

NORTH CAROLINA RESIDENTIAL GENERAL CONTRACTOR PRACTICE EXAM (SAMPLE)

STUDY GUIDE



SAMPLE STUDY GUIDE WITH LIMITED QUESTIONS

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THE FULL VERSION STUDY GUIDE**

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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 happens to soil when it is disturbed?**
 - A. It compacts
 - B. It swells
 - C. It stabilizes
 - D. It loosens
- 2. What must an applicant submit along with their contractor license application?**
 - A. Proof of previous projects
 - B. Fingerprints for background check
 - C. College diploma
 - D. Recommendations from previous employers
- 3. What slope range indicates the use of one ply for asphalt shingles?**
 - A. 2:12-4:12
 - B. 1:12-3:12
 - C. 3:12-5:12
 - D. 4:12-6:12
- 4. When header span exceeds how many feet must the header and trimmers be doubled?**
 - A. 3 feet
 - B. 4 feet
 - C. 5 feet
 - D. 6 feet
- 5. What is the maximum height of unreinforced hollow unit masonry parapet walls in relation to their thickness?**
 - A. 2 times their thickness
 - B. 3 times their thickness
 - C. 4 times their thickness
 - D. 5 times their thickness

6. How much bearing is required on masonry/concrete for the ends of each rafter or ceiling joist?
- A. 1 inch
 - B. 2 inches
 - C. 3 inches
 - D. 4 inches
7. What is the primary responsibility of a general contractor during a construction project?
- A. Finding subcontractors
 - B. Overseeing the construction process
 - C. Managing financial accounts
 - D. Designing the project
8. 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
9. What is the minimum slope required for coal tar built-up roofs?
- A. 1/2:12
 - B. 1/8:12
 - C. 1/4:12
 - D. 3/8:12
10. How far must gravel drains extend beyond the footing?
- A. 1 foot
 - B. 2 feet
 - C. 3 feet
 - D. 4 feet

Answers

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

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Explanations

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1. What happens to soil when it is disturbed?

- A. It compacts
- B. It swells**
- C. It stabilizes
- D. It loosens

When soil is disturbed, it often compacts rather than swells. Disturbance can include activities such as excavation, grading, or any mechanical manipulation of the soil. When soil is compacted, the particles are forced closer together, resulting in increased density and reduced air spaces. This compaction can lead to various issues, such as reduced water infiltration, limited root growth for plants, and challenges in the stability of structures built upon it. In addition to compaction, disturbed soil may also become loosened temporarily during disturbance due to the movement of particles. However, the overall effect on soil during and after disturbance is primarily a tendency toward compaction, especially if heavy equipment is used. Understanding soil behavior when disturbed is crucial for general contractors as it impacts building foundations, landscaping, and drainage systems. Proper management of soil during construction can help mitigate negative effects associated with compaction and ensure a stable and suitable environment for construction and planting.

2. What must an applicant submit along with their contractor license application?

- A. Proof of previous projects
- B. Fingerprints for background check**
- C. College diploma
- D. Recommendations from previous employers

When applying for a contractor license in North Carolina, one of the key requirements is to submit fingerprints for a background check. This step is critical because it helps ensure that applicants meet the necessary standards of trustworthiness and ethical conduct, which are vital in the construction industry. The background check aims to verify the applicant's criminal history and determine if there are any past offenses that may disqualify them from becoming a licensed contractor. This requirement is in place to protect the public and ensure that those who are granted licenses have a responsible history. While other options such as proof of previous projects, college diplomas, or recommendations from previous employers may be beneficial or even required in different contexts, they are not specifically mandated as part of the license application process in North Carolina. Submitting fingerprints ensures compliance with state regulations and contributes to maintaining integrity within the contracting profession.

3. What slope range indicates the use of one ply for asphalt shingles?

A. 2:12-4:12

B. 1:12-3:12

C. 3:12-5:12

D. 4:12-6:12

The correct answer highlights that a slope range of 2:12 to 4:12 is specified for the use of one ply for asphalt shingles. This slope is considered suitable for a single layer of shingles because it provides enough angle to ensure proper drainage while minimizing the risk of water pooling, which can lead to leaks and damage. In roofing terminology, the ratio represents the vertical rise over the horizontal run. A slope of 2:12 means that for every 12 inches of horizontal distance, there is a rise of 2 inches, while a 4:12 slope rises 4 inches over the same distance. The range specified offers a balance that allows for adequate water runoff, making a single ply sufficient for effective waterproofing in these slope conditions. This range is critical because roofs with steeper slopes (above 4:12) can typically handle heavier materials or additional layers due to better drainage. Conversely, slopes that are too low (less than 2:12) often require additional protection or different roofing materials altogether. Therefore, utilizing one ply in the 2:12 to 4:12 range is standard practice to ensure durability and effectiveness in residential construction under that slope condition.

4. When header span exceeds how many feet must the header and trimmers be doubled?

A. 3 feet

B. 4 feet

C. 5 feet

D. 6 feet

When a header span exceeds a specific distance, the structural integrity of the opening being framed must be maintained. In residential construction, this is particularly critical to ensure the load above is adequately supported. In North Carolina, and in standard building practices, when the header span exceeds 4 feet, it is necessary to double both the header and the trimmer studs. Doubling the header involves using two pieces of lumber side by side to create a stronger support beam, which is essential to distribute the weight and prevent sagging or failure of the framing over time. Additionally, doubling the trimmers provides added stability to the sides of the opening, ensuring that the load is properly carried down to the bottom plate and ultimately to the foundation. This requirement is based on building codes and engineering practices that account for the weight of the materials and any load that may be applied, ensuring safety and durability in the structure. Knowing this requirement can be crucial for compliance with local building codes and for the successful execution of construction projects.

5. What is the maximum height of unreinforced hollow unit masonry parapet walls in relation to their thickness?

- A. 2 times their thickness
- B. 3 times their thickness**
- C. 4 times their thickness
- D. 5 times their thickness

The correct answer is that the maximum height of unreinforced hollow unit masonry parapet walls is 3 times their thickness. This is grounded in structural engineering principles and building codes that aim to ensure stability and safety. The height-to-thickness ratio is crucial because it directly influences the wall's ability to withstand various stresses, including wind loads and lateral forces. A ratio of up to 3:1 allows for adequate stability without the risk of structural failure. Walls built much higher than this relative to their thickness may become unstable, risking buckling or collapse under pressure. Understanding this principle is important for any general contractor working in residential construction in North Carolina, as it ensures compliance with building codes and helps maintain the safety and durability of structures.

6. How much bearing is required on masonry/concrete for the ends of each rafter or ceiling joist?

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

The requirement for bearing of rafter or ceiling joist ends on masonry or concrete is typically established in the building codes to ensure structural integrity. A bearing of 3 inches is specified for the ends of each rafter or ceiling joist. This measurement ensures that the weight of the roof or ceiling system is adequately supported, allowing for appropriate load distribution and stability. By providing this minimum bearing surface, the structure minimizes the potential for movement or failure at the connection points, which could occur if the bearing surface were inadequate. In contexts like these, building codes are designed not only for safety but also for long-term performance of the building. Therefore, adhering to the requirement of 3 inches of bearing is crucial in any construction or renovation project involving rafters or ceiling joists attached to masonry or concrete.

7. What is the primary responsibility of a general contractor during a construction project?

- A. Finding subcontractors
- B. Overseeing the construction process**
- C. Managing financial accounts
- D. Designing the project

The primary responsibility of a general contractor during a construction project is to oversee the construction process. This entails managing all aspects of the project from start to finish, ensuring that it stays on schedule and within budget while meeting quality standards. The general contractor coordinates the work of various subcontractors, schedules inspections, and ensures compliance with building codes and safety regulations. They act as the primary point of contact between stakeholders, including clients, subcontractors, and suppliers, ensuring effective communication and problem-solving throughout the construction process. This central role is crucial for the successful completion of the project, as it involves not only the management of physical work but also the integration of all project elements to achieve the desired outcome. Other responsibilities, such as finding subcontractors, managing financial accounts, and project design, are important but secondary to the overarching task of overseeing the entire construction process to ensure its smooth execution.

8. 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.

9. What is the minimum slope required for coal tar built-up roofs?

- A. 1/2:12
- B. 1/8:12**
- C. 1/4:12
- D. 3/8:12

The minimum slope required for coal tar built-up roofs is 1/8:12. This slope is significant because it ensures proper drainage of water off the roof surface, which is crucial in preventing water pooling and subsequent damage or deterioration to the roofing material. A slope of 1/8:12 allows for sufficient runoff to avoid leaks, extend the life of the roofing system, and maintain compliance with building codes and best practices in roofing design. In roofing applications, insufficient slope can lead to water accumulation, which can cause structural issues over time, while also increasing the likelihood of mold and mildew due to prolonged moisture exposure. Therefore, the 1/8:12 slope is a standard that helps ensure that the roofing system is effective and durable, making it the correct choice in this scenario.

10. How far must gravel drains extend beyond the footing?

- A. 1 foot**
- B. 2 feet
- C. 3 feet
- D. 4 feet

In residential construction, proper drainage is crucial for maintaining the integrity of the foundation and preventing water-related issues. Gravel drains are utilized to direct water away from the footing of a structure. Extending gravel drains beyond the footing helps ensure that water is effectively diverted, minimizing the potential for moisture accumulation around the foundation. The correct distance that gravel drains should extend beyond the footing is 1 foot. This distance allows for adequate drainage while preventing water from pooling near the foundation, which could lead to erosion, settlement, or other structural problems. Following this guideline contributes to a more stable and durable foundation, safeguarding the overall longevity of the structure. Understanding the significance of proper drainage practices is essential for general contractors in maintaining the quality and safety of their construction projects.

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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