

MICHIGAN CDL - AIR BRAKES PRACTICE EXAM (SAMPLE)

STUDY GUIDE



SAMPLE STUDY GUIDE WITH LIMITED QUESTIONS

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THE FULL VERSION STUDY GUIDE

<https://michigancdl-airbrakes.examzify.com>



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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 is the minimum air pressure required for safe operation of air brakes?**
 - A. 30 psi
 - B. 60 psi
 - C. 80 psi
 - D. 100 psi

- 2. What should be done if the low air pressure warning signal activates while driving a vehicle with air brakes?**
 - A. Speed up to reach a service station
 - B. Bring the vehicle to a complete stop and have it repaired
 - C. Ignore it if brakes feel normal
 - D. Switch off the warning system

- 3. What should a driver check to ensure safe operation of spring brakes?**
 - A. Check for tire wear
 - B. Ensure air pressure falls below 60 psi
 - C. Verify the spring brakes engage at low air pressure
 - D. Ensure the vehicle is leveled

- 4. What type of air brake system is commonly used in heavy trucks?**
 - A. Single air brake systems
 - B. Hydraulic brake systems
 - C. Dual air brake systems
 - D. Pneumatic brake systems

- 5. How often should manually operated air tank drains be used to prevent oil and water buildup?**
 - A. Once a week
 - B. Every day
 - C. Once a month
 - D. Every two weeks

- 6. What role does the air compressor play in an air brake system?**
- A. It provides hydraulic pressure to the brakes.
 - B. It compresses air to replenish the air tanks.
 - C. It controls the brake fluid flow.
 - D. It signals when brakes need servicing.
- 7. During a pre-trip inspection, what should be checked regarding the brake drums?**
- A. Check for rust only
 - B. Verify if they are painted
 - C. Check for cracks, wear, and ensure they are securely mounted
 - D. Test their temperature during operation
- 8. Which system controls the brake lights in an air brake system?**
- A. The main air pressure regulator
 - B. The air compressor
 - C. The vehicle's electrical system
 - D. The parking brake
- 9. What is the primary function of Anti-Lock Braking Systems (ABS) during hard brake pedal applications?**
- A. To reduce overall braking power
 - B. To prevent wheels from locking up
 - C. To increase vehicle speed
 - D. To enhance driving comfort
- 10. What is a potential sign of malfunctioning brakes?**
- A. Quiet operation
 - B. Uneven tire wear
 - C. Steady brake pedal pressure
 - D. No vibrations during braking

Answers

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

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Explanations

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1. What is the minimum air pressure required for safe operation of air brakes?

- A. 30 psi
- B. 60 psi**
- C. 80 psi
- D. 100 psi

The minimum air pressure required for the safe operation of air brakes is 60 psi. This threshold is critical because air brakes rely on a compressed air system to function effectively. When the pressure drops below 60 psi, it can signal that the brakes may not function correctly, posing a significant safety risk. Maintaining adequate air pressure ensures that the brake components can engage and release appropriately, providing reliable stopping power for the vehicle. If the air pressure is insufficient, it could lead to brake failure or diminished braking capability, increasing the likelihood of accidents, especially in larger commercial vehicles. Understanding this pressure requirement is part of how drivers can ensure their vehicle's air brake system is functioning optimally, allowing for safe operation on the road. Regular checks for air pressure in the brake system contribute to overall vehicle safety and compliance with regulations set forth for commercial drivers.

2. What should be done if the low air pressure warning signal activates while driving a vehicle with air brakes?

- A. Speed up to reach a service station
- B. Bring the vehicle to a complete stop and have it repaired**
- C. Ignore it if brakes feel normal
- D. Switch off the warning system

When the low air pressure warning signal activates while driving a vehicle equipped with air brakes, the appropriate response is to bring the vehicle to a complete stop and have it repaired. This is essential because low air pressure indicates a potential failure in the air brake system, which could lead to a complete loss of braking ability. Air brakes rely on sufficient pressure to function effectively, and if that pressure drops too low, the brakes may not engage or may fail to hold the vehicle securely, posing a serious safety hazard. Addressing the signal promptly and ensuring the vehicle is safe for operation helps prevent accidents and ensures compliance with safety regulations. While it may be tempting to speed up to reach a service station or to ignore the signal if the brakes feel normal, those actions can significantly compromise safety. It's critical to treat any warning about air pressure seriously and to operate under the understanding that air brake systems require careful attention and maintenance. Ignoring the warning or disabling it could put both the driver and others on the road at risk.

3. What should a driver check to ensure safe operation of spring brakes?

- A. Check for tire wear
- B. Ensure air pressure falls below 60 psi
- C. Verify the spring brakes engage at low air pressure**
- D. Ensure the vehicle is leveled

To ensure the safe operation of spring brakes, it is essential for a driver to verify that the spring brakes engage at low air pressure. Spring brakes are a crucial safety feature in vehicles equipped with air brake systems, designed to automatically apply brakes when the air pressure drops to a certain threshold, usually around 60 psi or lower. This automatic engagement helps to prevent the vehicle from rolling away when the air pressure fails or is insufficient to keep the service brakes operational. This focus on the engagement of spring brakes is vital because it ensures that in the event of an air leak or failure, the vehicle remains safely stopped. This is particularly important in large or heavy vehicles where uncontrolled movement could lead to serious accidents. The other options, while relevant to vehicle maintenance and safety, do not directly pertain to the specific function and operation of spring brakes. Checking tire wear or ensuring the vehicle is leveled does not influence how the spring brakes function. Additionally, simply ensuring that air pressure falls below 60 psi does not guarantee safe operation; it omits the critical step of confirming that the brakes engage appropriately at such pressures. Thus, the emphasis on verifying the engagement of the spring brakes under low air pressure directly relates to the core function of maintaining safety in air brake systems.

4. What type of air brake system is commonly used in heavy trucks?

- A. Single air brake systems
- B. Hydraulic brake systems
- C. Dual air brake systems**
- D. Pneumatic brake systems

The dual air brake system is widely used in heavy trucks because it enhances safety and reliability. This system consists of two separate air brake circuits, each with its own reservoir, compressor, and brake lines. The primary advantage of having a dual system is that if one circuit fails, the other can still function, providing a backup that assures the driver can maintain braking capability. This redundancy is particularly important in large commercial vehicles where stopping power is crucial for safety. In contrast, single air brake systems, while simpler, lack this redundancy and can lead to total brake failure if a single component fails. Hydraulic brake systems, which are common in lighter vehicles, do not utilize compressed air and are therefore not suitable for the heavy loads and demands of large trucks. Pneumatic brake systems refer more broadly to the principles behind air brakes but do not specifically address the crucial feature of having dual circuits designed for enhanced safety.

5. How often should manually operated air tank drains be used to prevent oil and water buildup?

- A. Once a week
- B. Every day**
- C. Once a month
- D. Every two weeks

Manually operated air tank drains should be used every day to effectively prevent the buildup of oil and water in the air brake system. Over time, moisture and contaminants can accumulate in the air tanks, which can lead to various problems such as reduced braking efficiency or even failure of components within the air brake system. Daily draining helps to ensure that any accumulated moisture and contaminants are removed before they can create issues, maintaining the overall health and performance of the brakes. This regular maintenance routine is crucial for safety and reliability in commercial driving, as moisture can freeze in cold weather, leading to brake failure. Other intervals, such as once a week, once a month, or every two weeks, may not be sufficient to keep the air system clear of contaminants, especially in environments with high humidity or heavy usage of the brakes.

6. What role does the air compressor play in an air brake system?

- A. It provides hydraulic pressure to the brakes.
- B. It compresses air to replenish the air tanks.**
- C. It controls the brake fluid flow.
- D. It signals when brakes need servicing.

The air compressor is a crucial component of an air brake system, as it is responsible for compressing air and replenishing the air tanks. This process is essential because air brakes operate on the principle of using pressurized air to engage the brake mechanism. When the driver applies the brakes, air is released from the storage tanks and directed to the brake chambers, creating the necessary force to slow down or stop the vehicle. By ensuring that the air tanks are adequately filled, the compressor enables the braking system to function effectively and reliably. Without sufficient air pressure, the brakes would be unable to operate correctly, which could lead to hazardous driving conditions. Therefore, the role of the air compressor is vital for maintaining optimal brake functionality and safety on the road.

7. During a pre-trip inspection, what should be checked regarding the brake drums?

- A. Check for rust only
- B. Verify if they are painted
- C. Check for cracks, wear, and ensure they are securely mounted**
- D. Test their temperature during operation

During a pre-trip inspection, it is essential to check the brake drums for cracks, wear, and to ensure they are securely mounted. This is crucial for maintaining the safety and functionality of the braking system. Cracked or excessively worn brake drums can significantly decrease braking performance and increase the risk of brake failure, which can lead to severe accidents. Ensuring that the drums are securely mounted helps to prevent any movement or detachment while the vehicle is in operation, which is critical for safe braking performance. Other options focus on aspects that do not provide a comprehensive safety check. Checking for rust or whether the drums are painted does not address the critical structural integrity or the operational readiness of the braking system. Testing their temperature during operation may be relevant in diagnosing overheating issues but is not a part of routine pre-trip checks aimed at identifying physical damage or secure mounting. Thus, the comprehensive assessment of cracks, wear, and secure mounting is the best practice to ensure the reliable operation of the vehicle's braking system.

8. Which system controls the brake lights in an air brake system?

- A. The main air pressure regulator
- B. The air compressor
- C. The vehicle's electrical system**
- D. The parking brake

The vehicle's electrical system is responsible for controlling the brake lights in an air brake system. When the brake pedal is pressed, the electrical signals are activated to illuminate the brake lights, indicating to other drivers that the vehicle is slowing down or stopping. This system operates independently of the air brake components, which are primarily focused on the braking function itself rather than the signaling function. In an air brake system, while components like the main air pressure regulator and air compressor are vital for the operation of the brakes—ensuring that sufficient air pressure is maintained to apply the brakes—the actual lighting for the brake signals is managed through the vehicle's wiring and electrical components. The parking brake is also a critical part of the braking system, but it primarily engages the brakes to hold the vehicle stationary rather than controlling the brake lights. Thus, the correct answer identifies the source that regulates the signaling aspect, which is essential for safe driving.

9. What is the primary function of Anti-Lock Braking Systems (ABS) during hard brake pedal applications?

- A. To reduce overall braking power
- B. To prevent wheels from locking up**
- C. To increase vehicle speed
- D. To enhance driving comfort

The primary function of Anti-Lock Braking Systems (ABS) during hard brake pedal applications is to prevent the wheels from locking up. When a driver applies the brakes forcefully, there's a risk that the wheels may stop rotating entirely, which can lead to a loss of steering control and increases the chance of skidding. ABS works by automatically modulating the brake pressure on each wheel, allowing the wheels to continue turning while still applying sufficient braking force. This system helps maintain traction and steering control, which is essential for safe maneuvering during emergency stops or adverse driving conditions. By preventing the wheels from locking up, ABS significantly reduces the likelihood of skidding and enhances vehicle stability, allowing the driver to steer while braking. This capability is crucial in maintaining safety on the roads, particularly in situations where quick and controlled stopping is necessary.

10. What is a potential sign of malfunctioning brakes?

- A. Quiet operation
- B. Uneven tire wear**
- C. Steady brake pedal pressure
- D. No vibrations during braking

Uneven tire wear is an important indicator of malfunctioning brakes. When brakes are not functioning properly, they can apply uneven pressure on the wheels, which leads to inconsistent braking force. This inconsistency can cause one tire to wear down faster than others, resulting in noticeable patches of wear on certain tires. Monitoring tire wear can help identify brake issues early on, allowing for timely maintenance and repairs, which is crucial for ensuring safe operation. Quiet operation, steady brake pedal pressure, and no vibrations during braking generally indicate normal brake function. While the absence of sounds, vibrations, or constant pedal pressure might seem favorable, these characteristics do not necessarily confirm that the brakes are functioning correctly. Hence, paying attention to uneven tire wear can serve as a critical warning sign of necessary brake system inspection and potential issues that need to be addressed.

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:

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

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