

# Federal Communications Commission (FCC) Element 3 Practice Test (Sample)

## Study Guide



**Everything you need from our exam experts!**

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# Table of Contents

<b>Copyright</b> .....	<b>1</b>
<b>Table of Contents</b> .....	<b>2</b>
<b>Introduction</b> .....	<b>3</b>
<b>How to Use This Guide</b> .....	<b>4</b>
<b>Questions</b> .....	<b>5</b>
<b>Answers</b> .....	<b>8</b>
<b>Explanations</b> .....	<b>10</b>
<b>Next Steps</b> .....	<b>16</b>

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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. Which device is typically used to resolve issues in elevator circuit tachometers?**
  - A. An oscilloscope**
  - B. A .01  $\mu$ F capacitor**
  - C. A waveform analyzer**
  - D. A circuit tester**
  
- 2. A switching regulator's efficiency is often determined by what factor?**
  - A. Input ripple current**
  - B. Duty cycle of the switching**
  - C. Transistor junction temperature**
  - D. Load impedance**
  
- 3. What causes the SART to begin a transmission?**
  - A. Manual activation by the operator.**
  - B. Detector of significant vessel movement.**
  - C. After being activated, the SART responds to RADAR interrogation.**
  - D. Automatic detection of emergency signals only.**
  
- 4. What occurs in an NMEA 2000 network if one device in the line fails?**
  - A. No interruption to all other devices**
  - B. All devices stop functioning**
  - C. Only the faulty device is affected**
  - D. Communication delays for all devices**
  
- 5. What type of wave is composed of sine waves at the fundamental frequency and all odd harmonics?**
  - A. Triangular wave**
  - B. Square wave**
  - C. Sine wave**
  - D. Rectangular wave**

- 6. What is a common potential solution to interference caused by a radio system on the tachometer of a building's elevator circuit?**
- A. Reposition the tachometer**
  - B. Add a .01  $\mu$ F capacitor across the motor leads**
  - C. Install a noise filter on the radio**
  - D. Replace the elevator circuit entirely**
- 7. What is the typical range of RADAR pulse widths?**
- A. 0.01 s to 0.1 s**
  - B. 0.05 s to 1.0 s**
  - C. 0.1 s to 2.0 s**
  - D. 0.5 s to 1.5 s**
- 8. In the context of phase relationships between two signals, if signal B is lagging signal A by 90 degrees, what can be inferred?**
- A. Signal A is leading signal B**
  - B. Signals A and B are in phase**
  - C. Signal B is leading signal A**
  - D. Signal A and signal B have the same frequency**
- 9. What is meant by the term modulation index?**
- A. The ratio between the frequency of the carrier wave and the modulating frequency**
  - B. The ratio between the deviation of a frequency modulated signal and the modulating frequency**
  - C. The degree of distortion in a modulated signal**
  - D. The maximum amplitude of a modulating wave**
- 10. Which class of amplifier is known for the highest linearity and least distortion?**
- A. Class B**
  - B. Class A**
  - C. Class C**
  - D. Class AB**

## Answers

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

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## **Explanations**

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**1. Which device is typically used to resolve issues in elevator circuit tachometers?**

- A. An oscilloscope**
- B. A .01  $\mu$ F capacitor**
- C. A waveform analyzer**
- D. A circuit tester**

In the context of resolving issues with elevator circuit tachometers, a capacitor, particularly a .01  $\mu$ F capacitor, plays a crucial role in filtering and stabilizing signals. Tachometers are used to measure the speed of the elevator's motor and convert that mechanical movement into an electrical signal. Sometimes, these signals can experience noise or fluctuations that interfere with accurate readings. A .01  $\mu$ F capacitor can be used to smooth out these signals by filtering out high-frequency noise that may affect the performance of the tachometer. This helps ensure that the tachometer provides reliable and accurate speed indications essential for the safe operation of the elevator. Capacitors in this range are commonly utilized in electronic circuits for decoupling and bypassing purposes, which is relevant to maintaining signal integrity in tachometer systems. Other options, while useful in their contexts—such as oscilloscopes for visual waveform analysis, waveform analyzers for analyzing signal characteristics, and circuit testers for general troubleshooting—are not specifically geared towards addressing the signal filtering issues typically encountered with tachometer circuits in elevators. Thus, the capacitor is the most appropriate choice for resolving specific issues related to the performance of elevator circuit tachometers.

**2. A switching regulator's efficiency is often determined by what factor?**

- A. Input ripple current**
- B. Duty cycle of the switching**
- C. Transistor junction temperature**
- D. Load impedance**

The efficiency of a switching regulator is largely influenced by the duty cycle of the switching. The duty cycle refers to the ratio of the time the switch is on to the total time of the switching cycle. It directly affects how long the energy is transferred from the input to the output during each cycle. A higher duty cycle means that the regulator is spending more time in the "on" state, which can lead to increased energy transfer to the output but can also lead to higher losses due to switching. Conversely, a lower duty cycle reduces the energy transferred but can improve efficiency in certain contexts. Therefore, understanding and optimizing the duty cycle is key to maximizing the regulator's efficiency, as it directly impacts how effectively the input power is converted to the output power while minimizing losses. The other factors listed do play a role in the overall performance of a switching regulator, but they do not have as direct an impact on efficiency as the duty cycle. For instance, input ripple current and load impedance influence other aspects of design and performance, while transistor junction temperature affects longevity and reliability rather than direct efficiency calculations. Thus, the duty cycle stands out as the primary factor affecting a switching regulator's efficiency.

### 3. What causes the SART to begin a transmission?

- A. Manual activation by the operator.
- B. Detector of significant vessel movement.
- C. After being activated, the SART responds to RADAR interrogation.**
- D. Automatic detection of emergency signals only.

The SART, or Search and Rescue Transponder, is designed to assist in search and rescue operations by responding to RADAR signals. When it receives a RADAR interrogation signal from a vessel or aircraft searching for a distressed vessel, the SART activates and begins transmitting a series of radar reply signals that help rescuers locate the distressed vessel on their RADAR screens. This characteristic is essential, as it ensures that the SART is only activated when it is needed for search and rescue purposes, making it efficient and effective in emergency situations. While manual activation by the operator is a valid way to start a transmission, the key function of the SART is to respond to RADAR interrogations automatically, which is what sets it apart as an emergency signaling device. The other options, such as detecting significant vessel movement or automatic detection of emergency signals, do not accurately describe the primary trigger for a SART transmission. The core functionality relies on interaction with RADAR, which drives the SART to broadcast its location to assist rescuers effectively.

### 4. What occurs in an NMEA 2000 network if one device in the line fails?

- A. No interruption to all other devices**
- B. All devices stop functioning
- C. Only the faulty device is affected
- D. Communication delays for all devices

In an NMEA 2000 network, the architecture is designed for robustness and reliability. When one device in the network fails, the remaining devices continue to function without interruption. This is largely due to the use of a controller-area network (CAN) bus system, which allows devices to communicate with one another even if one or more devices experience failures. If one device fails, it does not bring down the entire network, allowing other devices to maintain communication and operate normally. This design is crucial for marine applications, where reliability is needed for navigation and safety equipment. The network's ability to tolerate individual device failures ensures that operations can continue smoothly, thereby enhancing the overall robustness of the system. Understanding this aspect helps emphasize the advantages of using an NMEA 2000 network over other more fragile networking methods, where a single point of failure could lead to broader system failures.

**5. What type of wave is composed of sine waves at the fundamental frequency and all odd harmonics?**

- A. Triangular wave**
- B. Square wave**
- C. Sine wave**
- D. Rectangular wave**

The square wave is composed of sine waves at the fundamental frequency and all odd harmonics. When analyzing the frequency spectrum of a square wave, it is important to recognize that the waveform can be expressed as a series of sine waves where the fundamental frequency is present, alongside the odd harmonics (the 3rd, 5th, 7th, etc., frequencies). This results from the mathematical representation known as Fourier series, which shows that a square wave can be reconstructed by summing these specific sine wave components. Each odd harmonic adds to the waveform's characteristics, giving it the distinctive sharp transitions seen in a square wave. Understanding the harmonic content of waveforms is fundamental in signal processing and communications, as it helps to diagnose and interpret various signal properties and behaviors under different conditions.

**6. What is a common potential solution to interference caused by a radio system on the tachometer of a building's elevator circuit?**

- A. Reposition the tachometer**
- B. Add a .01  $\mu$ F capacitor across the motor leads**
- C. Install a noise filter on the radio**
- D. Replace the elevator circuit entirely**

Adding a 0.01  $\mu$ F capacitor across the motor leads is a common and effective solution for reducing radio frequency interference (RFI) that can affect the operation of devices like a tachometer in an elevator circuit. This capacitor acts as a bypass or decoupling capacitor, which helps shunt high-frequency noise to ground. By doing so, it reduces the amount of electromagnetic interference that can couple into the tachometer from the motor, ensuring that the tachometer receives a cleaner signal for accurate speed measurement. In the context of elevator systems, this approach is favored for its simplicity and efficiency, avoiding more invasive or costly solutions such as completely replacing system components. Interference can be a co-product of the motor's operation due to its electromagnetic characteristics; thus, incorporating a capacitor to filter out high-frequency noise directly at the source is typically a practical response to such issues.

**7. What is the typical range of RADAR pulse widths?**

- A. 0.01 s to 0.1 s
- B. 0.05 s to 1.0 s**
- C. 0.1 s to 2.0 s
- D. 0.5 s to 1.5 s

The typical range of radar pulse widths falls between 0.05 seconds to 1.0 seconds, primarily due to the operational requirements of radar systems. Shorter pulse widths allow for higher resolution in detecting and distinguishing between objects, while longer pulse widths enhance averaging effects, which can improve signal-to-noise ratios in certain contexts. Radar systems are designed to optimize performance in various environments, balancing the need for resolution with the effective detection range. This balance is critical in applications such as air traffic control, weather monitoring, and military surveillance, where accurate and precise measurements of distance and object characteristics are essential. The other options either represent pulse widths that are too brief or excessively long for standard radar operations. For instance, pulse widths that extend beyond typical ranges can limit a radar system's ability to accurately discern close targets, as they may lead to ambiguities due to the overlap of echoes from multiple returns.

**8. In the context of phase relationships between two signals, if signal B is lagging signal A by 90 degrees, what can be inferred?**

- A. Signal A is leading signal B**
- B. Signals A and B are in phase
- C. Signal B is leading signal A
- D. Signal A and signal B have the same frequency

When signal B is described as lagging signal A by 90 degrees, it indicates a specific relationship between the two signals concerning their phase. In this case, the term "lagging" means that signal B reaches its peak value after signal A does. Therefore, it is accurate to say that signal A is leading signal B. The leading signal (A) reaches the same phase positions as the lagging signal (B) earlier in the cycle, confirming that A advances ahead of B by a quarter of the wave period. The notion of signals being "in phase" would imply that both signals reach peak and zero values simultaneously, which isn't the case here given the 90-degree phase difference. The signals cannot be in phase if they are out of sync by any amount, including 90 degrees. While the statement that signal B is leading signal A would also imply a similar timing dynamic, the correct understanding in this scenario is that the leading signal is always the one that reaches corresponding points in the cycle first, not the lagging one. Lastly, the assertion that both signals have the same frequency does not necessarily follow from the given phase information alone. Although signals can have the same frequency and exhibit a phase difference, a phase difference alone does not confirm

## 9. What is meant by the term modulation index?

- A. The ratio between the frequency of the carrier wave and the modulating frequency
- B. The ratio between the deviation of a frequency modulated signal and the modulating frequency**
- C. The degree of distortion in a modulated signal
- D. The maximum amplitude of a modulating wave

The term modulation index specifically refers to the ratio between the frequency deviation of a frequency modulated (FM) signal and the frequency of the modulating signal itself. In frequency modulation, the modulation index indicates how much the carrier frequency varies in response to the input or modulating signal. A higher modulation index signifies a greater frequency deviation, which can enhance the signal's sensitivity to the changes in audio or data being transmitted. This is crucial for ensuring that the receiving equipment correctly interprets the variations encoded in the carrier wave. Understanding the modulation index is essential in designing and analyzing FM transmission systems, as it directly influences the bandwidth of the transmitted signal and its overall accuracy in representing the original information. The other choices do not accurately describe this concept, as they refer to different aspects of modulation or signal properties that do not align with the formal definition of modulation index.

## 10. Which class of amplifier is known for the highest linearity and least distortion?

- A. Class B
- B. Class A**
- C. Class C
- D. Class AB

The class of amplifier recognized for its highest linearity and least distortion is Class A. In Class A amplifiers, the output transistors conduct for the entire cycle of the input signal, which means they are always on to some extent. This constant conduction leads to minimal signal distortion because the output linearity is maintained across the entire waveform. Additionally, since Class A amplifiers do not switch off at any point during the signal cycle, they provide a smooth and linear response to the input, resulting in high fidelity for audio signals and other applications where signal integrity is crucial. This characteristic makes Class A amplifiers suitable for high-end audio applications, where sound quality is paramount. In contrast, other amplifier classes like Class B and Class C are more efficient but might introduce more distortion due to their operation, which involves the transistors being off for part of the signal cycle. Class AB strikes a balance between efficiency and linearity but may not achieve the same level of performance as Class A in terms of distortion and linear fidelity.

## 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:**

**<https://fcelelement3.examzify.com>**

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

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