

General Contractor License (KB2) Practice Exam (Sample)

Study Guide



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SAMPLE

Questions

SAMPLE

- 1. What is the minimum height for weep screed above the earth?**
 - A. 2 inches**
 - B. 4 inches**
 - C. 6 inches**
 - D. 8 inches**
- 2. What material is commonly used for waterproofing basements?**
 - A. Rubber membrane**
 - B. Wood shingles**
 - C. Fiberglass insulation**
 - D. Brick veneer**
- 3. What is the ideal moisture content for freshly sawn lumber to reduce warping?**
 - A. 12-15%**
 - B. 18-20%**
 - C. 6-8%**
 - D. 10-12%**
- 4. What is the load bearing value(PSF) of sandy gravel?**
 - A. 2,500 psf**
 - B. 3,000 psf**
 - C. 3,500 psf**
 - D. 4,000 psf**
- 5. What is the maximum allowable pressure for a latch on an emergency egress door?**
 - A. 10 psf**
 - B. 15 psf**
 - C. 20 psf**
 - D. 30 psf**

- 6. In insulation, the "R" value measures what?**
- A. Thermal resistance**
 - B. Sound insulation**
 - C. Water resistance**
 - D. Structural integrity**
- 7. When floor joists are supported by masonry walls, the joists shall have a minimum bearing distance on each end of how many inches?**
- A. 2 inches**
 - B. 3 inches**
 - C. 4 inches**
 - D. 5 inches**
- 8. What type of roof is commonly used in residential house plans featuring gables and valleys?**
- A. Hip roof**
 - B. Flat roof**
 - C. Gable and valley**
 - D. Shed roof**
- 9. What is the minimum distance a ladder should extend above the roof?**
- A. 24 inches**
 - B. 30 inches**
 - C. 36 inches**
 - D. 42 inches**
- 10. In terms of construction, what does the term 'load-bearing' refer to?**
- A. Materials that reduce noise**
 - B. Structural elements that support weight**
 - C. Non-structural components**
 - D. Any type of load applied**

Answers

SAMPLE

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

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Explanations

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1. What is the minimum height for weep screed above the earth?

- A. 2 inches
- B. 4 inches**
- C. 6 inches
- D. 8 inches

The minimum height for weep screed above the earth is established to prevent moisture from coming into contact with the building's structure, which could lead to a variety of issues including mold growth, wood rot, and damage to the exterior finishes. The correct height, which is 4 inches, strikes a balance between adequate drainage and ensuring that the base of the wall is protected from potential moisture intrusion. This requirement is rooted in building codes that emphasize the importance of maintaining a clear separation between the earth and the components of a structure. By setting the weep screed at this minimum height, it effectively allows for proper drainage of rainwater and reduces the risk of water accumulation that could compromise the building's integrity over time. Other heights, while they may offer some level of protection, do not meet the specific guidelines that are reflected in most building code requirements, which are designed to ensure the longevity and durability of construction projects.

2. What material is commonly used for waterproofing basements?

- A. Rubber membrane**
- B. Wood shingles
- C. Fiberglass insulation
- D. Brick veneer

The use of a rubber membrane for waterproofing basements is highly effective due to its water-resistant properties and flexibility. Rubber membranes serve as a barrier that prevents moisture from penetrating through walls and foundations, which is especially valuable in areas prone to heavy rainfall or high groundwater levels. These membranes can adapt to the natural movement of the structure without cracking or losing integrity, thus providing long-lasting protection against water damage. In contrast, wood shingles, fiberglass insulation, and brick veneer do not possess the essential waterproof characteristics required for effective basement waterproofing. Wood shingles are susceptible to rot and degradation when exposed to moisture, fiberglass insulation can trap water leading to mold growth, and brick veneer provides minimal waterproofing capability as it is porous and could allow water intrusion without proper sealing. Therefore, the rubber membrane stands out as the primary choice for waterproofing in basement construction.

3. What is the ideal moisture content for freshly sawn lumber to reduce warping?

- A. 12-15%**
- B. 18-20%**
- C. 6-8%**
- D. 10-12%**

The ideal moisture content for freshly sawn lumber to reduce warping is in the range of 6-8%. This lower moisture content is crucial because wood is hygroscopic, meaning it absorbs and loses moisture based on the environment around it. When lumber has a moisture content of 6-8%, it is generally considered to be at an equilibrium point for most indoor environments, which helps to minimize dimensional changes as the wood acclimates to its surroundings. When the moisture content is too high, as in the 18-20% range, the lumber is more prone to warping, twisting, and other forms of dimensional instability as it dries. On the other hand, while the 10-12% range is often acceptable for construction, it is still higher than the ideal scenario of 6-8% for freshly sawn lumber specifically looking to reduce warping. Therefore, keeping lumber at 6-8% moisture content is ideal for structural integrity and longevity in construction projects.

4. What is the load bearing value(PSF) of sandy gravel?

- A. 2,500 psf**
- B. 3,000 psf**
- C. 3,500 psf**
- D. 4,000 psf**

The load-bearing value of sandy gravel is typically cited around 3,000 pounds per square foot (psf). This value represents the capacity of sandy gravel to support loads without experiencing excessive settlement or failure, making it a suitable material for foundational supports in various types of construction. Sandy gravel, characterized by its granular texture and drainage properties, offers a combination of strength and stability. The specific value can depend on various factors, including the grain size distribution, moisture content, and compaction level. In engineering practices, sandy gravel is often used in footing and subgrade scenarios, where reliable load-bearing characteristics are essential. Recognizing the significance of soil bearing values is crucial for any general contractor, as it informs decisions regarding foundation design and the type of structures that can be safely built on such soils. That's why a value of 3,000 psf aligns with standard engineering guidelines used in construction projects.

5. What is the maximum allowable pressure for a latch on an emergency egress door?

- A. 10 psf**
- B. 15 psf**
- C. 20 psf**
- D. 30 psf**

The maximum allowable pressure for a latch on an emergency egress door is established to ensure that the latch can be easily opened in an emergency situation without excessive force. Option B, which specifies 15 psf (pounds per square foot), is recognized as the standard requirement. This level of pressure is calibrated to provide a balance between security when the door is not in use and ease of operation during an emergency, ensuring that individuals can quickly exit the building if necessary. Standards for emergency exits often focus on facilitating swift evacuation, which is critical in situations such as fires or other emergencies. By limiting the latch pressure to 15 psf, building codes aim to minimize the risk of hindrance during emergency evacuations, thus prioritizing the safety and well-being of occupants. It is essential that any latch mechanism on an emergency egress door can be easily activated without requiring excessive strength, reflecting the importance of safety in design regulations for exits in buildings.

6. In insulation, the "R" value measures what?

- A. Thermal resistance**
- B. Sound insulation**
- C. Water resistance**
- D. Structural integrity**

The "R" value measures thermal resistance, which is a critical factor in determining how well insulation can resist heat flow. A higher "R" value indicates greater insulating effectiveness, meaning the material does a better job of keeping heat inside during cold weather and outside during hot weather. This is particularly important in building construction, as effective insulation contributes to energy efficiency, comfort, and cost savings on heating and cooling bills. The thermal resistance value of insulation helps builders and homeowners make informed decisions when selecting materials for their projects. The other options do not accurately represent what the "R" value measures. Sound insulation refers to the ability of a material to block or absorb sound waves, while water resistance pertains to a material's ability to resist water penetration. Structural integrity concerns the strength and stability of a material rather than its insulating properties. Therefore, the focus on thermal resistance distinctly distinguishes the "R" value in the context of insulation.

7. When floor joists are supported by masonry walls, the joists shall have a minimum bearing distance on each end of how many inches?

A. 2 inches

B. 3 inches

C. 4 inches

D. 5 inches

When floor joists are supported by masonry walls, they must have a minimum bearing of 3 inches on each end. This requirement is specified to ensure the structural integrity and stability of the floor system. The proper bearing distance is crucial because it helps to distribute the load of the joists and the floor above evenly onto the supporting walls, preventing excessive stress on both the joists and the masonry. A bearing distance of at least 3 inches also helps prevent issues related to moisture and deterioration that can occur at the ledger points where the joists make contact with the wall. Overall, adhering to this specification contributes to the long-term durability and safety of the structure.

8. What type of roof is commonly used in residential house plans featuring gables and valleys?

A. Hip roof

B. Flat roof

C. Gable and valley

D. Shed roof

The correct choice pertains to a roof design that effectively uses both gables and valleys, which are characteristic features of many residential structures. A roof described as having gables refers to the triangular ends found at the peak of a pitched roof, while valleys are formed in the junction where two sloped planes meet, providing effective drainage and aesthetic appeal. The combination of gables and valleys in a roofing system serves both functional and visual purposes. Functionally, it aids in water runoff and prevents pooling, while aesthetically, it can create an appealing silhouette that is often desired in residential architecture. This type of roof is particularly popular in regions with moderate to heavy rainfall or snowy climates where effective drainage is necessary. Other options, while valid in different contexts, do not encapsulate the combined features as well. For example, a hip roof generally lacks the vertical gables, a flat roof does not provide the slopes needed for drainage, and a shed roof consists of a single plane that does not incorporate the gabled aspect. Thus, a roof specifically categorized as "gable and valley" accurately represents the combination necessary for the question at hand.

9. What is the minimum distance a ladder should extend above the roof?

- A. 24 inches**
- B. 30 inches**
- C. 36 inches**
- D. 42 inches**

The correct answer indicates that a ladder should extend a minimum of 36 inches above the roof line to provide adequate support and safety for individuals accessing or working on a roof. This height is critical because it allows for a secure grip and stability when transitioning from the ladder to the roof. Having this extra height ensures that users can safely maintain three points of contact — two hands and one foot or two feet and one hand — while climbing up or down, which is essential for preventing falls. The specified height also helps mitigate risks associated with slipping or losing balance, as it provides a solid handhold that reduces the likelihood of accidents during entry or exit from the ladder. As such, adhering to this requirement is important for ensuring adherence to safety regulations and best practices in construction and maintenance work. The other distances offered may not provide the necessary security and safety margin, which is crucial when working at elevated heights.

10. In terms of construction, what does the term 'load-bearing' refer to?

- A. Materials that reduce noise**
- B. Structural elements that support weight**
- C. Non-structural components**
- D. Any type of load applied**

The term 'load-bearing' specifically refers to structural elements within a construction that are designed to support weight, including the weight of the building itself, occupants, furniture, and other loads imposed on the structure. These elements play a critical role in ensuring the stability and integrity of a building by transferring loads from the roof and upper floors down to the foundation. Understanding load-bearing structures is essential for proper construction practices, as any modifications or renovations involving these elements must be approached with caution. Failure to recognize and maintain the integrity of load-bearing components can lead to structural failure and safety hazards. The other options focus on either noise reduction, non-structural aspects, or simply refer to any load applied, which does not capture the specificity required when discussing structural elements in construction.