

# Introductory Sommelier 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

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- 1. What are tartrates?**
  - A. A sugar crystals**
  - B. A metallic flakes**
  - C. Tartaric acid crystals**
  - D. A salt formed by tannins**
  
- 2. What does the Appellation d'Origine Protegee (AOP) govern?**
  - A. Geographical boundaries, grape varieties, yields, alcohol levels, viticultural methods, winemaking techniques, and quality of the finished product; with different regional standards.**
  - B. Only geographical boundaries and grape varieties.**
  - C. Labeling and packaging requirements.**
  - D. Production location but no varietal or yield standards.**
  
- 3. Which ocean current cools Chile's coastal vineyards?**
  - A. Canary Current**
  - B. California Current**
  - C. Humboldt Current**
  - D. Peru Current**
  
- 4. Which region is known as 'The Garden of France'?**
  - A. Loire Valley**
  - B. Burgundy**
  - C. Provence**
  - D. Alsace**
  
- 5. Blanc de Noirs wines are typically made from which grape varieties?**
  - A. Chardonnay**
  - B. Pinot Gris**
  - C. Pinot Noir and/or Pinot Meunier**
  - D. Pinot Blanc**

- 6. Which region was classified in 1855?**
- A. Burgundy**
  - B. Bordeaux (Left Bank)**
  - C. Champagne**
  - D. Alsace**
- 7. Which red grape dominates most blends in the Southern Rhone?**
- A. Syrah**
  - B. Grenache**
  - C. Mourvèdre**
  - D. Cinsault**
- 8. Which country has over 1,300 registered grape varieties?**
- A. France**
  - B. Spain**
  - C. Italy**
  - D. United States**
- 9. What is the consequence of not storing Madeira and Sherry upright?**
- A. The cork could be eroded by alcohol.**
  - B. The wine will turn sour.**
  - C. The bottle will crack.**
  - D. The color will fade.**
- 10. Barossa is located in which Australian state?**
- A. New South Wales**
  - B. Victoria**
  - C. Western Australia**
  - D. South Australia**

## Answers

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

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## **Explanations**

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## 1. What are tartrates?

- A. A sugar crystals
- B. A metallic flakes
- C. Tartaric acid crystals**
- D. A salt formed by tannins

Tartrates are crystals that form from a salt of tartaric acid in wine, most commonly potassium bitartrate. In bottles, especially white wines or when chilled, the solubility of this salt decreases and crystals precipitate, sometimes seen as a sediment or “wine diamonds.” They are harmless and simply a natural byproduct of tartaric acid in grapes reacting with potassium. The listed option describes the origin of tartrates in terms of tartaric acid, which is why it’s the best fit among the choices. The other options describe sugar crystals, metallic flakes, or tannin-based salts, which aren’t what tartrates are.

## 2. What does the Appellation d'Origine Protegee (AOP) govern?

- A. Geographical boundaries, grape varieties, yields, alcohol levels, viticultural methods, winemaking techniques, and quality of the finished product; with different regional standards.**
- B. Only geographical boundaries and grape varieties.
- C. Labeling and packaging requirements.
- D. Production location but no varietal or yield standards.

At its heart, the Appellation d'Origine Protegee defines origin and production standards. It creates a protected designation that ties a wine to a specific geographic area and to a defined set of rules for how it must be produced. These rules cover which grape varieties are allowed, the maximum yields, minimum alcohol levels, and the viticultural and winemaking methods that may be used. They also establish quality criteria for the finished wine. Because these requirements can differ by region, each appellation has its own regional standards within the overall framework. In short, it governs not just where the wine comes from, but how it is made and what standards it must meet to bear that designation.

## 3. Which ocean current cools Chile's coastal vineyards?

- A. Canary Current
- B. California Current
- C. Humboldt Current**
- D. Peru Current

Coastal wine regions stay cooler when a cold ocean current runs along the shore, because it chills the air, promotes fog, and drives upwelling of colder water from below. The current that flows north along Chile’s western edge brings polar water to the surface, a persistent cold influence that lowers daytime temperatures and helps grapes retain natural acidity. This system is the Humboldt Current (also known as the Peru Current), and its steady chill is what makes Chile’s coastal vineyards—especially those near the Pacific—cooler than inland areas. The other currents listed occur in different regions and don’t provide the same cooling effect for Chile’s coast, reinforcing why this particular current is responsible for cooling those vineyards.

#### 4. Which region is known as 'The Garden of France'?

- A. Loire Valley**
- B. Burgundy**
- C. Provence**
- D. Alsace**

The Loire Valley earns the label “The Garden of France” because its landscape along the Loire River is famously lush, fertile, and green, with gardens, orchards, and picturesque châteaux that have long symbolized cultivation and beauty. The region’s mild climate and rich soils support abundant farming and colorful, verdant scenery, which historically inspired this nickname. While Burgundy, Provence, and Alsace are each renowned for their own wines and landscapes, they are not the regions commonly described by this garden-like moniker.

#### 5. Blanc de Noirs wines are typically made from which grape varieties?

- A. Chardonnay**
- B. Pinot Gris**
- C. Pinot Noir and/or Pinot Meunier**
- D. Pinot Blanc**

Blanc de Noirs refers to a white wine made from black-skinned grapes. The usual varieties are Pinot Noir and/or Pinot Meunier, either on their own or in a blend. The wine stays white because the grapes are pressed and kept away from extended skin contact, so the dark skins don’t impart color to the juice. Chardonnay, Pinot Gris, and Pinot Blanc aren’t used for Blanc de Noirs since they are white-skinned (with Pinot Blanc being a white mutation of Pinot Noir and Pinot Gris having different skin behavior). In practice, Blanc de Noirs is a white, often sparkling wine made from Pinot Noir and/or Pinot Meunier.

#### 6. Which region was classified in 1855?

- A. Burgundy**
- B. Bordeaux (Left Bank)**
- C. Champagne**
- D. Alsace**

The main idea here is the Bordeaux wine classification of 1855, an official ranking created for the Paris Exposition to sort Bordeaux wines. It specifically applied to wines from the Bordeaux region, focusing on the Médoc (on the Left Bank) and the Graves area, plus the sweet wines of Sauternes/Barsac. Because the question asks which region was classified in 1855, the best answer is Bordeaux, specifically its Left Bank wines. Burgundy, Champagne, and Alsace did not receive this official Bordeaux classification, so they aren’t the region referred to by the 1855 ranking.

**7. Which red grape dominates most blends in the Southern Rhone?**

- A. Syrah
- B. Grenache**
- C. Mourvèdre
- D. Cinsault

Grenache is the grape that dominates most red blends in the Southern Rhône. The hot, sunny climate there lets Grenache ripen fully, delivering a lush, fruit-forward base with relatively soft tannins and higher alcohol. That makes it ideal as the backbone of blends, while Syrah and Mourvèdre step in to provide structure, color, and spice. In the region's signature blends—often referred to as GSM—Grenache typically forms the largest share, with Syrah contributing body and peppery notes and Mourvèdre adding tannin and aging potential. Cinsault is used in some blends for aroma or lighter style, but it isn't the dominant variety.

**8. Which country has over 1,300 registered grape varieties?**

- A. France
- B. Spain
- C. Italy**
- D. United States

A large catalog of registered grape varieties points to a country with a long, regionally diverse winemaking heritage. Italy stands out because it has over 1,300 registered grape varieties, the most of any country. This abundance arises from centuries of vine cultivation across countless microclimates and regions, yielding a vast array of native grapes like Sangiovese, Nebbiolo, Aglianico, and Garganega. While other countries are influential and have their share of notable varieties, none match Italy's breadth of registered types. This is why the country with the extensive registered grape variety list is Italy.

**9. What is the consequence of not storing Madeira and Sherry upright?**

- A. The cork could be eroded by alcohol.**
- B. The wine will turn sour.
- C. The bottle will crack.
- D. The color will fade.

Madeira and Sherry are fortified wines with relatively high alcohol content, and the cork plays a crucial role in keeping the bottle sealed over time. When bottles are not stored upright, the wine sits against the cork longer, and the alcohol can gradually erode or deteriorate the cork. A compromised cork can lose its seal, allowing air in and potentially leading to leakage or oxidation, which is why upright storage helps preserve the integrity of the seal. The other outcomes listed aren't primarily driven by storage orientation: souring, a cracked bottle, or fading color aren't the direct risks associated with not storing these wines upright.

**10. Barossa is located in which Australian state?**

- A. New South Wales**
- B. Victoria**
- C. Western Australia**
- D. South Australia**

**Barossa is in South Australia. The Barossa Valley, renowned for its wine, sits just north of Adelaide in the central part of South Australia. This state is known for its wine regions and is distinct from New South Wales (east coast), Victoria (southeast of SA), and Western Australia (the western coast). So the Barossa region belongs to South Australia.**

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## 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://introductorysommelier.examzify.com>**

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

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