

DSST Computing and Information Technology 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. What was the name of the WAN set up by the Department of Defense that contributed significantly to the development of internet protocols?**
 - A. ARPANET**
 - B. NSFNET**
 - C. CompuServe**
 - D. Fidonet**

- 2. What does DNS stand for?**
 - A. Data Name System**
 - B. Domain Network System**
 - C. Domain Name System**
 - D. Data Network Security**

- 3. What is the purpose of using a search engine on the internet?**
 - A. To manage online advertising**
 - B. To retrieve information that meets defined criteria**
 - C. To download web pages**
 - D. To optimize website performance**

- 4. What protocol is primarily used to send email?**
 - A. HTTP**
 - B. FTP**
 - C. SMTP**
 - D. POP3**

- 5. Which type of disc is known for having a higher storage capacity than CDs and DVDs, specifically for high-definition videos?**
 - A. DVD-R**
 - B. Blu-ray**
 - C. HD DVD**
 - D. CD-R**

- 6. What is the primary purpose of an operating system?**
- A. To provide internet access**
 - B. To manage computer hardware and software resources**
 - C. To store data permanently**
 - D. To manage user accounts**
- 7. Which of the following is NOT a procedural programming language?**
- A. FORTRAN**
 - B. BASIC**
 - C. COBOL**
 - D. HTML**
- 8. Which type of memory retains data even when power is turned off?**
- A. Volatile memory**
 - B. Static memory**
 - C. Non-volatile memory**
 - D. Dynamic memory**
- 9. What does cloud computing allow users to access?**
- A. Local data storage only**
 - B. On-site server management**
 - C. Computing services over the internet**
 - D. Hardware upgrades exclusively**
- 10. What is the role of the operating system during the startup process?**
- A. To execute user applications**
 - B. To manage computer hardware**
 - C. To load all device drivers**
 - D. To activate the bootloader**

Answers

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

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Explanations

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1. What was the name of the WAN set up by the Department of Defense that contributed significantly to the development of internet protocols?

- A. ARPANET**
- B. NSFNET**
- C. CompuServe**
- D. Fidonet**

The correct answer is ARPANET. ARPANET, or the Advanced Research Projects Agency Network, was the first packet-switching network, funded by the U.S. Department of Defense. It played a pivotal role in the early development of networking technologies and protocols that eventually laid the groundwork for the modern internet. ARPANET utilized packets to transmit data across a network, allowing different types of computers to communicate effectively. This innovative approach to data transmission contributed to the creation of essential internet protocols, such as TCP/IP, which remain fundamental to internet communication today. The transition of ARPANET from a military project to a public network helped facilitate the broader development of networking technologies and protocols that underpin the internet as we know it now. The other options represent significant networks but did not have the same foundational impact on the internet protocols. NSFNET was a successor to ARPANET that expanded the network for educational and research purposes and contributed to the internet's growth. CompuServe and Fidonet were more focused on specific services and forums rather than the development of the foundational protocols of the internet.

2. What does DNS stand for?

- A. Data Name System**
- B. Domain Network System**
- C. Domain Name System**
- D. Data Network Security**

DNS stands for Domain Name System. This system is a fundamental component of the internet that translates human-friendly domain names (like `www.example.com`) into IP addresses (like `192.0.2.1`), which are used by computers to identify each other on the network. The Domain Name System functions like a phone book for the internet, making it easier for users to navigate the web. The correct option reflects the purpose and functionality of DNS accurately. This translation process allows for seamless web browsing and is essential for the operation of the internet. Understanding DNS is critical for anyone working in IT, networking, or web development, as it plays a crucial role in how information is located and accessed online.

3. What is the purpose of using a search engine on the internet?

- A. To manage online advertising
- B. To retrieve information that meets defined criteria**
- C. To download web pages
- D. To optimize website performance

Using a search engine on the internet primarily serves the purpose of retrieving information that meets defined criteria. When users input specific keywords or phrases into a search engine, the engine processes that request and returns a list of relevant web pages, documents, images, or other types of content that match the entered criteria. This function enables efficient access to the massive amount of information available on the web, assisting users in finding exactly what they are looking for without needing to browse each site individually. Search engines utilize complex algorithms to index content from the web and to determine the relevance and ranking of results based on various factors, such as keyword density, website authority, and user engagement metrics. This makes them crucial tools for information retrieval in our digital age. The other options, while related to the internet and its functionality, do not encompass the primary purpose of a search engine. For instance, managing online advertising relates more to marketing strategies, downloading web pages pertains to accessing content offline, and optimizing website performance involves enhancing how well a website operates, which is separate from the search function itself.

4. What protocol is primarily used to send email?

- A. HTTP
- B. FTP
- C. SMTP**
- D. POP3

The protocol primarily used to send email is Simple Mail Transfer Protocol (SMTP). This protocol is specifically designed for sending emails across the Internet. It facilitates the transfer of messages from the sender's mail server to the recipient's mail server, ensuring that emails reach their destination efficiently and reliably. SMTP operates over the TCP/IP protocol suite, typically using port 25 for communication. It is responsible for routing the messages and handling errors during transmission, making it a crucial element in the email infrastructure. In contrast, other protocols mentioned serve different purposes in the realm of email. For instance, HTTP (Hypertext Transfer Protocol) is primarily used for transmitting web pages on the Internet. FTP (File Transfer Protocol) is used for transferring files between computers and is not specifically related to email transmission. POP3 (Post Office Protocol version 3) is used for retrieving emails from a mail server after they have been sent, focusing on the process of receiving rather than sending. Understanding these distinctions clarifies why SMTP is the protocol designated for sending email.

5. Which type of disc is known for having a higher storage capacity than CDs and DVDs, specifically for high-definition videos?

- A. DVD-R**
- B. Blu-ray**
- C. HD DVD**
- D. CD-R**

Blu-ray discs are recognized for their higher storage capacity compared to CDs and DVDs, making them particularly well-suited for storing high-definition video content. The technology used in Blu-ray allows for more data to be packed into the same physical disc size; it utilizes a blue-laser technology that operates at a shorter wavelength than the red lasers used for CDs and DVDs. This allows Blu-ray to hold significantly more data — typically around 25 GB on a single-layer disc and 50 GB on a dual-layer disc, which is ideal for the larger file sizes associated with high-definition video. The other options, while capable of storing data, do not match Blu-ray's capacity. DVDs typically hold 4.7 GB (single-layer) and 8.5 GB (dual-layer) of data. HD DVDs offered some enhancement over standard DVDs but still fall short of Blu-ray's capacity. CDs generally hold only around 700 MB of data, making them unsuitable for high-definition video storage. Thus, the choice of Blu-ray as the correct answer aligns perfectly with its design purpose and technological advantages in terms of storage capacity for high-definition videos.

6. What is the primary purpose of an operating system?

- A. To provide internet access**
- B. To manage computer hardware and software resources**
- C. To store data permanently**
- D. To manage user accounts**

The primary purpose of an operating system is to manage computer hardware and software resources. This involves coordinating the use of hardware components such as the CPU, memory, storage devices, and input/output devices, as well as overseeing the execution of software applications. An operating system acts as an intermediary between users and the computer hardware, enabling users to interact with the system and run programs effectively. It allocates resources to various tasks, manages file systems, controls peripheral devices, and ensures that different applications can operate without interfering with one another. This foundational role is essential for the overall functionality of the computer. The other choices represent functions that may be associated with computer systems but do not capture the primary role of an operating system. For instance, while providing internet access can be a feature facilitated by an operating system, it is not its primary function. Similarly, storing data permanently and managing user accounts are both important tasks but they fall within the broader scope of resource management that the operating system oversees.

7. Which of the following is NOT a procedural programming language?

- A. FORTRAN**
- B. BASIC**
- C. COBOL**
- D. HTML**

The choice of HTML as the answer is accurate because HTML, or HyperText Markup Language, is not a procedural programming language. Instead, it is a markup language used for creating and structuring content on the web. HTML focuses on the presentation and layout of information rather than executing logic or procedures that manipulate data, which is the hallmark of procedural programming languages. Procedural programming languages such as FORTRAN, BASIC, and COBOL are designed to follow a set of instructions or procedures to perform tasks, utilizing concepts such as loops, conditionals, and variable manipulation. FORTRAN is known for its numerical and scientific computing capabilities, BASIC is recognized for its simplicity and educational use, and COBOL is often used in business applications. In contrast, HTML doesn't include functionalities for procedural logic; it simply structures content and informs web browsers how to display it, which differentiates it significantly from the other languages listed.

8. Which type of memory retains data even when power is turned off?

- A. Volatile memory**
- B. Static memory**
- C. Non-volatile memory**
- D. Dynamic memory**

Non-volatile memory retains data even when the power is turned off. This characteristic is crucial for storing information that must persist without an active power supply, such as firmware, user settings, and files. Common types of non-volatile memory include flash memory, read-only memory (ROM), and hard drives. By retaining data in this way, non-volatile memory ensures that important information is not lost during power outages or when devices are turned off, making it essential for everyday computing needs. In contrast, volatile memory requires power to maintain the stored information. It loses its data immediately when the power supply is cut off, which is typical for RAM (Random Access Memory). Static memory and dynamic memory are both types of volatile memory. Static memory retains data as long as power is supplied and is often faster, while dynamic memory needs periodic refreshing to maintain the stored data.

9. What does cloud computing allow users to access?

- A. Local data storage only
- B. On-site server management
- C. Computing services over the internet**
- D. Hardware upgrades exclusively

Cloud computing allows users to access computing services over the internet, which is the fundamental principle of this technology. By leveraging the internet, users can utilize a variety of services such as storage, processing power, and applications through cloud providers without the need for physical hardware or local servers. This means that users can access their data and applications from any location with an internet connection, promoting flexibility and scalability. The focus of cloud computing is on providing on-demand resources and capabilities via the web, which contrasts significantly with local data storage, on-site server management, or hardware upgrades. While local data storage and on-site server management restrict access to physical locations and specific hardware, cloud computing transcends these limitations, allowing for more dynamic and cost-effective usage of resources. Therefore, the correct option reflects the core feature of cloud computing, which is internet-based access to a range of computing services.

10. What is the role of the operating system during the startup process?

- A. To execute user applications
- B. To manage computer hardware
- C. To load all device drivers
- D. To activate the bootloader**

During the startup process, the role of the operating system is centered around the activation of the bootloader, which is essential for initiating the boot sequence. The bootloader is a small program that resides in the computer's firmware or on the storage drive and is responsible for loading the operating system into memory. When the computer powers on, the firmware performs the initial hardware checks (such as POST - Power-On Self-Test) and then it locates the bootloader. Once the bootloader is activated, it starts to load the operating system kernel into memory and hands over control to it. This boot process is critical because without the successful activation of the bootloader, the operating system would not be able to start, and the system would remain inoperable. While managing computer hardware is vital for the operating system, that comes after the bootloader has done its job of loading the OS. The execution of user applications and loading of all device drivers also occurs post-boot when the operating system is fully operational. Therefore, activating the bootloader represents the very first step in the startup process, making it a crucial function at this stage.

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://dsstcomputingit.examzify.com>

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

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