

Commercial Driver's License (CDL) HW 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. What is the primary purpose of using four-way flashers when approaching a stop?**
 - A. When slowing down unexpectedly.**
 - B. When coming to a complete stop on a roadway or its shoulder.**
 - C. When exiting the highway.**
 - D. Both A and B.**

- 2. A road ____ is anyone who uses the road, while a road ____ is the state of the road surface.**
 - A. user, condition**
 - B. condition, user**
 - C. person, condition**
 - D. user, situation**

- 3. Per FMCSR 395.1, a driver may perform a non-driving job after 14 consecutive hours on duty and not be in violation of the Hours of Service Regulation.**
 - A. True**
 - B. False**
 - C. Cannot be determined**
 - D. Not applicable**

- 4. In alley dock backing, the vehicle is typically backed into a space at what angle to the truck?**
 - A. 90 degrees to the truck**
 - B. Parallel to the truck**
 - C. 180 degrees to the truck**
 - D. 45 degrees to the truck**

- 5. If you can use a spotter when backing a vehicle, which statement is true?**
 - A. you must agree on all hand signals before beginning the maneuver.**
 - B. responsibility for incidents transfers to the spotter.**
 - C. the spotter should be behind your vehicle at all times.**
 - D. using a handheld cell phone to communicate with the spotter is best.**

- 6. How often should you check your mirrors while driving?**
- A. Every 4 seconds.**
 - B. Every 2 seconds.**
 - C. Every 10 seconds.**
 - D. Every 20 seconds.**
- 7. Which of the following is NOT a sign of a distracted driver?**
- A. Providing adequate space ahead and behind for merging traffic**
 - B. Maintaining their position in a single lane for an extended period of time**
 - C. Changing speed erratically for no apparent reason**
 - D. Reducing their speed dramatically to avoid conflict with other vehicles**
- 8. What is the key characteristic of alley dock backing?**
- A. Backing into a space alongside a dock**
 - B. Backing straight down an alley**
 - C. Backing while turning into a space that is 90 degrees to the truck**
 - D. None of the above**
- 9. What is the only circumstance you are not required to inspect your cargo and load securing devices?**
- A. If your load is sealed and you have been ordered not to open it.**
 - B. If your vehicle is loaded in a way that makes cargo inspections impossible**
 - C. If your destination is less than 100-air miles from your home terminal**
 - D. Both A and B**

10. What should you do if you are unsure what may be behind your vehicle while backing?

- A. Check your mirrors and back quickly before anything can enter your path.**
- B. Stick your head out the window and look back during the entire maneuver.**
- C. All of the above.**
- D. Stop, get out of your vehicle, and check your path.**

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Answers

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

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Explanations

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1. What is the primary purpose of using four-way flashers when approaching a stop?

- A. When slowing down unexpectedly.**
- B. When coming to a complete stop on a roadway or its shoulder.**
- C. When exiting the highway.**
- D. Both A and B.**

Four-way flashers are a warning signal to drivers behind you that your vehicle isn't moving normally. They're used when you need others to notice that you'll be slowing down or stopping, such as when you're approaching a stop or coming to a complete stop on the roadway or its shoulder. Because of that, the best answer includes both situations: you use them when you slow down unexpectedly and when you come to a stop. Exiting the highway is typically signaled with a turn signal, not hazard lights, so that option isn't the primary use.

2. A road ____ is anyone who uses the road, while a road ____ is the state of the road surface.

- A. user, condition**
- B. condition, user**
- C. person, condition**
- D. user, situation**

The main idea is knowing standard road terminology. A road user means anyone who uses the road—drivers, cyclists, pedestrians, etc. The road condition describes the surface state—whether it's dry, wet, icy, rough, or has potholes. So the natural pairing is "road user" for the person and "road condition" for the surface. The other options mix up these terms or use nonstandard phrasing: describing a person as a condition isn't correct, and "road situation" isn't the typical term used for the road's surface status.

3. Per FMCSR 395.1, a driver may perform a non-driving job after 14 consecutive hours on duty and not be in violation of the Hours of Service Regulation.

- A. True**
- B. False**
- C. Cannot be determined**
- D. Not applicable**

Hours of Service limits the total on-duty time to 14 consecutive hours in a work shift. This 14-hour period counts all on-duty activity, whether you're driving or performing non-driving tasks. After you've accumulated 14 consecutive hours on duty, you may not perform any further on-duty work—including a non-driving job—until you've had 10 consecutive hours off duty to reset. The driving portion inside that window is limited to 11 hours, but once the 14 hours are up you cannot drive or do non-driving on-duty work until you take the required off-duty rest. That's why performing a non-driving job after the 14th hour would place you in violation until you complete the off-duty break.

4. In alley dock backing, the vehicle is typically backed into a space at what angle to the truck?

- A. 90 degrees to the truck**
- B. Parallel to the truck**
- C. 180 degrees to the truck**
- D. 45 degrees to the truck**

Backing into an alley dock works best when the trailer is brought in perpendicular to the truck. This means you position the vehicle so the trailer forms a right angle with the truck as you back into the space. A 90-degree angle gives you a clear path for the trailer to swing into the stall, making it easier to control with small steering adjustments and to straighten once the trailer is in. Approaches that are parallel, at a steep angle, or pointing the same direction as the truck (like a straight or opposite direction) make it much harder to maneuver the trailer into the space without risking contact with the dock or walls. The right-angle setup reduces complexity and gives you the necessary room to align the trailer neatly inside the space.

5. If you can use a spotter when backing a vehicle, which statement is true?

- A. you must agree on all hand signals before beginning the maneuver.**
- B. responsibility for incidents transfers to the spotter.**
- C. the spotter should be behind your vehicle at all times.**
- D. using a handheld cell phone to communicate with the spotter is best.**

When you're backing with a spotter, you must agree on all hand signals and how you'll communicate before you start. Establishing a shared set of signals gives both you and the spotter a single, clear language to rely on, which is crucial when visibility is limited and directions can be misread. This upfront agreement helps you steer accurately and stop safely without guessing what each gesture means. The spotter doesn't take on responsibility for any incidents; the driver remains responsible. The spotter also should not be behind the vehicle at all times; they need a clear view of the backing path, often from a position where they can see what you can't. Lastly, using a handheld cell phone is unsafe and not the recommended way to communicate with a spotter—the prearranged signals (or a radio) keep hands free and reduce distractions while backing.

6. How often should you check your mirrors while driving?

- A. Every 4 seconds.**
- B. Every 2 seconds.**
- C. Every 10 seconds.**
- D. Every 20 seconds.**

Regular mirror checks keep you continuously aware of what's happening around you. Checking about every four seconds provides a steady flow of information from the rear and sides, so you can spot a vehicle about to merge, a tailgater closing in, or a driver braking ahead in time to respond with proper lane position or braking. This cadence also helps you monitor your following distance and overall traffic flow without losing too much forward-looking attention. In practice, do a deliberate glance to the mirrors at roughly four-second intervals, adjusting as needed for speed and conditions. If traffic is dense or speeds are high, you'll want to check more frequently; if conditions are light, you still shouldn't let too much time pass without looking back. Checking every two seconds would be more frequent than necessary in steady traffic and can lead to over-focusing on mirrors, while waiting ten or twenty seconds would be too long and could cause you to miss hazards developing behind or beside you.

7. Which of the following is NOT a sign of a distracted driver?

- A. Providing adequate space ahead and behind for merging traffic**
- B. Maintaining their position in a single lane for an extended period of time**
- C. Changing speed erratically for no apparent reason**
- D. Reducing their speed dramatically to avoid conflict with other vehicles**

Distracted driving shows up as inconsistent, reactive behavior rather than proactive, safe driving. When a driver is distracted, you're likely to see erratic changes in speed, abrupt braking or acceleration, and a lack of responsiveness to surrounding traffic. Staying in one lane for an extended period can also reflect a lapse in attention or fatigue. Reducing speed dramatically to avoid conflict can indicate misperception or overreaction tied to distraction. Providing adequate space ahead and behind for merging traffic, on the other hand, demonstrates anticipatory driving and awareness of what's ahead, which is not a sign of distraction. So the statement about giving enough room for merging is the one that does not indicate a distracted driver.

8. What is the key characteristic of alley dock backing?

- A. Backing into a space alongside a dock**
- B. Backing straight down an alley**
- C. Backing while turning into a space that is 90 degrees to the truck**
- D. None of the above**

Alley dock backing centers on entering a dock space that is at a right angle to the truck's approach. The trailer must be backed into a space that's perpendicular to the truck, often requiring the driver to steer through a turning maneuver so the trailer swings into the dock opening from the side. This perpendicular entry is what defines alley docking and makes it distinct from backing straight into a dock or backing straight down an alley. So the key idea is: you're backing into a space that is 90 degrees to the truck, not parallel to it or straight ahead.

9. What is the only circumstance you are not required to inspect your cargo and load securing devices?

- A. If your load is sealed and you have been ordered not to open it.**
- B. If your vehicle is loaded in a way that makes cargo inspections impossible**
- C. If your destination is less than 100-air miles from your home terminal**
- D. Both A and B**

The thing being tested is when cargo and its securing need not be inspected. You must inspect cargo and load securing devices before and during a trip unless you're in one of two situations where you're not allowed or able to open or access the load. First, if the cargo is sealed and you have been ordered not to open it, you cannot inspect the contents or the interior securing, so the inspection isn't required in that case. Second, if the way the load is arranged makes a cargo inspection impossible (you can't access or see the cargo to check it), then the inspection isn't required in that situation either. In all other circumstances, you should perform the inspection to ensure nothing has shifted and all restraints remain secure.

10. What should you do if you are unsure what may be behind your vehicle while backing?

- A. Check your mirrors and back quickly before anything can enter your path.**
- B. Stick your head out the window and look back during the entire maneuver.**
- C. All of the above.**
- D. Stop, get out of your vehicle, and check your path.**

If you're unsure what's behind the vehicle while backing, the safest move is to stop and get out to check your path. Mirrors can miss hazards in blind spots, and backing while peeking out the window for the entire maneuver isn't reliable or safe. Exiting the cab lets you physically inspect the area behind and around the vehicle, spot any feet, pallets, pedestrians, or other obstacles, and decide how to proceed—possibly with a spotter guiding you. Once you've confirmed the area is clear, you can re-enter and back carefully, using mirrors to supplement your view. This approach minimizes risk and avoids relying on limited visibility from inside the cab.

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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://cdlhw.examzify.com>

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

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