FNGLA Horticulture Landscape Maintenance 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

1. Which of the following is one of the first steps in developing a turfgrass fertilization management program?

A. Knowledge of mowing frequency

B. Knowledge of soils

C. Knowledge of irrigation systems

D. Knowledge of pesticide labels

2. What is the Ring of Responsibility?

A. A 10' buffer around a waterway when using any fertilizer

B. A recommended buffer only for pesticides

C. A 15' buffer required for all fertilizers

D. A 3' untreated buffer zone around a waterway when using liquid fertilizers. or granular fertilizers with a shield

3. How can edging be done?

A. Mechanically or chemically?

B. Electronically or magnetically?

C. Abrasively or chemically?

D. By using fertilizer only?

4. After verticutting, how should the lawn be cleaned?

A. Thoroughly cleaning the lawn by raking or vacuuming

B. Mow only

C. Water deeply

D. Apply fertilizer

5. What are some of the reasons that led to the development of Green Industries Best Management Practices (BMPs)?

A. Poor pesticide management and inefficient fertilizing.

B. Good pesticide management, correct fertilizing, appropriate design and plant development.

C. Focus solely on irrigation.

D. Marketing and branding practices.

6. Which practice helps ensure nutrient availability without increasing waste?

A. Recycling of clippings

B. Leaving clippings to decompose slowly

C. Burning clippings

D. Collecting clippings for disposal

7. Which statement best describes verticutting?

A. It is an herbicide application

B. It is a form of pruning

C. It is a soil drainage method

D. It is a mechanical method to remove thatch

8. Which of the following is one of the 9 Principles of FYN?

A. Avoid Native Plants

B. Use More Pesticides

C. Plant Only Non-native Species

D. Right Plant/Right Place

9. Which statement about verticutting is true?

A. It is a chemical method for thatch removal

B. It prunes shrubs

C. It reduces thatch by removing the top growth only

D. It is a mechanical method to remove thatch

10. During planning, which plant characteristic is preferred?

A. Plants with few insects/disease

B. Plants requiring frequent pruning

C. Highly aggressive spreaders

D. Non-native species only

Answers

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

Explanations

1. Which of the following is one of the first steps in developing a turfgrass fertilization management program?

A. Knowledge of mowing frequency

B. Knowledge of soils

C. Knowledge of irrigation systems

D. Knowledge of pesticide labels

Knowing about soils is the starting point because soil properties directly shape how nutrients become available to turfgrass. A soil test reveals pH, nutrient levels, organic matter, texture, and cation exchange capacity, which together determine what the grass already has, what it needs, and how fertilizers will behave in the root zone. With this information you can select the right fertilizer types, set accurate rates, and time applications to match the grass's uptake and growth cycle, while also addressing pH or organic matter issues that can affect nutrient availability. This foundation helps prevent waste, reduces environmental risk from leaching or runoff, and ensures that subsequent steps—like irrigation management and cultural practices—are effective. Mowing frequency and irrigation systems matter for overall turf health, and pesticide labels matter for chemical use, but they hinge on understanding soil conditions to make informed fertilization decisions.

2. What is the Ring of Responsibility?

A. A 10' buffer around a waterway when using any fertilizer

B. A recommended buffer only for pesticides

C. A 15' buffer required for all fertilizers

D. A 3' untreated buffer zone around a waterway when using liquid fertilizers. or granular fertilizers with a shield

Ring of Responsibility is about protecting water quality by keeping a small buffer around waterways during fertilizer applications. The best answer reflects a specific, practical rule: there should be a three-foot untreated zone around any waterway when applying liquid fertilizers or granular fertilizers that use a shield. In this area, no fertilizer is applied, which helps prevent nutrients from washing or splashing into the water and reduces drift risk from nearby applications even when shields are used. Outside that buffer, fertilizer applications can follow label directions, but the three-foot ring is a safety margin that addresses the most common runoff paths. The other options either propose larger buffers, reference pesticides instead of fertilizers, or imply the rule applies to all fertilizers regardless of method, which isn't how the Ring of Responsibility is typically defined.

3. How can edging be done?

A. Mechanically or chemically?

B. Electronically or magnetically?

C. Abrasively or chemically?

D. By using fertilizer only?

Edging to create a clean, defined boundary between turf and planting beds can be done in two general ways: mechanically or chemically. Mechanically means using a tool to cut or remove the turf along the border, physically shaping a crisp edge—this includes manual edging with a spade or knife, power edgers, lawn edgers, or a trimmer with an edging attachment. It provides an immediate, visible line and a barrier that resists encroachment. Chemical edging involves applying herbicides to the edge to kill the grass and prevent regrowth, offering a low-luss maintenance option but requiring careful treatment to avoid damage to nearby plants and to manage re-growth over time. The other options aren't standard methods for edging: electronic or magnetic approaches aren't used in landscape edging, abrasive methods aren't a typical edging practice, and using fertilizer would not create a defined border at all.

4. After verticutting, how should the lawn be cleaned?

A. Thoroughly cleaning the lawn by raking or vacuuming

B. Mow only

C. Water deeply

D. Apply fertilizer

Verticutting opens up the turf to remove dead material and thatch, leaving behind loosened debris and soil plugs. Cleaning with a rake or a lawn vacuum physically removes that material, which is crucial to prevent it from smothering the new growth and to reduce disease risk. A thorough cleanup also helps air, light, and moisture reach the crowns and encourages quicker recovery. Mowing alone won't remove the loosened debris, watering deeply won't clear it, and applying fertilizer won't clean up the residue that can block recovery.

5. What are some of the reasons that led to the development of Green Industries Best Management Practices (BMPs)?

A. Poor pesticide management and inefficient fertilizing.

B. Good pesticide management, correct fertilizing, appropriate design and plant development.

C. Focus solely on irrigation.

D. Marketing and branding practices.

BMPs were developed to cut environmental and public health risks from landscape work by promoting practices that work together rather than in isolation. They emphasize an integrated approach: manage pests responsibly to minimize chemical use, apply fertilizers correctly to prevent nutrient runoff, and design and establish landscapes with plant development in mind so the site stays healthy with fewer inputs. This combination—good pesticide management, proper fertilizing, and thoughtful design and plant development—best captures why BMPs were created. Focusing only on irrigation misses the broader protective goals, and marketing or branding practices don't address environmental and resource concerns BMPs aim to improve.

6. Which practice helps ensure nutrient availability without increasing waste?

A. Recycling of clippings

B. Leaving clippings to decompose slowly

C. Burning clippings

D. Collecting clippings for disposal

Returning nutrients to the soil by leaving clippings on the lawn or in beds allows the organic matter to break down slowly, releasing nitrogen and other minerals gradually for plant uptake. This on-site decomposition acts as a natural fertilizer while keeping waste out of disposal streams, since nothing needs to be hauled away or burned. The slow release also helps build soil organic matter and improves moisture retention, supporting healthier growth over time. In contrast, removing or burning clippings removes nutrients from the site and creates additional waste or pollution, which is counterproductive to both nutrient availability and waste reduction.

7. Which statement best describes verticutting?

A. It is an herbicide application

B. It is a form of pruning

C. It is a soil drainage method

D. It is a mechanical method to remove thatch

Verticutting is a mechanical dethatching technique that uses vertical blades to cut into the turf canopy and lift out thatch and accumulated dead material between the soil surface and the living grass. This process directly targets the thatch layer, which, when thick, can impede water, air, and nutrient movement to the roots. By removing this buildup, verticutting helps improve root health, water penetration, and overall turf vigor, and it can also create seedbeds or better conditions for overseeding after the procedure. It isn't an herbicide application, nor is it simply pruning living tissue, and while it can indirectly improve drainage by reducing the thatch layer, its primary purpose isn't a drainage method.

8. Which of the following is one of the 9 Principles of FYN?

A. Avoid Native Plants

B. Use More Pesticides

C. Plant Only Non-native Species

D. Right Plant/Right Place

The key idea here is matching what you plant to the site where it will grow. Right Plant/Right Place means choosing species that naturally fit the conditions there—sun or shade, soil type, drainage, and how much maintenance you're willing to do. When a plant is well-suited to its location, it tends to establish more easily and needs less water, fertilizer, and pest control, which leads to a healthier landscape with fewer inputs. In Florida yards, this translates to selecting natives or locally adapted plants and placing them where their water and sunlight needs align with the site, rather than forcing a species that won't thrive. The principle underlines sustainable landscaping by reducing irrigation, fertilizers, and pesticides. Choices that suggest avoiding natives, using more pesticides, or planting non-native species don't align with this approach, because they typically require more inputs or risk ecological disruption.

9. Which statement about verticutting is true?

A. It is a chemical method for thatch removal

B. It prunes shrubs

C. It reduces thatch by removing the top growth only

D. It is a mechanical method to remove thatch

Verticutting is a turf maintenance process that uses vertical cutting blades to cut into the thatch layer and lift out or remove the accumulated organic matter between the grass and the soil. This makes it a mechanical method of dethatching, not a chemical one. It isn't about pruning shrubs, and it goes beyond just removing the top growth—the vertical cuts penetrate into the thatch and help pull thatch material to the surface for removal, thinning the thatch layer and improving air, water, and nutrient movement into the soil.

10. During planning, which plant characteristic is preferred?

A. Plants with few insects/disease

B. Plants requiring frequent pruning

C. Highly aggressive spreaders

D. Non-native species only

Choosing plants that are naturally resistant to common pests and diseases is the most efficient way to plan a landscape. When a plant has few insect and disease problems, it stays healthier with less maintenance, fewer pesticide inputs, and fewer unexpected service calls, helping the design stay on budget and on schedule. This reliability is especially important for long-term aesthetic and functional goals, since pest pressure can vary with site conditions and climate. By prioritizing pest-resistant options, you also reduce the risk of damaged beds and the need for frequent interventions. In contrast, plants that require frequent pruning add labor and cost; highly aggressive spreaders can become invasive and hard to control; and relying exclusively on non-native species can introduce ecological and management challenges, often increasing maintenance rather than reducing it.

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://fnglahorticulturelandscapemaint.examzify.com

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