Northeast Operating Rules Advisory Committee (NORAC) 100 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

1. Flat Spots: Greater than 2 1/2 inches in length but less than 4 inches in length, how may you proceed?

A. Proceed not exceeding 10 MPH and contact dispatcher

B. Continue at Normal Speed

C. Stop immediately

D. Increase speed to 15 MPH

2. If signaling devices are inoperative and you do not have direct dispatcher authorization, which action is required?

A. Proceed at reduced speed and continue.

B. Wait for a supervisor to make a decision.

C. Follow fixed instructions or obtain direct authorization from the dispatcher for normal movement.

D. Ignore the outage and carry on.

3. During a job briefing, which hazard should be identified?

A. The presence of other crews working in the area

B. Weather conditions

C. Equipment malfunction

D. Vehicle traffic

4. What must you do with radio devices prior to commencement of the work assignment?

A. They must be tested, with an exchange of voice transmissions with another radio

B. They must be turned off

C. They must be used on the main channel

D. They must be kept on for all communication

5. What is the primary purpose of NORAC 100 rules?

A. To provide standardized operating practices for safe train movement, communication, and train handling on Northeast railroads.

B. To regulate fuel efficiency measures across the industry.

C. To regulate passenger schedules and timetables.

D. To manage employee payroll and benefits.

6. In NORAC 100, what is true about hand signals?

A. They replace all radio communications.

B. They are decorative and optional.

C. They are only used in yard limits.

D. They provide safe movement guidance when signaling or communications are not fully available.

7. How should you handle a temporary speed restriction (TSR) encountered en route?

A. Slow to the TSR speed, maintain strict adherence to the limit, and report any discrepancy to the dispatcher.

B. Ignore it if you are in a hurry.

C. Increase speed to clear it quickly.

D. Only slow when you see it on the dashboard.

8. What is the proper approach to using a radio under NORAC procedures?

A. Use the radio for all communications to maintain record.

B. Use it only when a supervisor approves use for any message.

C. Use it for urgent matters only while bypassing standard procedures.

D. Only when necessary and in accordance with NORAC radio procedures, ensuring clarity and brevity.

9. When a signal indicates a diverging route, what action is required?

A. Proceed immediately if safe

B. Stop until you confirm the route is set and clear for the diverging path

C. Back up to the previous signal

D. Take the diverging route as conditional

10. Who is authorized to remove a blue signal?

A. The dispatcher

B. Only a person of the same group or craft that displayed the signals may remove it, after all the workmen are clear

C. A supervisor

D. A safety officer

Answers

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

Explanations

1. Flat Spots: Greater than 2 1/2 inches in length but less than 4 inches in length, how may you proceed?

A. Proceed not exceeding 10 MPH and contact dispatcher

B. Continue at Normal Speed

C. Stop immediately

D. Increase speed to 15 MPH

A wheel with a flat spot is a defect that changes how the car rides and can cause damage if you run fast. The length of the flat determines the safe speed. If the flat spot is between 2 1/2 inches and 4 inches, the proper procedure is to proceed at a restricted speed—not exceeding 10 mph—and contact the dispatcher. This gives you enough control to avoid excessive vibration or derailment risks while arranging an inspection or service for the wheel. Continuing at normal speed would be unsafe because the defect can worsen and stress the suspension and rails. Stopping immediately is typically reserved for more severe or obvious faults, and increasing speed would worsen the issue. So the recommended action fits the level of the defect and keeps you under control while getting the wheel inspected.

2. If signaling devices are inoperative and you do not have direct dispatcher authorization, which action is required?

A. Proceed at reduced speed and continue.

B. Wait for a supervisor to make a decision.

C. Follow fixed instructions or obtain direct authorization from the dispatcher for normal movement.

D. Ignore the outage and carry on.

When signaling devices are inoperative, movement must be controlled by direct dispatcher authorization or by following fixed instructions that are published for the outage. Without dispatcher authorization, you cannot move as if the signals were guiding you; you need explicit permission or the pre-determined instructions to proceed for normal movement. This ensures everyone on the route understands the plan and safety steps under outage conditions. Proceeded at reduced speed without authorization isn't allowed because it doesn't provide the required dispatcher approval or the published guidance for the outage. Waiting for a supervisor isn't the correct channel, since the dispatcher is the authority for train movements when signals are down. Ignoring the outage and continuing would create a dangerous situation and violates the procedure designed for inoperative signaling.

3. During a job briefing, which hazard should be identified?

A. The presence of other crews working in the area

B. Weather conditions

C. Equipment malfunction

D. Vehicle traffic

In a job briefing, the most important hazard to identify is the presence of other crews working in the area. Knowing where others are and what they're doing directly affects safe coordination, clearance distances, and communication. This helps establish who is responsible for what, where lookout points should be, and how movements of equipment or personnel will be coordinated to prevent collisions or interference. Weather conditions, equipment malfunction, and vehicle traffic are all safety factors, but they're managed through separate checks or procedures. The briefing specifically focuses on how other crews' activities in the same workspace can create immediate safety risks and how to avoid them through clear coordination.

4. What must you do with radio devices prior to commencement of the work assignment?

A. They must be tested, with an exchange of voice transmissions with another radio

B. They must be turned off

C. They must be used on the main channel

D. They must be kept on for all communication

Verifying radio readiness and reliability before starting work is essential. The required step is to test the radios and exchange voice transmissions with another radio to confirm both transmit and receive functions work on the assigned channel. This ensures you can reach crew members and supervisors and that the device is operating properly in the field, which is crucial for coordinating actions and calling for help if needed. Turning the radios off would prevent any communication, using only the main channel isn't specified as the pre-work requirement, and simply keeping radios on for all communication doesn't verify functionality. The test and two-way transmission check is the proper way to confirm reliable communication before the assignment begins.

5. What is the primary purpose of NORAC 100 rules?

A. To provide standardized operating practices for safe train movement, communication, and train handling on Northeast railroads.

B. To regulate fuel efficiency measures across the industry.

C. To regulate passenger schedules and timetables.

D. To manage employee payroll and benefits.

The main idea this question tests is that NORAC 100 rules establish standardized operating practices to keep train movement safe, clear, and coordinated across Northeast railroads. These rules create a common framework for how crews communicate, issue and follow authority, and handle trains, so everyone on different roads can work together predictably and safely. That focus on safety through consistent procedures is what makes this choice the best fit. The other options don't align with NORAC's purpose. NORAC 100 isn't about fuel efficiency, passenger timetables, or employee payroll and benefits. It centers on safe operations and clear, uniform rules for movement and communication.

6. In NORAC 100, what is true about hand signals?

A. They replace all radio communications.

B. They are decorative and optional.

C. They are only used in yard limits.

D. They provide safe movement guidance when signaling or communications are not fully available.

Hand signals in NORAC 100 are a backup method for guiding movements when normal signals or radio communications aren't fully available. They're not decorative or optional, and they're not limited to yard areas. Trained personnel use a standardized set of gestures that convey clear instructions—such as stop, proceed, or proceed at restricted speed—so the locomotive engineer and crew can move safely even when other communications fail or are incomplete. This backup system helps prevent miscommunication and ensures safe operation during outages, obscured signals, or when a flagger is directing movement.

7. How should you handle a temporary speed restriction (TSR) encountered en route?

A. Slow to the TSR speed, maintain strict adherence to the limit, and report any discrepancy to the dispatcher.

B. Ignore it if you are in a hurry.

C. Increase speed to clear it quickly.

D. Only slow when you see it on the dashboard.

Temporary speed restrictions are set to protect track workers and equipment, so you must follow the speed shown for the restricted segment. The reason this option is the best is that the locomotive's cab display provides the authoritative indication of the current TSR and its required speed. By slowing when the dashboard shows the TSR speed, you rely on the system's precise, up-to-date information rather than guessing from trackside signs or trying to read them at the last moment. This helps you apply the exact speed needed for the duration of the restriction and reduces the risk of overshooting or undershooting the limit. Once you've cleared the TSR, you can resume normal speed. In contrast, ignoring the TSR, speeding up to hurry through, or waiting to slow only after you physically see a sign all pose safety risks and can lead to noncompliance.

8. What is the proper approach to using a radio under NORAC procedures?

A. Use the radio for all communications to maintain record.

B. Use it only when a supervisor approves use for any message.

C. Use it for urgent matters only while bypassing standard procedures.

D. Only when necessary and in accordance with NORAC radio procedures, ensuring clarity and brevity.

Using a radio under NORAC is about using it only when necessary and following the established procedures to keep channels clear and messages precise. When you do use the radio, communicate in plain language, keep it brief, and include the essential details so the recipient can act without delay. If a clearance or instruction is given, read it back to confirm you've understood it correctly and acknowledge receipt. This disciplined approach prevents unnecessary chatter, reduces the chance of miscommunication, and supports safety by ensuring critical instructions aren't buried in routine talk. Other approaches push too far in one direction—using the radio for every message slows communication and clutters the channel, requiring supervisors to approve every transmission imposes delays, or treating only urgent messages as legitimate and bypassing procedures undermines standardized safety practices. The proper method balances necessity, procedural alignment, and concise, clear wording.

9. When a signal indicates a diverging route, what action is required?

A. Proceed immediately if safe

B. Stop until you confirm the route is set and clear for the diverging path

C. Back up to the previous signal

D. Take the diverging route as conditional

When a signal shows a diverging route, you must stop and verify that the diverging path is properly set and clear before moving onto it. The diverging route must be set in the interlocking for your movement, and the track ahead on that route must be free of any trains or obstructions. Only after you confirm the route is set and clear may you proceed through the diverging path. This protects against entering a route that isn't prepared or that could be occupied, which is why rushing ahead is not allowed. Taking the diverging route as conditional isn't permitted unless a signal explicitly grants conditional authority.

10. Who is authorized to remove a blue signal?

A. The dispatcher

B. Only a person of the same group or craft that displayed the signals may remove it, after all the workmen are clear

C. A supervisor

D. A safety officer

Blue signal protection is a safety measure that protects workers on or near the track. When this signal is in place, it can only be removed by a person from the same group or craft that displayed it, and only after all workmen have cleared the area. This ensures the person taking down the protection is directly aware of what work was being done and confirms that no one remains in the danger zone before the track is considered safe for movement. Dispatchers, supervisors, or safety officers aren't the ones who should remove it because they did not place the protection and may not have the same on-site awareness of who is still working or where they are. The rule prevents premature clearance and keeps the crew protected.

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://norac100.examzify.com

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