National Home Inspector Examination (NHIE) Practice Exam (Sample)

Study Guide

BY EXAMZIFY

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. What device is characterized by preventing backflow in plumbing systems?

A. backflow preventer

B. pressure reducer valve

C. gas pressure regulator

D. backwater valve

2. What happens when a system designed for natural gas is supplied with propane gas?

A. No changes are needed for proper operation

B. The flame will be too high unless a smaller orifice is installed

C. The flame will be too low unless a larger orifice is installed

D. The gas regulator and valve must be replaced

3. One of the purposes of a home inspection contract is to define the responsibilities and limitations for?

A. The real estate agent

B. The client

C. The seller

D. The appraiser

4. What is the primary function of circuit breakers?

A. Protect inhabitants by limiting shock duration.

B. Regulate power to the attached equipment.

C. Protect the wire from an electrical overload.

D. Measure the current in a circuit.

5. In the context of dryer exhaust and gas-fired water heater vent termination, what should a home inspector recommend?

A. the dryer exhaust should be at least 5 feet from the gas vent termination.

B. the dryer exhaust backdraft damper should be repaired or replaced.

C. the gas vent is improperly terminated and should be relocated.

D. the client monitor the gas vent for indications of deterioration.

6. What should be assessed first when a heating system is not producing heat?

A. The thermostat settings

B. The condition of the ductwork

C. The furnace or boiler operation

D. The insulation levels in the home

7. What should be reported regarding rigid foam insulation covering a service entrance cable?

A. Acceptable because the siding is a non-conducting type

B. An improper installation that should be corrected

C. A benefit because additional protection is provided to the service entrance cable

D. Acceptable, provided the drip loops at the service entrance head are left exposed

8. What is a common issue associated with older plumbing systems?

A. High-pressure water output

B. Corrosion and build-up in pipes, leading to reduced water flow

C. Excessive water waste

D. Modern fixture compatibility

9. What does condensation between glass layers of thermal pane windows suggest?

A. Need to repair or replace the sealant

B. Need to clean breather holes

C. Need to replace glazing, sash, or window

D. Need to replace the interior pane

10. Which tool is commonly used to check for moisture in walls?

A. Thermal camera

B. Moisture meter

C. Electrical tester

D. Pneumatic tool

Answers

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

Explanations

1. What device is characterized by preventing backflow in plumbing systems?

A. backflow preventer

B. pressure reducer valve

C. gas pressure regulator

D. backwater valve

The device that serves to prevent backflow in plumbing systems is known as a backflow preventer. This essential component ensures that water flows in the correct direction, thereby protecting potable water supplies from contamination or pollution that could occur if water were to reverse flow. Backflow typically occurs due to a change in pressure within the plumbing system, which can happen during events like a water main break or when a fire hydrant is used. Backflow preventers are designed to automatically shut off and prevent the reverse flow of water, making them crucial for maintaining the safety and integrity of drinking water systems. They come in various types, including air gaps, check valves, and reduced pressure zone devices, each providing an effective barrier against potential backflow. In contrast, devices such as pressure reducer valves regulate water pressure but do not address the issue of backflow. Gas pressure regulators control the pressure of gas systems but are unrelated to plumbing and backflow prevention. Backwater valves are specifically designed to prevent sewer backup in drain systems, which, while similar in function to backflow preventers, address a different kind of flow issue entirely, primarily in waste water management. Therefore, it is the backflow preventer that specifically focuses on preventing backflow in plumbing systems.

2. What happens when a system designed for natural gas is supplied with propane gas?

A. No changes are needed for proper operation

B. The flame will be too high unless a smaller orifice is installed

C. The flame will be too low unless a larger orifice is installed

D. The gas regulator and valve must be replaced

When a system designed for natural gas is supplied with propane gas, the correct answer reflects that the flame will be too high unless modifications are made, specifically, installing a smaller orifice. This is because propane has a higher energy content than natural gas, meaning it releases more heat per unit of gas burned. If a system set up for natural gas operates with propane without any adjustments, the result is an excess of fuel being supplied relative to the amount of air available for combustion. This imbalance causes a flame that is higher and can lead to dangerous conditions including overheating and potential damage to the appliance itself. Adjusting the orifice size ensures that the correct fuel-to-air ratio is maintained, allowing for safe and efficient operation of the system with propane. In contrast, if one were to incorrectly choose an option that suggests no changes are needed, it would ignore the fundamental differences in combustion properties between the two gases, particularly their required air-to-fuel ratios. Similarly, suggesting that the flame would be too low unless a larger orifice is installed would misconstrue how propane burns compared to natural gas. Lastly, while alterations to the gas regulator and valves can sometimes be necessary in certain systems, the immediate and most critical adjustment relates specifically to the orifice size

3. One of the purposes of a home inspection contract is to define the responsibilities and limitations for?

A. The real estate agent

B. The client

C. The seller

D. The appraiser

A home inspection contract primarily serves to clarify the responsibilities and limitations for the client. This document outlines what the home inspector will examine and what aspects of the property are not covered during the inspection. By defining these parameters, the contract ensures that the client has a clear understanding of the scope of the inspection and the inspector's obligations. It also addresses the client's responsibilities, such as providing access to the property and any specific instructions or limitations they might have regarding the inspection process. In this context, the contract is essential for setting realistic expectations and preventing misunderstandings between the home inspector and the client, guiding them in what they can and cannot expect from the inspection service. This transparency helps to enhance the client's satisfaction and reinforces the professional nature of the inspection process.

4. What is the primary function of circuit breakers?

A. Protect inhabitants by limiting shock duration.

B. Regulate power to the attached equipment.

C. Protect the wire from an electrical overload.

D. Measure the current in a circuit.

The primary function of circuit breakers is to protect the wire from an electrical overload. Circuit breakers are designed to automatically interrupt the flow of electricity in a circuit when they detect an overload or a short circuit condition. This is crucial because excessive current can lead to overheating and potentially cause electrical fires. By tripping and cutting off the power, circuit breakers help ensure that the wiring in a home or building remains safe, preventing damage and reducing the risk of hazards. In the context of other choices, limiting shock duration refers more to ground fault circuit interrupters (GFCIs), which are designed to protect people from electric shock. Regulating power to attached equipment is typically a function of devices like voltage regulators or transformers, while measuring current in a circuit is performed by an ammeter or similar device, not by a circuit breaker itself. Thus, protecting the wire from an overload is the essential and primary role of a circuit breaker.

5. In the context of dryer exhaust and gas-fired water heater vent termination, what should a home inspector recommend?

A. the dryer exhaust should be at least 5 feet from the gas vent termination.

B. the dryer exhaust backdraft damper should be repaired or replaced.

C. the gas vent is improperly terminated and should be relocated.

D. the client monitor the gas vent for indications of deterioration.

When evaluating venting, the safety issue is keeping combustion appliance venting separate from other exhaust paths so gases don't backdraft into living areas. A gas-fired water heater vents combustion products outdoors, while a dryer exhaust pushes lint-laden air outward. If the gas vent termination is improperly placed relative to the dryer exhaust, wind or pressure differences can cause backdrafting or cross-drafting, potentially sending combustion gases into the home or causing the dryer to affect the gas vent's performance. Relocating the gas vent termination to a location with appropriate clearance from the dryer exhaust ensures each vent operates independently and reduces the risk of backdrafting, entry of combustion gases, and lint/moisture issues near the vent. This directly addresses the hazardous condition shown. The other options don't tackle that risk as directly: a fixed distance requirement may not apply universally or address the immediate termination placement; repairing a dryer backdraft damper? That might help in some cases but doesn't fix the improper gas vent termination; monitoring deterioration is reactive and unrelated to the current safety concern.

6. What should be assessed first when a heating system is not producing heat?

A. The thermostat settings

B. The condition of the ductwork

C. The furnace or boiler operation

D. The insulation levels in the home

When addressing a heating system that is not producing heat, the thermostat settings are the most logical first step to assess. The thermostat is the control mechanism for the heating system and directly influences its operation. If the thermostat is set incorrectly—whether it's set to "off," the temperature is too low, or the programming is incorrect—it can prevent the heating system from activating. By checking the thermostat first, you can eliminate a simple and common issue that might lead to no heat production. If the thermostat settings are found to be appropriate, the next steps could include examining the furnace or boiler operation, the condition of the ductwork, and the insulation levels. However, starting with the thermostat saves time and effort, as it is often the root cause of heating issues.

7. What should be reported regarding rigid foam insulation covering a service entrance cable?

A. Acceptable because the siding is a non-conducting type

B. An improper installation that should be corrected

C. A benefit because additional protection is provided to the service entrance cable

D. Acceptable, provided the drip loops at the service entrance head are left exposed

When it comes to rigid foam insulation covering a service entrance cable, it is critical to adhere to safety and code requirements regarding electrical systems. Service entrance cables, which carry electricity from the utility company to the building, must remain accessible and adequately protected to minimize the risk of damage, overheating, or electrical failures. The installation of rigid foam insulation over a service entrance cable is typically seen as improper. This is because rigid foam can trap heat and moisture, creating an environment that is conducive to insulation failure or electrical hazards. Moreover, adequate access and visibility to the service entrance cable are necessary for maintenance and emergency situations. Proper installation guidelines dictate that insulation should not hinder the performance and safety of electrical components. Therefore, stating that this scenario represents an improper installation that should be corrected aligns with best practices and relevant safety codes, emphasizing the necessity of maintaining the integrity and accessibility of electrical systems.

8. What is a common issue associated with older plumbing systems?

A. High-pressure water output

B. Corrosion and build-up in pipes, leading to reduced water flow

C. Excessive water waste

D. Modern fixture compatibility

Corrosion and build-up in pipes is a prevalent issue in older plumbing systems. Over time, the materials used in older pipes, such as galvanized steel or iron, can deteriorate due to chemical reactions with water, leading to rust formation and mineral deposits. This corrosion not only weakens the structural integrity of the pipes but also results in reduced water flow rates. The accumulation of build-up can create blockages, which may further exacerbate the issue and lead to increased pressure on the plumbing system. As a result, homeowners with older plumbing systems often experience variable water pressure and diminished performance in fixtures. In contrast, high-pressure water output is typically a characteristic of newer plumbing systems that are designed to handle the demands of modern households. Excessive water waste may arise due to leaks, but this is not inherently a problem tied to the age of the plumbing system alone. Lastly, modern fixture compatibility may be an issue with older systems that don't meet current standards, but it is not a common physical issue affecting the plumbing's performance like corrosion and build-up.

9. What does condensation between glass layers of thermal pane windows suggest?

A. Need to repair or replace the sealant

B. Need to clean breather holes

C. Need to replace glazing, sash, or window

D. Need to replace the interior pane

When condensation forms between the layers of glass in thermal pane windows, it typically indicates that the sealant that helps maintain the integrity of the insulated glass unit has failed. This failure allows moisture-laden air to enter the space between the glass layers, leading to condensation. While cleaning breather holes and checking sealant are important aspects of window maintenance, they are not the primary causes of internal condensation. The presence of condensation signifies that the insulating properties of the window have been compromised, which can significantly reduce energy efficiency and may lead to further issues if not addressed promptly. Replacing the glazing, sash, or entire window is a common recommendation in such cases because it not only resolves the issue of condensation but also restores the thermal performance of the window, ultimately enhancing the comfort and energy efficiency of the home.

10. Which tool is commonly used to check for moisture in walls?

A. Thermal camera

B. Moisture meter

C. Electrical tester

D. Pneumatic tool

A moisture meter is a specialized device designed to measure the moisture content within various materials, including walls. This tool is particularly effective in identifying areas where excess moisture may be present, which can indicate potential problems such as water damage, mold growth, or structural issues. Moisture meters work by using either resistance or capacitance technology to detect the amount of moisture in the material being tested. Thermal cameras can be useful for visualizing temperature differences on surfaces, which can indirectly indicate moisture presence, but they do not measure moisture content directly. Electrical testers are typically used to assess electrical systems and cannot accurately determine moisture levels. Pneumatic tools are generally for mechanical applications and are not used for moisture detection. Therefore, the moisture meter is the most effective and common tool for this purpose in home inspections.

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://natlhomeinspector.examzify.com

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