

New Mexico Search and Rescue Field Certification 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 materials are recommended for the inner layer of clothing for certification?

- A. Silk, synthetics, or wool**
- B. Cotton, polyester, or lycra**
- C. Nylon, fleece, or acrylic**
- D. Cashmere, rayon, or spandex**

2. In addition to water, what should be ingested to help prevent dehydration?

- A. Protein bars**
- B. Salty snacks**
- C. Fried foods**
- D. Soda**

3. If someone is dehydrated and has altered mental status, what should be the next step?

- A. Let them rest**
- B. Give them food to eat**
- C. Request aggressive medical management**
- D. Offer them a drink**

4. Which two coordinate systems are utilized by NMSAR?

- A. Latitude-Longitude and Geographic Information System (GIS)**
- B. Latitude-Longitude and UTM**
- C. Universal Polar and Cartesian coordinates**
- D. Altitude-Azimuth and Latitude-Longitude**

5. Which layer of clothing is recommended to keep you warm during certification?

- A. Cotton**
- B. Wool or synthetics**
- C. Leather**
- D. Silk**

6. What is the primary safety concern when operating around helicopters during a SAR mission?

- A. They are very dangerous**
- B. They can communicate poorly**
- C. They are difficult to land**
- D. They consume too much fuel**

7. Which of the following is a symptom of Acute Mountain Sickness (AMS)?

- A. Shortness of breath**
- B. Headache**
- C. Chest pain**
- D. High fever**

8. What is the purpose of outer layers in hiking clothing?

- A. To look stylish**
- B. To provide warmth only**
- C. To protect from wind and water**
- D. To be light and airy**

9. In the event of a mass-casualty lightning strike, what type of triage should be implemented?

- A. Standard triage**
- B. Reverse triage**
- C. Immediate triage**
- D. Delayed triage**

10. How far apart should rescuers spread out to maintain safety during a lightning storm, while keeping visual contact?

- A. 10 ft**
- B. 20 ft**
- C. 30 ft**
- D. 50 ft**

Answers

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

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Explanations

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1. What materials are recommended for the inner layer of clothing for certification?

- A. Silk, synthetics, or wool**
- B. Cotton, polyester, or lycra**
- C. Nylon, fleece, or acrylic**
- D. Cashmere, rayon, or spandex**

The inner layer of clothing for search and rescue operations is crucial for maintaining warmth and moisture management. The recommended materials—silk, synthetics, or wool—are excellent choices for several reasons. Silk is known for its lightweight properties, comfort against the skin, and effective moisture-wicking capabilities. It can help keep the body dry, which is essential in cold environments as moisture can lead to heat loss. Synthetic materials, such as polyester, offer superior moisture-wicking and drying properties. They draw sweat away from the skin and dry quickly, helping to regulate body temperature during physical activity. Wool, particularly merino wool, is celebrated for its insulation properties even when wet. It not only retains heat but also has natural antibacterial properties that reduce odor, making it ideal for prolonged use in the field. Together, these materials create an effective inner layer that maximizes comfort, moisture control, and thermal regulation, making them suitable for the demanding conditions search and rescue personnel often face.

2. In addition to water, what should be ingested to help prevent dehydration?

- A. Protein bars**
- B. Salty snacks**
- C. Fried foods**
- D. Soda**

Ingesting salty snacks can be beneficial in preventing dehydration because they help retain water in the body. The body needs an adequate balance of electrolytes, which includes sodium, to maintain proper hydration levels. When you consume salty snacks, the sodium content can encourage the body to hold onto water, which can be particularly important during strenuous activities or hot weather where fluid loss is increased through sweat. While protein bars can provide energy, they do not directly contribute to hydration. Fried foods generally lack water content and can be heavy on the digestive system, potentially causing discomfort during exertion. Soda, despite being liquid, often contains high levels of sugar and caffeine, which can have a diuretic effect and lead to increased fluid loss rather than retention. Thus, consuming salty snacks serves a specific role in promoting hydration by supporting electrolyte balance.

3. If someone is dehydrated and has altered mental status, what should be the next step?

- A. Let them rest**
- B. Give them food to eat**
- C. Request aggressive medical management**
- D. Offer them a drink**

The correct response in a situation involving dehydration and altered mental status is to prioritize the safety and well-being of the individual. When someone exhibits altered mental status, it may indicate a severe level of dehydration or other medical issues that require immediate attention. Requesting aggressive medical management is essential because these symptoms can be life-threatening and may not improve without professional medical intervention. By seeking advanced medical support, you ensure that the person receives the appropriate evaluation and treatment, which could involve intravenous fluids or other medical interventions that are beyond the scope of first aid. This response acknowledges the seriousness of the situation, as altered mental status can rapidly progress, leading to further complications if not addressed promptly. While offering a drink might seem like a supportive action, it's crucial to assess the person's ability to swallow and their overall condition before administering fluids. Therefore, getting professional assistance takes precedence in life-threatening scenarios involving severe dehydration and altered mental states.

4. Which two coordinate systems are utilized by NMSAR?

- A. Latitude-Longitude and Geographic Information System (GIS)**
- B. Latitude-Longitude and UTM**
- C. Universal Polar and Cartesian coordinates**
- D. Altitude-Azimuth and Latitude-Longitude**

The use of Latitude-Longitude and UTM (Universal Transverse Mercator) coordinate systems by NMSAR is critical for ensuring accuracy in locating individuals during search and rescue operations. Latitude-Longitude is a global reference system that divides the Earth into a grid based on degrees of latitude and longitude, providing a universally recognized framework for navigation and location identification. UTM, on the other hand, is a more specialized mapping system that divides the world into a series of zones, with each specific zone mapped on a two-dimensional Cartesian system. This allows for more precise measurements in localized areas, which can be particularly beneficial in rugged or complex terrains often encountered in search and rescue missions. Utilizing both systems allows SAR teams to cross-reference locations and enhance their operational effectiveness, ensuring that they can communicate positions clearly and coordinate efforts in the field with precision. Each system has its strengths, and their combined use provides teams with the flexibility to navigate both large-scale and localized areas efficiently.

5. Which layer of clothing is recommended to keep you warm during certification?

- A. Cotton**
- B. Wool or synthetics**
- C. Leather**
- D. Silk**

The recommended choice for keeping warm during certification is wool or synthetics because these materials are known for their excellent insulating properties and moisture-wicking capabilities. This means they can trap heat close to the body while drawing moisture away from the skin, which is crucial in cold and wet conditions. Wool, in particular, retains warmth even when damp, making it a dependable layer in variable weather. Synthetics, such as polyester or nylon, also provide effective insulation and are often lightweight and quick-drying, further enhancing their usability during outdoor activities. Together, these materials create a breathable layer that contributes to temperature regulation, essential for search and rescue scenarios where physical activity can lead to temperature fluctuations. Other materials, such as cotton, do not perform well in cold conditions as they tend to absorb moisture and lose insulating properties when wet. Leather, while durable, does not provide the necessary insulation for warmth and can become heavy and cold when exposed to moisture. Silk can serve as a base layer but does not offer the same level of warmth or moisture management as wool or synthetics. Therefore, choosing wool or synthetics is the most effective option for maintaining warmth in outdoor environments.

6. What is the primary safety concern when operating around helicopters during a SAR mission?

- A. They are very dangerous**
- B. They can communicate poorly**
- C. They are difficult to land**
- D. They consume too much fuel**

The primary safety concern when operating around helicopters during a Search and Rescue (SAR) mission stems from their inherent dangers in flight operations. Helicopters, while essential tools for SAR missions, can pose significant hazards to both the crew on board and those on the ground. The danger comes from factors such as rotor blade and tail rotor clearance, the possibility of a sudden loss of lift, and the noise levels that can impede communication. The high-speed rotating blades create a risk of severe injury or fatality to anyone who comes too close, which makes it critical for ground personnel to maintain safe distances and follow proper protocols. In addition, the dynamic nature of helicopter operations—such as fast-paced landings and takeoffs—requires constant vigilance, as any unexpected movements can lead to accidents. Understanding and respecting these dangers is vital for ensuring the safety and effectiveness of SAR missions. It empowers personnel to act with caution and maintain an environment where both rescuers and those being rescued can operate safely. While elements such as communication and fuel management are important considerations during SAR missions, they do not surpass the immediate and critical safety concerns posed by the helicopter's operational hazards.

7. Which of the following is a symptom of Acute Mountain Sickness (AMS)?

- A. Shortness of breath**
- B. Headache**
- C. Chest pain**
- D. High fever**

Acute Mountain Sickness (AMS) is a condition that can occur when individuals ascend to high altitudes rapidly without allowing their bodies sufficient time to acclimatize. One of the hallmark symptoms of AMS is a headache, which is often described as a pressing or throbbing pain. The onset of such headaches can be directly related to the decreased availability of oxygen at higher elevations, which impacts the brain and leads to discomfort. While shortness of breath can occur at high altitudes due to lower oxygen levels, it is more related to physical exertion than specifically indicating AMS. Chest pain can arise from various conditions, including altitude-related issues, but it is not a primary symptom of AMS. High fever is typically associated with infections or other illness rather than AMS, which is primarily characterized by symptoms such as headache, nausea, fatigue, and dizziness. Therefore, headache is the most recognized and specific symptom of Acute Mountain Sickness.

8. What is the purpose of outer layers in hiking clothing?

- A. To look stylish**
- B. To provide warmth only**
- C. To protect from wind and water**
- D. To be light and airy**

The purpose of outer layers in hiking clothing is primarily to protect from wind and water. When hiking, it is essential to have clothing that can withstand various weather conditions. Outer layers, often made from materials that are waterproof or water-resistant, help keep the body dry by repelling moisture from rain or snow. Additionally, these layers play a crucial role in blocking wind, which can exacerbate the effects of cold temperatures and lead to loss of body heat. While factors like style and comfort are considerations when choosing hiking apparel, the functional aspects of insulation and protection against the elements take precedence for outdoor activities. Thus, the outer layer serves as an essential barrier against the unpredictable conditions that hikers may encounter, ensuring safety and comfort during their adventures.

9. In the event of a mass-casualty lightning strike, what type of triage should be implemented?

- A. Standard triage**
- B. Reverse triage**
- C. Immediate triage**
- D. Delayed triage**

In the context of a mass-casualty lightning strike, implementing reverse triage is especially relevant due to the nature of the injuries typically sustained during such events. In a situation where multiple victims are affected, and resources such as medical personnel and equipment are limited, reverse triage prioritizes patients based on their likelihood of survival versus the level of care they will require. This approach focuses on assessing the severely injured individuals whose prognosis is poor with immediate medical intervention versus those who may be stabilized and can wait for treatment. By applying reverse triage, responders can allocate resources more effectively, ensuring that those with the best chances of survival, even if they have less immediate need for treatment, receive care first. This method is critical in mass-casualty incidents where overwhelming situations demand quick thinking and effective prioritization. In contrast, standard triage typically follows a straightforward protocol of assessing and classifying patients into categories based on severity without the urgency to prioritize based on resource limitations. Immediate and delayed triages also follow set protocols that don't fully address the unique challenges presented in a mass casualty event like a lightning strike, where a disproportionate number of casualties may exist in one or more categories.

10. How far apart should rescuers spread out to maintain safety during a lightning storm, while keeping visual contact?

- A. 10 ft**
- B. 20 ft**
- C. 30 ft**
- D. 50 ft**

To maintain safety during a lightning storm while still keeping visual contact, it is recommended that rescuers spread out about 20 feet apart. This distance strikes a balance between minimizing the risk of multiple people being struck by lightning simultaneously and ensuring that rescuers can effectively maintain communication and visual contact. The primary concern during a lightning storm is to reduce the likelihood of related accidents. Spacing out decreases the chances that lightning will affect multiple rescuers at once. While options that suggest more distance, such as 30 or 50 feet, may offer increased safety in terms of individual risk, they create the challenge of diminished teamwork and communication capabilities. Likewise, being as close as 10 feet could leave rescuers vulnerable if a lightning strike occurs nearby. Thus, maintaining a distance of 20 feet allows rescuers to stay safe while still working together effectively, which is crucial in emergency response scenarios.

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://nmsearchandrescuefield.examzify.com>

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

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