

NC CDL General Knowledge Practice Test (Sample)

Study Guide



Everything you need from our exam experts!

Copyright © 2026 by Examzify - A Kaluba Technologies Inc. product.

ALL RIGHTS RESERVED.

No part of this book may be reproduced or transferred in any form or by any means, graphic, electronic, or mechanical, including photocopying, recording, web distribution, taping, or by any information storage retrieval system, without the written permission of the author.

Notice: Examzify makes every reasonable effort to obtain accurate, complete, and timely information about this product from reliable sources.

SAMPLE

Table of Contents

Copyright	1
Table of Contents	2
Introduction	3
How to Use This Guide	4
Questions	5
Answers	8
Explanations	10
Next Steps	16

SAMPLE

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

SAMPLE

- 1. What should you do if you encounter a school bus with its stop sign extended?**
 - A. Slow down and proceed carefully**
 - B. Stop completely until the sign is retracted**
 - C. Continue driving at a normal speed**
 - D. Honk the horn to signal to the bus driver**

- 2. When is it especially important to check your blind spots?**
 - A. Only during the day**
 - B. When stopping at a red light**
 - C. Before changing lanes and merging**
 - D. When driving straight**

- 3. What is the Blood Alcohol Concentration (BAC) limit for commercial drivers to be considered intoxicated?**
 - A. .08**
 - B. .04**
 - C. .02**
 - D. 0.00**

- 4. Under what circumstances is it permissible to use a cell phone while operating a commercial vehicle?**
 - A. While driving at any speed**
 - B. If using a hands-free device**
 - C. Only during long trips**
 - D. When stopped at a red light**

- 5. What is one critical reason to check your mirrors regularly while driving?**
 - A. To monitor your vehicle's condition**
 - B. To watch for pedestrians**
 - C. To ensure you are aware of surrounding traffic**
 - D. All of the above**

- 6. What is true about downshifting for a long downhill grade?**
- A. It is not necessary to downshift while descending.**
 - B. It helps maintain speed without using brakes excessively.**
 - C. It allows engine compression and friction to help slow the vehicle.**
 - D. Downshifting increases the risk of losing control.**
- 7. Is it legal to operate a vehicle with one fourth of its leaf springs broken or missing?**
- A. Yes, if the vehicle is under a certain weight**
 - B. No**
 - C. Yes, as long as it is not a heavy load**
 - D. Only with a temporary permit**
- 8. How often should you check your mirrors while driving?**
- A. Every 15 seconds**
 - B. Every minute**
 - C. Frequently to remain aware of surroundings**
 - D. Only when changing lanes**
- 9. What is the primary use of stop signs?**
- A. To control the speed of vehicles**
 - B. To indicate a one-way street**
 - C. To require vehicles to come to a complete stop**
 - D. To direct drivers to merge into lanes**
- 10. In terms of cargo safety, what is the function of blocking and bracing?**
- A. To improve vehicle speed**
 - B. To secure the load and prevent movement**
 - C. To reduce the overall weight**
 - D. To enhance visibility while driving**

Answers

SAMPLE

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

SAMPLE

Explanations

SAMPLE

1. What should you do if you encounter a school bus with its stop sign extended?

- A. Slow down and proceed carefully**
- B. Stop completely until the sign is retracted**
- C. Continue driving at a normal speed**
- D. Honk the horn to signal to the bus driver**

When you encounter a school bus with its stop sign extended, it is essential to stop completely until the sign is retracted. The purpose of the stop sign and the flashing lights is to ensure the safety of children getting on or off the bus. This law is in place to protect the most vulnerable road users—students—by creating a safe environment around stopped school buses. Stopping completely means that all vehicles, including yours, must come to a full stop until the bus resumes its route and the stop sign is withdrawn. This requirement applies regardless of the direction from which you are approaching the bus, unless specific local laws state otherwise. Adhering to this rule is crucial not only for compliance with traffic laws but also for the overall safety of children, who may be crossing the street or waiting near the bus. On the other hand, proceeding with caution, continuing at normal speed, or honking the horn does not align with legal requirements and poses unnecessary risks to students. These actions could lead to severe accidents and legal consequences, emphasizing the importance of understanding and following traffic laws related to school buses.

2. When is it especially important to check your blind spots?

- A. Only during the day**
- B. When stopping at a red light**
- C. Before changing lanes and merging**
- D. When driving straight**

Checking your blind spots is particularly critical before changing lanes and merging because these actions require an awareness of vehicles or objects that may not be visible in your mirrors. Blind spots are areas around your vehicle that are not visible through standard mirrors, and other vehicles can occupy these spaces unexpectedly. When you prepare to change lanes or merge, you need to ensure that the path is clear not just in your primary mirrors but also in these hidden spots. This precaution helps prevent accidents caused by not seeing nearby vehicles, which could be in the process of overtaking or may be positioned directly next to you. By making a habit of checking your blind spots during lane changes and merges, you enhance the safety of yourself, your passengers, and others on the road. The other situations provided do not demand the same level of vigilance regarding blind spots. For instance, checking blind spots while driving straight or at a red light is generally less critical, as traffic is usually more predictable, and vehicles are in designated lanes. Therefore, the correct answer emphasizes the importance of awareness and safety during lane changes and merges, which are high-risk driving maneuvers.

3. What is the Blood Alcohol Concentration (BAC) limit for commercial drivers to be considered intoxicated?

- A. .08
- B. .04**
- C. .02
- D. 0.00

For commercial drivers, the Blood Alcohol Concentration (BAC) limit to be considered intoxicated is 0.04. This lower threshold reflects the increased responsibility and potential consequences associated with operating a commercial vehicle compared to personal vehicles. Commercial drivers are held to stricter standards due to the size and weight of their vehicles, as well as the potential risk to public safety. A BAC of 0.04 means that a driver can be legally charged with driving under the influence even if they may still feel capable of operating their vehicle. This legal limit is designed to promote safety on the road by ensuring that commercial drivers maintain a higher level of sobriety. Understanding this limit is crucial for anyone operating commercial vehicles, as it emphasizes the importance of responsible behavior and adherence to laws that govern professional driving.

4. Under what circumstances is it permissible to use a cell phone while operating a commercial vehicle?

- A. While driving at any speed
- B. If using a hands-free device**
- C. Only during long trips
- D. When stopped at a red light

Using a cell phone while operating a commercial vehicle is permissible only when using a hands-free device. This regulation is in place to enhance safety on the roads. The reasoning is that using a hands-free device allows the driver to maintain better control of the vehicle and keeps both hands on the wheel, reducing the distraction associated with manual handling of a phone. Utilizing a cell phone in any other way, such as talking or texting without a hands-free setup, significantly increases the risk of accidents by diverting attention away from driving. The rules are particularly strict for commercial drivers due to the potential consequences of their vehicles. Therefore, the use of a hands-free device allows for communication while still prioritizing road safety and maintaining necessary focus on driving duties. Other options do not uphold these safety standards, as they either allow for distractions while driving or do not align with the regulations designed to protect all road users.

5. What is one critical reason to check your mirrors regularly while driving?

- A. To monitor your vehicle's condition**
- B. To watch for pedestrians**
- C. To ensure you are aware of surrounding traffic**
- D. All of the above**

Regularly checking your mirrors is essential primarily for maintaining awareness of surrounding traffic. This practice helps you keep track of vehicles approaching from behind or alongside, which is crucial for safe maneuvers such as lane changes, merging, and maintaining a safe following distance. By consistently monitoring what is happening around your vehicle, you can make informed decisions and react promptly to any potential hazards, enhancing your overall driving safety. While monitoring your vehicle's condition and watching for pedestrians are important aspects of safe driving, the main focus of mirror checks is to assess the proximity and behavior of other road users. This awareness is vital in preventing accidents and ensuring that you can respond to dynamic conditions on the road effectively.

6. What is true about downshifting for a long downhill grade?

- A. It is not necessary to downshift while descending.**
- B. It helps maintain speed without using brakes excessively.**
- C. It allows engine compression and friction to help slow the vehicle.**
- D. Downshifting increases the risk of losing control.**

When descending a long downhill grade, downshifting is crucial for vehicle control, and the correct choice highlights the advantages of this technique. Downshifting allows the engine to utilize compression and friction to help slow the vehicle down. This is particularly important in maintaining control during a descent. By engaging a lower gear, the engine can create additional resistance that counteracts the force of gravity pulling the vehicle down the hill. This engine braking effect reduces reliance on the brake system, which can overheat and become less effective if used excessively. The result is that the driver can maintain a safer, steadier speed while controlling the vehicle more effectively, minimizing the risk of brake failure. Utilizing engine compression is especially vital for larger vehicles, like trucks, where the weight can be significant; relying solely on brakes can lead to dangerous situations.

7. Is it legal to operate a vehicle with one fourth of its leaf springs broken or missing?

A. Yes, if the vehicle is under a certain weight

B. No

C. Yes, as long as it is not a heavy load

D. Only with a temporary permit

Operating a vehicle with one fourth of its leaf springs broken or missing is illegal because leaf springs are crucial components of a vehicle's suspension system. They help support the weight of the vehicle and maintain control and stability while driving. If any part of the leaf spring system is compromised, it can lead to serious safety hazards, such as difficulty in steering, increased stopping distance, or even loss of control of the vehicle. Maintaining the integrity of the suspension system is vital not only for the safety of the driver and passengers but also for others on the road. Regulations prohibit operating a vehicle in such a condition to uphold safety standards. Therefore, it is illegal to drive a vehicle with broken or missing leaf springs, regardless of the weight of the vehicle or load it is carrying.

8. How often should you check your mirrors while driving?

A. Every 15 seconds

B. Every minute

C. Frequently to remain aware of surroundings

D. Only when changing lanes

The correct response emphasizes the importance of being continually aware of your surroundings while driving. Checking mirrors frequently helps maintain situational awareness, allowing drivers to observe the behavior of vehicles around them, detect any hazards, and adjust their driving accordingly. This proactive approach is crucial for safety, as it enables drivers to react promptly to changing circumstances, such as vehicles entering their blind spots or unexpected obstacles appearing on the road. Additionally, while specific intervals like every 15 seconds or every minute might seem beneficial, they do not account for the dynamic nature of driving. Situations on the road can change rapidly, so relying solely on a timer can be insufficient. Checking mirrors only when changing lanes would greatly reduce awareness and increase the risk of accidents, as drivers would miss critical information about their surroundings during regular driving. Therefore, a habit of frequent mirror checks is essential for safe driving practices.

9. What is the primary use of stop signs?

- A. To control the speed of vehicles**
- B. To indicate a one-way street**
- C. To require vehicles to come to a complete stop**
- D. To direct drivers to merge into lanes**

The primary use of stop signs is to require vehicles to come to a complete stop. Stop signs are placed at intersections to ensure that drivers halt their vehicles, allowing them to assess cross traffic or pedestrians before proceeding safely. This traffic control measure is crucial in promoting safety, as it helps prevent accidents by ensuring that all vehicles yield to one another in situations where visibility might be compromised or where traffic control signals are not present. While stop signs may indirectly influence speed control by requiring motorists to stop before moving again, their main purpose is not speed regulation. Stop signs also do not indicate one-way streets or direct lane merges; those functions are served by different types of signs and signals specific to traffic flow management. The requirement to stop allows for a controlled and safe passage through intersections, which is why it is the fundamental function of stop signs.

10. In terms of cargo safety, what is the function of blocking and bracing?

- A. To improve vehicle speed**
- B. To secure the load and prevent movement**
- C. To reduce the overall weight**
- D. To enhance visibility while driving**

The function of blocking and bracing in cargo safety is to secure the load and prevent movement. This process involves using physical supports, such as wooden blocks or braces, to hold cargo in place and minimize the risk of it shifting during transit. When cargo moves around, it can lead to accidents, damage to the load, or even loss of control of the vehicle, posing a danger to the driver and other road users. Securing the load makes it much safer for transport by ensuring that the weight distribution remains stable and balanced. Properly blocked and braced cargo can also help maintain visibility, comfort, and efficiency in driving since it reduces the likelihood of the load shifting unexpectedly while the vehicle is in motion.

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://nc-cdl.examzify.com>

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

SAMPLE