

HOSA Chairside Assisting / Dental Instruments Practice Test (Sample)

Study Guide



Everything you need from our exam experts!

This is a sample study guide. To access the full version with hundreds of questions,

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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. Don't worry about getting everything right, 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, and take breaks to retain information better.

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.

7. Use Other Tools

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!

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Questions

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- 1. What is a mandrel disc specifically used for in dentistry?**
 - A. Polishing restorations**
 - B. Punching holes in the dam**
 - C. Separating teeth**
 - D. Mixing materials**

- 2. Which device is used to hold the x-ray film for a bitewing x-ray?**
 - A. Bitewing XCP ring - red**
 - B. Periapical XCP ring - yellow**
 - C. Full mouth XCP ring - green**
 - D. Cephalometric XCP ring - blue**

- 3. What is the main advantage of using a double-ended dental instrument like the Hollenbeck?**
 - A. Enhanced precision in treatment**
 - B. Reduced time in procedures**
 - C. Improved ergonomics for the dentist**
 - D. Ability to perform multiple functions without switching instruments**

- 4. What is the main use of a scaler in dental procedures?**
 - A. To perform root canals**
 - B. To remove plaque and tartar**
 - C. For root extraction**
 - D. To close incisions**

- 5. Which instrument is used to loosen a tooth before extraction?**
 - A. Surgical scissors**
 - B. Elevator**
 - C. Anterior forceps**
 - D. Root tip pick**

6. Which tool is specifically used to remove air bubbles from impression material?

- A. Bite/wax (wafer)**
- B. Vibrators**
- C. Laboratory knife**
- D. Plaster spatula**

7. What is the purpose of an anesthetic in dental procedures?

- A. To extract teeth**
- B. To deaden the nerve**
- C. To clean the tooth surface**
- D. To whiten teeth**

8. Which item can be employed to dispense wax or impression material?

- A. Denture case**
- B. Extruder gun**
- C. Model trimmer**
- D. Lab knife**

9. Which x-ray accessory helps with taking proper images of a dentist's work area?

- A. X-ray Processor**
- B. X-ray View Box**
- C. Bitewing Tabs**
- D. Posterior XCP Ring**

10. What is used to mark the root canal during procedures?

- A. Endo stops**
- B. Gutta percha spreader**
- C. Root canal sealer**
- D. Irrigating syringe**

Answers

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

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Explanations

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1. What is a mandrel disc specifically used for in dentistry?

- A. Polishing restorations**
- B. Punching holes in the dam**
- C. Separating teeth**
- D. Mixing materials**

A mandrel disc is specifically designed for polishing restorations in dentistry. This instrument typically consists of a thin, circular disc attached to a mandrel, which is a rod or spindle that holds and powers the disc during use. When utilized in a dental handpiece, the mandrel disc effectively smooths and polishes various dental materials, such as composites, metal, or ceramics, to achieve a polished finish that enhances both the aesthetic appeal and functionality of restorations. Polishing is a crucial step in the restorative process because it not only improves the appearance of dental work but also helps to minimize plaque accumulation and maintain oral hygiene. In contrast, other options like punching holes in the dam, separating teeth, and mixing materials are associated with different dental procedures and instruments. For instance, a dental dam punch is specifically made for creating holes in a rubber dam, which is used to isolate teeth during procedures. Separating teeth typically involves the use of separators, like orthodontic separators or wedge-shaped devices to create space. Mixing materials is a task generally completed using spatulas or mixing bowls designed for dental impression materials or restorative agents. This is why the mandrel disc is distinctively aligned with polishing restorations.

2. Which device is used to hold the x-ray film for a bitewing x-ray?

- A. Bitewing XCP ring - red**
- B. Periapical XCP ring - yellow**
- C. Full mouth XCP ring - green**
- D. Cephalometric XCP ring - blue**

The device that is specifically designed to hold the x-ray film for a bitewing x-ray is the Bitewing XCP ring, which is typically color-coded red. The Bitewing XCP is shaped to allow for the appropriate positioning of the film in relation to the patient's teeth, facilitating the capture of the necessary dental images. This type of x-ray is crucial for assessing interproximal areas, which show how well the teeth fit together and can help in identifying cavities between the teeth. Other XCP rings serve different purposes and are tailored for alternative types of x-ray imaging. The Periapical XCP, which is yellow, is used to take periapical x-rays that focus on a single tooth and the surrounding bone structure. The Full Mouth XCP, indicated by the green color, is utilized for more comprehensive imaging that captures multiple periapical views across the entire mouth. The Cephalometric XCP, represented by the blue color, is specifically for lateral cephalometric radiographs, which are used in orthodontics to analyze skeletal relationships. Each of these devices has its unique role, making the Bitewing XCP ring red the appropriate choice for bitewing x-ray images.

3. What is the main advantage of using a double-ended dental instrument like the Hollenbeck?

- A. Enhanced precision in treatment**
- B. Reduced time in procedures**
- C. Improved ergonomics for the dentist**
- D. Ability to perform multiple functions without switching instruments**

The main advantage of using a double-ended dental instrument, such as the Hollenbeck, lies in its ability to perform multiple functions without the need to switch instruments. This design allows the dentist or dental assistant to utilize one tool for different tasks, such as carving, contouring, or carrying materials, which enhances efficiency during procedures. By offering two working ends, a double-ended instrument reduces the time spent searching for and exchanging tools, ultimately streamlining the workflow in the dental office. This multifunctionality not only saves time but also helps maintain a more organized workspace, contributing to a smoother experience for both the dental professional and the patient. The design of double-ended instruments often considers the various restorative and procedural needs, making them indispensable in the dental toolkit.

4. What is the main use of a scaler in dental procedures?

- A. To perform root canals**
- B. To remove plaque and tartar**
- C. For root extraction**
- D. To close incisions**

A scaler is an essential instrument in dental hygiene and various dental procedures primarily used to remove plaque and tartar from the surfaces of teeth. Plaque is a soft, sticky film of bacteria that forms on teeth, and if not removed, it can harden into tartar, which is more difficult to eliminate and can lead to gum disease and cavities. The scaler's design allows for effective scraping and cleaning of the tooth surfaces, particularly in areas that are hard to reach with a toothbrush. This function is crucial for maintaining oral health and providing patients with a clean slate for further dental work or preventive care. In contrast, instruments used for performing root canals, extracting teeth, or closing incisions serve very different purposes and are not suited for eliminating deposits on teeth. Each of those procedures may utilize specialized tools such as endodontic files, extraction forceps, or suturing instruments, respectively, highlighting the unique role that the scaler plays in dental hygiene and care.

5. Which instrument is used to loosen a tooth before extraction?

- A. Surgical scissors**
- B. Elevator**
- C. Anterior forceps**
- D. Root tip pick**

The instrument used to loosen a tooth before extraction is an elevator. Elevators are designed specifically to help separate a tooth from the periodontal ligament and the surrounding bone. This instrument is crucial in the extraction process, as it helps to create the necessary mobility of the tooth before it is removed with forceps. Using an elevator allows the dentist to gently rock the tooth back and forth, which aids in loosening it and can make the extraction smoother and less traumatic for the patient. This is especially important for teeth with strong roots or when the tooth is impacted or in a difficult position. Surgical scissors, while valuable in various surgical procedures, are not intended for loosening teeth. Anterior forceps are specialized instruments for grasping and removing anterior teeth but are used after the tooth has been loosened. The root tip pick is primarily utilized to retrieve small fragments of root that may remain in the socket after an extraction, rather than for loosening the tooth prior to extraction.

6. Which tool is specifically used to remove air bubbles from impression material?

- A. Bite/wax (wafer)**
- B. Vibrators**
- C. Laboratory knife**
- D. Plaster spatula**

The tool that is specifically used to remove air bubbles from impression material is a vibrator. The function of a vibrator in dental practice is to ensure that impression materials are evenly and thoroughly seated against the teeth and surrounding tissues without the presence of air pockets, which can compromise the accuracy of the impression. When the impression material is poured into a tray or while it's being manipulated, using a vibrator helps to displace trapped air and allows the material to flow more uniformly, ensuring a detailed and precise impression. The other tools mentioned serve different purposes: bite/wax wafers are used to make occlusal registrations, a laboratory knife is utilized for cutting and trimming materials in the lab, and a plaster spatula is typically used to mix dental materials rather than to engage with impression materials directly. Understanding the specific functions of these tools highlights the importance of using the correct instrument for the task to achieve optimal results in dental procedures.

7. What is the purpose of an anesthetic in dental procedures?

- A. To extract teeth
- B. To deaden the nerve**
- C. To clean the tooth surface
- D. To whiten teeth

The primary purpose of an anesthetic in dental procedures is to deaden the nerve. This is crucial for patient comfort, as it minimizes pain and allows for a more relaxed experience during treatments. Anesthetics work by blocking the signals sent through the nerves to the brain, effectively preventing the sensation of pain in the area where the dental procedure is being performed. When undergoing procedures such as fillings, extractions, or root canals, the dentist applies the anesthetic to ensure that the patient does not feel the discomfort that would otherwise be associated with these interventions. This sedation allows the dentist to perform necessary work without causing distress to the patient, ultimately improving the overall experience and the effectiveness of the treatment. The other choices, while related to dental care, do not accurately capture the role of anesthetics. For example, extracting teeth is a procedure that may require anesthetics, but the anesthetic itself does not perform the extraction. Similarly, cleaning or whitening teeth involves different techniques and products that do not involve nerve endings or pain management, which is the primary focus of anesthetics.

8. Which item can be employed to dispense wax or impression material?

- A. Denture case
- B. Extruder gun**
- C. Model trimmer
- D. Lab knife

An extruder gun is designed for dispensing materials like wax or impression material in a controlled manner. This tool uses pressure to force the material through a nozzle, allowing for precise application. It is particularly useful when a smooth, even layer or a specific shape of material is required in dental procedures, such as creating impressions or applying wax. The extruder gun's design makes it suitable for tasks that demand accuracy and consistency, ensuring that the materials are dispensed exactly where needed. In contrast, the other items have different purposes. For instance, a denture case is primarily used for storing dentures safely when they are not in use. A model trimmer is used for refining and shaping dental models, making it unsuitable for dispensing materials. A lab knife is utilized for cutting or trimming materials rather than dispensing them. Thus, the extruder gun is the correct choice for the task of dispensing wax or impression material due to its specific functionality.

9. Which x-ray accessory helps with taking proper images of a dentist's work area?

- A. X-ray Processor**
- B. X-ray View Box**
- C. Bitewing Tabs**
- D. Posterior XCP Ring**

The posterior XCP ring is specifically designed to help with the accurate positioning of x-ray film or digital sensors during the imaging process. It is part of the extension cone paralleling (XCP) system, which aids dental professionals in ensuring the correct alignment of the x-ray beam to the film or sensor. This alignment is essential for obtaining clear, undistorted images that accurately represent the dentist's work area. Using the posterior XCP ring allows for optimal angle and positioning when capturing images of posterior teeth, which can be challenging without proper support and alignment. This device helps reduce the risk of errors that could arise from incorrect positioning, leading to better diagnostic images that can inform treatment decisions. In contrast, the other options serve different functions. The x-ray processor is used for developing x-ray films but does not assist with image capturing. The x-ray view box is a device for viewing developed films, and bitewing tabs are used primarily to hold the film in place during the imaging process but do not facilitate the proper alignment of the x-ray beam.

10. What is used to mark the root canal during procedures?

- A. Endo stops**
- B. Gutta percha spreader**
- C. Root canal sealer**
- D. Irrigating syringe**

The correct choice is an endo stop, as it is specifically designed to assist in accurately marking the length of the canal during endodontic procedures. Endo stops are small, typically rubber or plastic, devices that are placed on the end of files or reamers to indicate the working length of the root canal. This ensures that the clinician knows how far to extend the instrument within the canal, which is crucial for effective cleaning and shaping. By setting the endo stop to the predetermined length, dental professionals can prevent over-instrumentation and potential damage to the surrounding tissues, which could lead to complications. This precise measurement is essential in achieving a successful root canal treatment by ensuring complete removal of infected tissue and proper sealing of the canal. The other options each have specific functions in the root canal procedure but do not serve the purpose of marking the canal length. A gutta percha spreader is used to compact gutta percha in the canal, a root canal sealer is used to fill the space created in the canal after cleaning and shaping, and an irrigating syringe is used to deliver irrigation solutions for cleaning the canal. While these instruments are vital to the overall procedure, they do not provide the necessary sectional markings required for determining the working

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://hosachairassist.examzify.com>

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

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