

North Carolina Residential General Contractor Practice Exam (Sample)

Study Guide



Everything you need from our exam experts!

This is a sample study guide. To access the full version with hundreds of questions,

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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. Don't worry about getting everything right, 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, and take breaks to retain information better.

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.

7. Use Other Tools

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!

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Questions

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- 1. What is the minimum nominal thickness required for wood framing supporting gypsum board?**
 - A. 1 inch
 - B. 2 inches
 - C. 3 inches
 - D. 4 inches

- 2. What can slot dozing and U-shaped blades help to reduce?**
 - A. Operating costs
 - B. Soil erosion
 - C. Load lost
 - D. Machine wear and tear

- 3. In a one-story dwelling, what is the minimum thickness of solid masonry walls?**
 - A. 4 inches
 - B. 6 inches
 - C. 8 inches
 - D. 10 inches

- 4. When might a backhoe be suitable for large excavation jobs?**
 - A. Only in dry conditions
 - B. In rocky soil
 - C. In areas with low water
 - D. In slimy mud

- 5. What is the minimum thickness of a vapor retarder required?**
 - A. 4 mil
 - B. 6 mil
 - C. 8 mil
 - D. 10 mil

6. What is the minimum net area of ventilation openings required for a crawl space of 300 sq ft?

- A. 1 sq ft**
- B. 2 sq ft**
- C. 3 sq ft**
- D. 4 sq ft**

7. What does the North Carolina Homeowner's Recovery Fund aim to do?

- A. Provide loans to contractors**
- B. Compensate homeowners who suffer financial losses**
- C. Support new contractor licenses**
- D. Fund construction material costs**

8. How many pounds of cement per square yard are required for foundation walls?

- A. 2 lbs**
- B. 3 lbs**
- C. 4 lbs**
- D. 5 lbs**

9. What is the best practice regarding the surface of footings?

- A. Should be curved**
- B. Should be sloped**
- C. Should be rough**
- D. Should be flat**

10. What is the primary agency responsible for licensing contractors in North Carolina?

- A. North Carolina Business Board**
- B. North Carolina General Assembly**
- C. North Carolina Licensing Board for General Contractors**
- D. North Carolina Department of Labor**

Answers

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

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Explanations

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1. What is the minimum nominal thickness required for wood framing supporting gypsum board?

- A. 1 inch**
- B. 2 inches**
- C. 3 inches**
- D. 4 inches**

The minimum nominal thickness required for wood framing supporting gypsum board is crucial for ensuring that the structural integrity and support of the wall system are adequate. A nominal thickness of 2 inches provides sufficient strength and rigidity to support the weight of the gypsum board while adhering to building codes and standards. Using framing that is too thin may not provide the necessary support, leading to potential sagging or cracking of the gypsum board over time, especially in situations where the board is exposed to moisture or thermal expansion. Adequate thickness also facilitates better attachment of the gypsum board, ensuring that screws or nails have enough grip in the wood substrate. In summary, a minimum nominal thickness of 2 inches is specified to ensure that the wood framing can adequately support the gypsum board, maintain the structural integrity of the wall, and comply with best practices in construction.

2. What can slot dozing and U-shaped blades help to reduce?

- A. Operating costs**
- B. Soil erosion**
- C. Load lost**
- D. Machine wear and tear**

Slot dozing and U-shaped blades are specifically designed to improve the efficiency of earthmoving equipment, such as bulldozers, when it comes to moving and manipulating soil. The U-shaped blade allows for a more controlled and stable movement of material over uneven terrain, while the slot dozing technique enables more precise cutting and shaping of the ground. This precision helps to minimize the amount of load lost during the operation, as these tools are engineered to maximize the volume of material moved while reducing spillage or loss. By effectively keeping the material where it needs to be, these methods can ensure that there is less waste, which ultimately contributes to the efficiency of the operation and supports better project management. As a result, focusing on reducing load loss is crucial in construction operations, where material costs and project timelines are closely linked to productivity and efficient use of resources.

3. In a one-story dwelling, what is the minimum thickness of solid masonry walls?

- A. 4 inches**
- B. 6 inches**
- C. 8 inches**
- D. 10 inches**

The minimum thickness of solid masonry walls in a one-story dwelling is established in building codes to ensure structural integrity and adequate support for the loads applied to the walls. A thickness of 6 inches is specified to provide sufficient strength and stability while accommodating various design aspects, such as insulation and finishing materials. Choosing a thickness of 6 inches is in line with industry standards, as it strikes a balance between structural requirements and practical construction considerations. Thicker walls may provide added strength but can lead to increased material costs and potentially impractical construction methods. Therefore, 6 inches represents an accepted compromise for ensuring safety and efficiency in the building process. Other thicknesses, either thinner or thicker, do not meet the minimum requirement or may over-engineer the structure without suitable justification, which is why they are unsuitable in this context.

4. When might a backhoe be suitable for large excavation jobs?

- A. Only in dry conditions**
- B. In rocky soil**
- C. In areas with low water**
- D. In slimy mud**

A backhoe is suitable for large excavation jobs primarily due to its versatility and ability to handle a variety of materials and conditions, although it is most effective under certain circumstances. When considering the conditions under which a backhoe would operate effectively, it excels in relatively solid ground conditions and can manage soft, wet, or muddy substrates, such as slimy mud. The design of a backhoe allows for sufficient traction and maneuverability in these types of terrain, permitting contractors to excavate and move materials more efficiently. While rocky soil may pose some challenges that may limit the effectiveness of a backhoe, and dry conditions might not fully leverage its capabilities for excavation, a backhoe, especially equipped with the proper attachment, can navigate areas with lower water content or higher moisture levels, making it particularly suitable for areas that are muddy but still manageable. This adaptability is what makes a backhoe a preferred choice for various excavation tasks in more challenging environments.

5. What is the minimum thickness of a vapor retarder required?

- A. 4 mil**
- B. 6 mil**
- C. 8 mil**
- D. 10 mil**

The minimum thickness of a vapor retarder required is 6 mil. This specification is often dictated by building codes and industry standards to provide an adequate barrier against moisture infiltration in residential construction. A vapor retarder helps prevent moisture from the ground or exterior from entering the building envelope, which can lead to mold growth and structural damage. Using 6 mil plastic sheeting is standard, as it strikes a balance between flexibility and effectiveness. It is thick enough to prevent moisture penetration while still being manageable for installation. A retarder of insufficient thickness might not perform adequately, allowing moisture to pass through and compromising the structural integrity and indoor air quality of the building. Understanding this requirement is essential for ensuring the durability and comfort of a residential structure, as moisture management is a critical aspect of good building practices.

6. What is the minimum net area of ventilation openings required for a crawl space of 300 sq ft?

- A. 1 sq ft**
- B. 2 sq ft**
- C. 3 sq ft**
- D. 4 sq ft**

The minimum net area of ventilation openings required for a crawl space is determined by the total square footage of the crawl space. According to building codes, specifically the guidelines for ventilated crawl spaces, the general rule is that one square foot of ventilation is required for every 150 square feet of crawl space area. In this case, with a crawl space of 300 square feet, the calculations would indicate that a total of 2 square feet of ventilation openings would be necessary (300 sq ft divided by 150 sq ft per sq ft of opening equals 2). This ensures adequate airflow, which helps in preventing moisture buildup and maintaining a healthier environment beneath the structure. Therefore, based on the appropriate calculation, the correct answer would reflect the need for 2 square feet of ventilation openings.

7. What does the North Carolina Homeowner's Recovery Fund aim to do?

- A. Provide loans to contractors**
- B. Compensate homeowners who suffer financial losses**
- C. Support new contractor licenses**
- D. Fund construction material costs**

The North Carolina Homeowner's Recovery Fund is specifically designed to compensate homeowners who incur financial losses due to the actions of a licensed contractor. This fund serves as a safety net for homeowners who may have paid for services that were not rendered or were performed inadequately, leading to financial hardship. It is established to protect consumers and ensure that they have a means of recourse when they encounter unlicensed or unethical contractor practices. The fund is particularly important in maintaining trust in the construction industry, as it helps to reassure homeowners that they have protection against potential losses associated with home construction and renovation. It underscores the importance of accountability and responsible contracting practices within the industry, thereby fostering greater consumer confidence. While the other options mention aspects related to contractors and the construction industry, they do not align with the primary objective of the Homeowner's Recovery Fund, which focuses solely on compensating homeowners for their losses rather than providing loans, supporting new licenses, or funding construction material costs.

8. How many pounds of cement per square yard are required for foundation walls?

- A. 2 lbs**
- B. 3 lbs**
- C. 4 lbs**
- D. 5 lbs**

For foundation walls, the standard requirement is approximately 3 pounds of cement per square yard. This amount is based on established guidelines used in the construction industry to ensure adequate strength and durability of the foundation. Cement is a key ingredient in concrete and significantly contributes to the structural integrity of foundation walls, which need to support the weight of the building and resist other forces such as soil pressure and moisture. This value reflects not just the cement itself but is also considered relative to the other components of concrete, such as aggregates and water, to achieve the desired compressive strength while minimizing cracking and other potential issues. Understanding this requirement is crucial for contractors when estimating materials for foundation work, ensuring that they adhere to building codes and industry standards to maintain safety and quality in construction.

9. What is the best practice regarding the surface of footings?

- A. Should be curved**
- B. Should be sloped**
- C. Should be rough**
- D. Should be flat**

The preferred practice for the surface of footings is to ensure they are flat. This flat surface allows for uniform distribution of the load from the structure above and ensures proper bearing capacity. A flat footing provides stability and helps to prevent differential settlement, which can lead to structural issues over time. Having a flat surface also facilitates the placement of concrete and ensures that the footing adheres well to the ground. It simplifies the process of leveling and aligning your structure, which is critical in construction. While other surface treatments like being rough or sloped may have their places in specific contexts, they do not serve the foundational purpose as effectively as a flat surface does in providing the necessary support and stability for residential construction. A rough surface might be useful in enhancing the bond with the concrete but does not contribute to the overall intended function of the footing itself, and a sloped surface could lead to uneven weight distribution. Therefore, maintaining flat surfaces is a best practice when it comes to footings in construction.

10. What is the primary agency responsible for licensing contractors in North Carolina?

- A. North Carolina Business Board**
- B. North Carolina General Assembly**
- C. North Carolina Licensing Board for General Contractors**
- D. North Carolina Department of Labor**

The primary agency responsible for licensing contractors in North Carolina is the North Carolina Licensing Board for General Contractors. This board is tasked with overseeing the licensing process for general contractors, ensuring that they meet the necessary qualifications and adhere to state regulations. The board's mission includes protecting the public's health, safety, and welfare by regulating the construction industry and maintaining standards for contractor competency. When it comes to contractor licensing, this agency plays a critical role in establishing the requirements that must be met before an individual or business can obtain a license. This includes evaluating the applicant's qualifications, experience, and background to ensure they can adequately carry out the responsibilities associated with general contracting in the state. Other agencies mentioned, while involved in broader regulatory functions or legislative activities, do not specifically handle the licensing of general contractors. Thus, the Licensing Board is the definitive authority in this domain, reinforcing the importance of its role in maintaining the integrity and standards of the construction industry in North Carolina.

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://ncresidentialgencontractor.examzify.com>

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

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