

CDL Vehicle Combination Practice Test (Sample)

Study Guide



Everything you need from our exam experts!

This is a sample study guide. To access the full version with hundreds of 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. Don't worry about getting everything right, 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, and take breaks to retain information better.

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.

7. Use Other Tools

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!

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Questions

- 1. What is the device that connects the service and emergency air lines from the truck to the trailer called?**
 - A. Air coupler**
 - B. Glad hands**
 - C. Brake connector**
 - D. Pneumatic fittings**
- 2. What is a common sign of a trailer brake issue?**
 - A. Odd noises during braking**
 - B. Inconsistent steering**
 - C. Reduced engine performance**
 - D. Increased fuel consumption**
- 3. What should you do if you experience harsh braking in a combination vehicle?**
 - A. Continue driving to the destination**
 - B. Inspect brake systems for any issues**
 - C. Speed up to counteract the harsh braking**
 - D. Ensure all lights are functioning**
- 4. How do you supply air to the trailer tanks?**
 - A. By pulling the trailer air supply valve**
 - B. By pushing the trailer air supply valve**
 - C. By releasing the parking brake**
 - D. By turning the ignition on**
- 5. If you cannot make a turn without entering another lane, what should you do?**
 - A. Make a sharp turn**
 - B. Turn wide before starting your turn**
 - C. Stop and wait for a clear lane**
 - D. Signal and hope for the best**

- 6. Why is it important to avoid sudden maneuvers while driving a combination vehicle?**
- A. They can lead to engine failure**
 - B. They can destabilize the trailer and cause a loss of control**
 - C. They are against traffic laws**
 - D. They waste fuel**
- 7. What should be done to the trailer before backing the tractor under it?**
- A. The trailer should be fully raised**
 - B. The trailer should be lowered slightly**
 - C. The trailer should be at an equal height with the tractor**
 - D. The trailer should be detached from the tractor**
- 8. When coupling, what is the proper position of the fifth wheel?**
- A. Level**
 - B. Tilted up towards the end of the tractor**
 - C. Tilted down towards the end of the tractor**
 - D. Centered**
- 9. What action is recommended when coming to a stop while driving a combination vehicle?**
- A. Apply firm pressure to brakes**
 - B. Shift into neutral**
 - C. Perform a controlled slowdown**
 - D. Use engine braking only**
- 10. When coupling the glad hands, which of the following actions should be avoided?**
- A. Cross air supply lines to test for leaks**
 - B. Ensure proper alignment of the glad hands**
 - C. Check for visible damage on the glad hands**
 - D. Use appropriate gloves while handling**

Answers

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

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Explanations

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1. What is the device that connects the service and emergency air lines from the truck to the trailer called?

- A. Air coupler**
- B. Glad hands**
- C. Brake connector**
- D. Pneumatic fittings**

The device that connects the service and emergency air lines from the truck to the trailer is commonly known as "glad hands." These are specialized fittings that are designed to securely couple the air supply lines, ensuring that the air brake system functions properly. Glad hands are specifically constructed for heavy-duty use in the trucking industry, providing a reliable connection that can handle the pressure and volume of air needed for braking and other pneumatic systems in combination vehicles. Properly connecting glad hands is essential for the safety and operation of the vehicle combination, as they play a critical role in controlling the brakes of the trailer. If these connections are not functioning correctly, it could lead to brake failure, posing risks to the driver and others on the road. In contrast, the other options do not accurately describe this specific component. Air couplers can refer to a variety of fittings used in air systems and are not unique to this application. Brake connectors is a more general term that could apply to any part of the braking system, making it less specific. Pneumatic fittings encompass a wide array of connections used in compressed air systems, but they do not pinpoint the unique design and function of glad hands for truck-trailer connections.

2. What is a common sign of a trailer brake issue?

- A. Odd noises during braking**
- B. Inconsistent steering**
- C. Reduced engine performance**
- D. Increased fuel consumption**

A common sign of a trailer brake issue is the presence of odd noises during braking. This can manifest as grinding, squealing, or clunking sounds, which often indicate wear in the brake components or a malfunction of the braking system. These noises can signify problems such as worn brake pads, misalignment, or a more serious internal failure within the brake system. These sounds serve as a vital warning to the driver, suggesting that immediate attention is needed to prevent further damage and ensure safe operation of the vehicle and trailer. While the other options could indicate different vehicle issues, they are not specifically tied to trailer brake problems. Inconsistent steering may suggest issues with the steering system rather than the brakes, and reduced engine performance, along with increased fuel consumption, is typically related to engine problems or load distribution, not trailer braking. Understanding these distinctions helps in identifying and addressing the specific maintenance needs of a vehicle and its trailer.

3. What should you do if you experience harsh braking in a combination vehicle?

- A. Continue driving to the destination**
- B. Inspect brake systems for any issues**
- C. Speed up to counteract the harsh braking**
- D. Ensure all lights are functioning**

Experiencing harsh braking in a combination vehicle indicates a potential issue with the braking system that requires immediate attention. Just as you would react to any abnormal situation with a vehicle, it's essential to inspect the brake systems for problems before proceeding. Harsh braking could be caused by various factors, including brake imbalance, worn-out brake components, or issues with the braking system itself. By conducting an inspection, you ensure that the brakes are in good working condition, which is crucial for maintaining control and safety while driving. Continuing to drive without addressing this issue could lead to further complications, including loss of control or brake failure, risking the safety of yourself and others on the road. Other choices, such as speeding up to counteract braking issues or simply ensuring lights are functioning, do not address the fundamental problem and may exacerbate the situation. Proceeding to your destination without addressing the harsh braking can lead to serious safety hazards.

4. How do you supply air to the trailer tanks?

- A. By pulling the trailer air supply valve**
- B. By pushing the trailer air supply valve**
- C. By releasing the parking brake**
- D. By turning the ignition on**

To supply air to the trailer tanks, you push the trailer air supply valve. This action releases the valve, allowing compressed air from the tractor's air system to flow into the trailer's air tanks. This is essential for the trailer's braking system, which operates on air pressure. Properly supplying the trailer with air ensures that the brakes can engage and function effectively when needed. Pushing the trailer air supply valve is the correct action to initiate this process. In contrast, other options do not directly accomplish the goal of supplying air to the trailer. For example, pulling the valve may not engage the air supply, and merely releasing the parking brake does not influence the air supply to the trailer. Lastly, turning the ignition on is necessary for the operation of other electrical components but does not directly relate to supplying air to the trailer.

5. If you cannot make a turn without entering another lane, what should you do?

- A. Make a sharp turn**
- B. Turn wide before starting your turn**
- C. Stop and wait for a clear lane**
- D. Signal and hope for the best**

When you encounter a situation where making a turn would require entering another lane, turning wide before initiating the turn is the appropriate action to take. This approach allows you to navigate the turn without encroaching on adjacent traffic. By turning wide, you give yourself enough space to maneuver your vehicle safely while minimizing the risk of collision with other vehicles or obstacles. This technique is particularly important for larger vehicles, such as trucks and buses, which have longer wheelbases and require more room to execute turns. Additionally, by adopting a wider turning path, you maintain control of your vehicle and ensure that you remain within your designated lane, avoiding potential hazards or conflicts with neighboring traffic. On the other hand, making a sharp turn might not provide enough clearance and could result in lane encroachment or collisions. Stopping and waiting for a clear lane could be an option in some circumstances, but it does not directly address the need for a safe turning maneuver. Lastly, signaling and hoping for the best is not a responsible approach, as it ignores the importance of ensuring a safe and clear environment before executing a turn.

6. Why is it important to avoid sudden maneuvers while driving a combination vehicle?

- A. They can lead to engine failure**
- B. They can destabilize the trailer and cause a loss of control**
- C. They are against traffic laws**
- D. They waste fuel**

Avoiding sudden maneuvers while driving a combination vehicle is crucial because such actions can destabilize the trailer, significantly increasing the risk of losing control. When a driver makes abrupt changes in direction or speed, especially in a vehicle as complex as a combination vehicle, there is a high chance that the trailer can start to sway or fishtail. This can lead to a dangerous situation, where the trailer may flip or become unhitched from the tractor, causing accidents. Combination vehicles are particularly sensitive to sudden movements due to their longer length and the physics involved in towing. The trailer follows a different path than the cab, and unexpected maneuvers can lead to misalignment between the two, making it difficult to regain control. Maintaining smooth, gradual movements allows for better handling and stability of both the tractor and the trailer, ensuring safe operation on the road.

7. What should be done to the trailer before backing the tractor under it?

- A. The trailer should be fully raised**
- B. The trailer should be lowered slightly**
- C. The trailer should be at an equal height with the tractor**
- D. The trailer should be detached from the tractor**

To properly back a tractor under a trailer, the trailer should be fully raised. This ensures that the fifth wheel on the tractor can adequately engage with the kingpin of the trailer. Raising the trailer allows the tractor to align and lower onto it without the risk of misalignment, which can cause issues in connection and stability once hitched. When the trailer is raised fully, it also provides sufficient clearance to avoid any interference between the trailer and the tractor's hitch mechanism. This practice aids in creating a secure connection for safe operation thereafter. Maintaining proper height alignment is crucial as it impacts the ease of coupling and the overall safety of the vehicle combination. Therefore, having the trailer fully raised is the correct procedure before backing the tractor under it.

8. When coupling, what is the proper position of the fifth wheel?

- A. Level**
- B. Tilted up towards the end of the tractor**
- C. Tilted down towards the end of the tractor**
- D. Centered**

The correct position of the fifth wheel when coupling is tilted down towards the end of the tractor. This configuration helps ensure that the trailer's kingpin can smoothly engage with the fifth wheel's locking mechanism during the coupling process. When the fifth wheel is tilted down, it facilitates a natural alignment with the trailer, allowing for proper contact and lock engagement. This alignment helps prevent miscoupling situations, which can occur if the fifth wheel is not positioned correctly. Proper positioning is crucial for safety and stability during operation, as a properly coupled combination vehicle reduces the risk of accidents due to uncoupling or instability on the road. In contrast, when the fifth wheel is level or tilted up, it can create difficulty in engaging the trailer's kingpin correctly. This misalignment can lead to improper coupling, which poses safety risks during transport. Keeping the fifth wheel tilted downwards is therefore essential for effective and safe coupling of the tractor and trailer.

9. What action is recommended when coming to a stop while driving a combination vehicle?

- A. Apply firm pressure to brakes**
- B. Shift into neutral**
- C. Perform a controlled slowdown**
- D. Use engine braking only**

Performing a controlled slowdown is the recommended action when coming to a stop while driving a combination vehicle. This approach involves gradually reducing speed, which helps to maintain control of the vehicle during the stopping process. A controlled slowdown allows the driver to assess the traffic conditions and adjust their braking as necessary, providing a smoother stop and minimizing the risk of losing control. This method is particularly important with combination vehicles, as they are longer and heavier, and improper braking can lead to jackknifing or losing traction. By allowing for a controlled approach to stopping, drivers ensure that they can effectively manage the dynamics of the vehicle and its load, ensuring safety for themselves and others on the road. Additionally, while applying firm pressure to the brakes may seem like a good option, it does not account for the need to gradually reduce speed in a controlled manner. Shifting into neutral may lead to a loss of vehicle control, and engine braking only is often not sufficient for a complete stop, especially in combination vehicles where weight plays a significant role in braking effectiveness.

10. When coupling the glad hands, which of the following actions should be avoided?

- A. Cross air supply lines to test for leaks**
- B. Ensure proper alignment of the glad hands**
- C. Check for visible damage on the glad hands**
- D. Use appropriate gloves while handling**

When coupling the glad hands, crossing the air supply lines to test for leaks should be avoided because doing so can cause air to flow in unintended directions, compromising the air supply system and leading to possible air loss. The test for leaks is typically performed by checking for hissing sounds or using soapy water on the connections, rather than altering the configuration of the connections themselves. Proper actions such as ensuring alignment of the glad hands, checking for visible damage, and using appropriate gloves are critical to maintaining safety and functionality. Ensuring the glad hands are aligned minimizes the risk of accidental uncoupling and ensures a secure connection. Additionally, inspecting for visible damage helps identify any potential issues that could lead to failure during operation. Using gloves can also enhance grip and protect your hands from potential injuries while handling equipment.

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://cdl-vehiclecombination.examzify.com>

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