understanding these dimensions is essential for anyone involved in kitchen design or remodeling, as they influence both functionality and aesthetics in kitchen layouts.

**7. What is the purpose of using washers in plumbing connections?**

- A. To strengthen the pipe**
- B. To prevent leaks**
- C. To reduce weight**
- D. To enhance aesthetics**

The primary purpose of using washers in plumbing connections is to prevent leaks. Washers create a seal between two surfaces, such as between a nut and a pipe, or between two fittings. This sealing action is crucial in plumbing systems, where maintaining a tight, leak-free connection is essential to prevent water loss and ensure the system functions effectively. The materials from which washers are made, such as rubber or silicone, provide flexibility and durability, adapting to the surfaces they contact and filling any small gaps that might otherwise allow water to escape. Using washers helps to absorb vibrations and accommodate slight misalignments in fittings, further enhancing the integrity of the connection. Properly installed washers can significantly reduce the risk of leaks in fixtures, taps, and piping, which is vital for safeguarding against water damage and maintaining the efficiency of the plumbing system.

**8. What material is commonly used in the construction of interior walls?**

- A. Concrete**
- B. Wood paneling**
- C. Drywall**
- D. Plywood**

The material commonly used in the construction of interior walls is drywall. This is primarily because drywall is specifically designed for interior applications, offering a smooth surface that can be easily finished with paint or wallpaper. It is composed of a core of gypsum sandwiched between two sheets of thick paper, which makes it lightweight, easy to install, and cost-effective. Drywall also provides fire resistance, acoustic properties, and is easily repairable, making it a preferred choice for residential and commercial construction. Its versatility accommodates both standard wall framing and more complex layouts, contributing to its popularity in the industry. Other materials, while used in various applications, do not serve as the primary choice for constructing interior walls. For instance, concrete is heavier and generally used for structural elements or external walls, wood paneling offers aesthetic qualities but is not typically used for the structural framework of walls, and plywood is better suited for floor sheathing or other specific applications rather than as an interior wall material.

**9. What kind of brick is suitable for use in planter applications?**

- A. S
- B. MW**
- C. NW
- D. SS

The correct choice is MW (Medium Weight) brick, which is specifically suited for use in planter applications due to its durability and moisture resistance. Medium Weight bricks are designed to withstand outdoor conditions and can handle the weight and moisture associated with soil and plant growth. They are also typically made with fewer voids, which helps improve their structural integrity and resistance to water penetration. Using the appropriate type of brick is essential in planter applications because bricks that are not designed for outdoor use may deteriorate over time when exposed to moisture and temperature fluctuations. Therefore, choosing MW bricks ensures a longer lifespan for planter walls and reduces the need for repairs or replacements, making them a smart choice for garden and landscaping projects. This choice also contributes to a healthier environment for plants by preventing water pooling or soil erosion that can occur with less suitable materials.

**10. What kind of piping should be used for an air conditioning unit?**

- A. Copper**
- B. Aluminum
- C. Steel
- D. Galvanized

Using copper piping for an air conditioning unit is the best choice due to several key properties of copper that make it particularly well-suited for this application. Copper has excellent thermal conductivity, which allows for efficient heat exchange, a critical function in air conditioning systems. This means it can effectively transfer heat from the refrigerant within the pipes, helping to maintain the efficiency and performance of the unit. Additionally, copper is resistant to corrosion and has a proven lifespan, which reduces the need for frequent replacements and repairs. Its relatively lightweight nature makes it easier to install and handle during the installation process. Copper also has good malleability, allowing it to be easily shaped and bent as needed for proper fit and functionality in the layout of an air conditioning system. The other materials mentioned—aluminum, steel, and galvanized piping—are not typically used for the refrigerant lines in air conditioning systems as effectively as copper. While aluminum can be used in certain applications, it does not have the strength or corrosion resistance that copper offers. Steel is heavier, less efficient at heat transfer, and more prone to rust and corrosion, making it less ideal for this application. Galvanized pipes, while resistant to corrosion, are also generally not used in refrigeration applications because they can degrade

## 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:**

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

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