

CDL General Knowledge Practice Test (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. When securing cargo that can shift, how many tie-downs are required at a minimum?**
 - A. 1**
 - B. 2**
 - C. 3**
 - D. 4**

- 2. What should you check using your mirrors while making turns?**
 - A. The blind spots around your vehicle**
 - B. The rear of your vehicle**
 - C. The fuel gauge**
 - D. The passenger side door**

- 3. What should drivers do if they notice their brakes are not functioning properly?**
 - A. Continue to drive cautiously**
 - B. Pull over and inspect them immediately**
 - C. Ignore the problem if no warning lights are on**
 - D. Wait until they are in a safe area**

- 4. What should wheel bearing seals be checked for?**
 - A. Cracks**
 - B. Leaks**
 - C. Rust**
 - D. Wear and tear**

- 5. How far ahead should a driver look while driving?**
 - A. 5-10 seconds**
 - B. 10-12 seconds**
 - C. 12-15 seconds**
 - D. 15-20 seconds**

- 6. When driving a manual transmission truck on a long, steep downhill grade, what gear should you use?**
- A. A lower gear than you would use to climb the hill**
 - B. A higher gear than you would use to climb the hill**
 - C. The same gear as you would use on flat terrain**
 - D. You should not change gears**
- 7. If you discover an exhaust leak during a pre-trip inspection, what should you do?**
- A. Ignore it if it seems minor**
 - B. Report the problem and make arrangements for another vehicle to use**
 - C. Attempt to fix it yourself**
 - D. Continue with the inspection**
- 8. When should the parking brake be tested?**
- A. While moving forward slowly**
 - B. While parked on a hill**
 - C. After the vehicle has stopped**
 - D. While reversing**
- 9. Which of the following can cause a fire in a vehicle?**
- A. Overheated engine**
 - B. Loose fuel connections**
 - C. Under-inflated tires**
 - D. All are correct**
- 10. At what time should you check your cargo's weight?**
- A. Before leaving home**
 - B. After every fuel stop**
 - C. After every 150 miles or after three hours**
 - D. At every traffic signal**

Answers

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

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Explanations

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1. When securing cargo that can shift, how many tie-downs are required at a minimum?

- A. 1
- B. 2**
- C. 3
- D. 4

When securing cargo that can shift, a minimum of two tie-downs is required. This standard ensures that the load is adequately restrained in both directions—forward and backward, as well as side to side. Cargo is prone to shifting during transit due to factors such as acceleration, deceleration, and turns. Using just one tie-down does not provide sufficient stability and could allow the cargo to shift, potentially leading to accidents or loss of cargo. Two tie-downs create a more secure and balanced hold, effectively distributing the forces acting on the cargo and preventing it from becoming dislodged or rolling during transport. This practice is essential for ensuring safety on the road, complying with regulations, and protecting both the cargo and the vehicle.

2. What should you check using your mirrors while making turns?

- A. The blind spots around your vehicle
- B. The rear of your vehicle**
- C. The fuel gauge
- D. The passenger side door

While making turns, it is essential to check the blind spots around your vehicle, which is the area that mirrors may not adequately cover. This ensures that no pedestrians, cyclists, or other vehicles are located in those zones before completing your turn. Checking the rear of your vehicle is important, but the blind spots are critical for safe maneuvering, as they can present hazards that are not visible through standard rear view or side mirrors. Monitoring the fuel gauge is not relevant to the turning process, and ensuring that the passenger side door is secure does not directly contribute to safe navigation through turns. Thus, focusing on blind spots is the most critical aspect of using your mirrors while making turns. This helps prevent accidents and promotes safe driving practices.

3. What should drivers do if they notice their brakes are not functioning properly?

- A. Continue to drive cautiously**
- B. Pull over and inspect them immediately**
- C. Ignore the problem if no warning lights are on**
- D. Wait until they are in a safe area**

If drivers notice that their brakes are not functioning properly, the most prudent action is to pull over and inspect them immediately. This decision is critical for safety, as malfunctioning brakes can lead to severe accidents and endanger not only the driver but also other road users. By stopping the vehicle and checking the brakes, the driver can determine whether it's a minor issue that can be addressed or if further repairs are needed before continuing to drive. Continuing to drive cautiously, ignoring the problem, or waiting until reaching a safe area can exacerbate the situation. Brakes that are not performing properly may worsen, leading to a complete failure, making it difficult or impossible to stop the vehicle effectively. Immediate action is essential to prevent potential accidents and ensure the safe operation of the vehicle on the road.

4. What should wheel bearing seals be checked for?

- A. Cracks**
- B. Leaks**
- C. Rust**
- D. Wear and tear**

Wheel bearing seals play a crucial role in the overall integrity and performance of the vehicle's wheel assembly. Checking for leaks is vital because the seals are designed to keep lubricating grease or oil in the bearing and prevent contaminants like dirt and water from entering. When seals leak, it can lead to inadequate lubrication of the bearing, which increases the risk of overheating and premature wear or failure of the bearing itself. By ensuring that the seals are intact and not leaking, you help maintain the proper function and longevity of the wheel bearings. While cracks, rust, and wear and tear are important factors to consider during regular maintenance, the primary role of the wheel bearing seals is to prevent leakage. Therefore, regular checks for leaks should be emphasized to ensure proper sealing and lubrication.

5. How far ahead should a driver look while driving?

- A. 5-10 seconds
- B. 10-12 seconds
- C. 12-15 seconds**
- D. 15-20 seconds

Looking ahead while driving is crucial for safe vehicle operation and enhancing your decision-making ability on the road. The recommended distance to look ahead is typically 12-15 seconds, which translates to approximately one block in city driving or about a quarter of a mile on highways. This forward visual range allows drivers to set themselves up for potential hazards and adjust their speed or path of travel accordingly. By maintaining this 12-15 second visual lead, drivers are better equipped to anticipate obstacles, changing traffic conditions, and the actions of other road users. This forward perception time helps in avoiding sudden stops and gives additional time to react, promoting safer driving practices. Shorter distances, such as looking only 5-10 seconds ahead, might not provide enough time to respond to sudden changes in traffic or road conditions, while looking further ahead, such as 15-20 seconds, could lead to overestimation of reactions needed for distant events, which may not occur. Thus, the 12-15 second range strikes a balance between awareness and reaction time.

6. When driving a manual transmission truck on a long, steep downhill grade, what gear should you use?

- A. A lower gear than you would use to climb the hill**
- B. A higher gear than you would use to climb the hill
- C. The same gear as you would use on flat terrain
- D. You should not change gears

When driving a manual transmission truck on a long, steep downhill grade, using a lower gear than you would for climbing the hill is essential for maintaining control of the vehicle. Shifting to a lower gear enhances the engine's ability to slow the truck down through engine braking. This is crucial for preventing brake overheating, which can lead to brake failure. When descending a steep incline, gravity and momentum can significantly increase the speed of the vehicle. By using a lower gear, you can take advantage of the engine's resistance to help decelerate the truck without relying solely on the brakes. This method not only helps maintain a safe speed but also conserves brake life, as continuous braking can lead to overheating and reduced braking effectiveness. Using a higher gear or the same gear as you would on flat terrain does not provide sufficient engine resistance during descent, while not changing gears entirely overlooks the need for engine braking altogether. Therefore, selecting a lower gear is the safest and most effective approach when navigating steep downhill grades in a manual transmission truck.

7. If you discover an exhaust leak during a pre-trip inspection, what should you do?

- A. Ignore it if it seems minor**
- B. Report the problem and make arrangements for another vehicle to use**
- C. Attempt to fix it yourself**
- D. Continue with the inspection**

Reporting an exhaust leak and making arrangements for another vehicle is the appropriate response because exhaust leaks can pose serious safety risks. An exhaust leak can allow harmful gases, such as carbon monoxide, to enter the cabin of the vehicle, creating a health hazard for the driver and any passengers. Additionally, exhaust leaks can lead to increased pollution and may indicate other mechanical problems that could affect the performance and safety of the vehicle. The focus on reporting the issue ensures that the proper maintenance personnel can assess the situation fully and make the necessary repairs before the vehicle is put back into service. This prevents the potential for operating a vehicle that may be unsafe due to the leak. Overall, prioritizing safety and adherence to regulations is crucial in commercial vehicle operations, making it essential to take exhaust leaks seriously during inspections.

8. When should the parking brake be tested?

- A. While moving forward slowly**
- B. While parked on a hill**
- C. After the vehicle has stopped**
- D. While reversing**

The correct procedure for testing the parking brake is after the vehicle has come to a complete stop. This ensures that the brake system is functioning properly and can hold the vehicle in place when stationary. When the vehicle is stopped, the driver can engage the parking brake to check if it effectively prevents the vehicle from rolling. Testing while the vehicle is moving forward, even slowly, is not safe or effective, as it doesn't accurately assess the brake's holding capacity and could lead to dangerous situations if the brake fails to catch. Proper testing of the parking brake should always occur in a controlled environment after the vehicle has fully stopped, ensuring safety and reliability in various parking situations, especially on inclines.

9. Which of the following can cause a fire in a vehicle?

- A. Overheated engine**
- B. Loose fuel connections**
- C. Under-inflated tires**
- D. All are correct**

The correct answer encompasses all the listed situations, as each can potentially lead to a fire in a vehicle. An overheated engine can ignite surrounding materials or fluids, especially if there are leaks of combustible substances. Loose fuel connections can result in fuel leaking onto hot engine components, creating a fire hazard. Under-inflated tires, while primarily a safety issue related to performance and handling, can also generate excessive heat due to increased friction, which may contribute to tire failure and, in extreme cases, could potentially lead to a fire. Understanding the various risks associated with vehicle maintenance is crucial for preventing fire hazards, making it important to consider all potential causes noted in the question.

10. At what time should you check your cargo's weight?

- A. Before leaving home**
- B. After every fuel stop**
- C. After every 150 miles or after three hours**
- D. At every traffic signal**

Checking your cargo's weight after every 150 miles or after three hours is crucial for maintaining safety and compliance with weight restrictions. This practice ensures that the vehicle does not exceed federal and state weight limits, which can vary depending on the type of roadway and location. Additionally, weight changes can occur during transit due to cargo shifting or fuel consumption. Monitoring the weight at regular intervals helps prevent potential issues such as handling difficulties, increased wear on tires and brakes, and legal penalties for being overweight. Although checking the cargo's weight before leaving home is a good initial step, it does not account for any changes that may occur during travel. Similarly, while checking after every fuel stop seems reasonable, it may not be frequent enough to catch issues that arise in between stops. Checking at every traffic signal is not practical or necessary and would likely cause delays and safety concerns. Therefore, the recommended frequency of checking cargo weight after 150 miles or three hours strikes an appropriate balance between thoroughness and practicality in ensuring safe transportation.

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://cdlgeneralknowledge.examzify.com>

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

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