

PSI Indiana Cosmetology 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 is the primary ingredient in a true acid wave?**
 - A. Hydrogen peroxide**
 - B. Glyceryl monothioglycolate**
 - C. Ammonium thioglycolate**
 - D. Sodium hydroxide**

- 2. What chemical is responsible for making hair color oxidative?**
 - A. Ammonia**
 - B. Hydrogen peroxide**
 - C. Alcohol**
 - D. Silicone**

- 3. What is an appropriate consequence of a gel-based nail product incorrectly curing?**
 - A. Chipping**
 - B. Poor adhesion**
 - C. Discoloration**
 - D. Increased durability**

- 4. What degree haircut is referred to as an increased layered form or shag?**
 - A. 180 degrees**
 - B. 90 degrees**
 - C. 45 degrees**
 - D. 360 degrees**

- 5. What is a clarifying shampoo formulated to do?**
 - A. Bind to metals and remove them from the hair**
 - B. Deeply moisturize hair**
 - C. Color hair**
 - D. Strengthen hair structure**

- 6. What can prevent the renewal of a professional license?**
- A. Completing continuing education credits**
 - B. Unpaid property taxes and child support**
 - C. Having too many clients**
 - D. Insufficient salon space**
- 7. In a uniformly layered form, how are the layers cut?**
- A. At 45 degrees**
 - B. At different lengths**
 - C. At 90 degrees all over**
 - D. At random angles**
- 8. When should electrotherapy be avoided when treating hair?**
- A. In cases of sensitive skin**
 - B. To soften and emulsify grease deposits**
 - C. During hair coloring**
 - D. When using a straightening treatment**
- 9. What is the objective of creating the illusion of an oval face shape?**
- A. Widening the chin area**
 - B. Lengthening the appearance of the neck**
 - C. Balancing the face proportions**
 - D. Making the forehead appear smaller**
- 10. Which hair treatment is known to be self-heating?**
- A. Acid perm**
 - B. Alkaline perm**
 - C. Deep conditioning treatment**
 - D. Hot oil treatment**

Answers

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

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Explanations

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1. What is the primary ingredient in a true acid wave?

- A. Hydrogen peroxide
- B. Glyceryl monothioglycolate**
- C. Ammonium thioglycolate
- D. Sodium hydroxide

The primary ingredient in a true acid wave is glyceryl monothioglycolate. This chemical is a reducing agent that is specifically formulated for permanent waving and is characterized by its lower pH, typically ranging from 6.9 to 7.2. This mild acidity allows for a gentler process on the hair, making it suitable for more fragile or processed hair types. In comparison to other agents, glyceryl monothioglycolate offers more control over the wave pattern and texture, providing a softer and more natural curl. It is important to note that the pH level of the solution plays a significant role in how the hair is processed, contributing to less damage compared to alkaline waves, which use ingredients with a higher pH. The other options represent different types of chemicals used for various hair treatments. Hydrogen peroxide, for instance, is primarily used as an oxidizing agent in lightening services rather than permanent waving. Ammonium thioglycolate is used in alkaline waves, which are more aggressive than true acid waves and have a higher pH, leading to increased risk of damage. Sodium hydroxide is a relaxer that works by straightening hair rather than creating curls or waves. Each of these formulations

2. What chemical is responsible for making hair color oxidative?

- A. Ammonia
- B. Hydrogen peroxide**
- C. Alcohol
- D. Silicone

Hydrogen peroxide is the chemical responsible for making hair color oxidative. In hair coloring, oxidative dyes require the presence of an oxidizing agent, which is commonly hydrogen peroxide, to initiate the chemical reaction that alters the hair's color. When hair dye containing oxidative pigments is applied, the hydrogen peroxide works by opening up the hair cuticle and allowing the dye to penetrate the hair shaft. It then reacts with the dye precursors present in the formulation, resulting in the formation of larger color molecules that provide a permanent change in hair color. This process is crucial in achieving long-lasting and vibrant hues in hair coloring services. In contrast, ammonia is primarily used to help raise the hair cuticle's pH temporarily, facilitating better penetration of the dye, but it does not directly cause the oxidative reaction. Alcohol may serve as a solvent or carrier in hair products, and silicone is often used to provide shine and manageability, but neither plays a role in the oxidation process necessary for permanent hair color change.

3. What is an appropriate consequence of a gel-based nail product incorrectly curing?

- A. Chipping
- B. Poor adhesion**
- C. Discoloration
- D. Increased durability

When a gel-based nail product does not cure properly, poor adhesion is a likely consequence. The curing process involves a chemical reaction that hardens the gel and bonds it effectively to the natural nail. If the product remains uncured or is incorrectly cured due to factors such as inadequate exposure to the UV/LED light or the gel being applied too thickly, it will not adhere properly to the nail bed. The result is that the gel may lift, peel, or detach from the nail, leading to an overall compromised manicure. While chipping, discoloration, and increased durability are considerations in gel nail applications, they do not directly stem from improper curing as clearly as poor adhesion does. For example, chipping can occur for various reasons unrelated to curing, such as nail impact or wear and tear. Discoloration may result from exposure to certain chemicals or prolonged light exposure, but again, these are not directly linked to the curing process itself. Increased durability would generally imply that the product has cured correctly and is robust, which is not the case when curing is done incorrectly. Thus, poor adhesion stands out as the most direct and relevant consequence of a gel-based nail product not curing correctly.

4. What degree haircut is referred to as an increased layered form or shag?

- A. 180 degrees**
- B. 90 degrees
- C. 45 degrees
- D. 360 degrees

In haircutting terminology, an increased layered form or shag typically refers to a haircut achieved at 180 degrees. This technique creates volume and movement in the hair, making it ideal for a layered appearance. When cutting at this angle, the stylist elevates the hair away from the head, allowing the layers to become longer toward the front of the face and shorter in the back. This method is particularly effective for creating texture and can be used to achieve a modern, tousled look that works well with different hair types. The other options represent different haircutting techniques. For instance, a 90-degree haircut offers a more uniform length, while a 45-degree haircut creates a more subtle layering effect. A 360-degree haircut usually involves a more rounded shape and is not typically associated with the increased layering or shag style. Understanding these degree angles and their specific outcomes is essential for achieving the desired haircut results.

5. What is a clarifying shampoo formulated to do?

- A. Bind to metals and remove them from the hair**
- B. Deeply moisturize hair**
- C. Color hair**
- D. Strengthen hair structure**

A clarifying shampoo is specifically designed to bind to impurities, such as metals and product buildup, and wash them away from the hair. Over time, hair products can accumulate on the hair shaft, leading to a dull appearance and reduced effectiveness of other hair care products. By removing these impurities, clarifying shampoos restore the hair's natural shine and health. While other shampoos may focus on moisturizing, coloring, or strengthening hair, these functions do not pertain to the primary role of clarifying shampoos. They are not formulated for deep hydration or enhancing hair color, nor do they specifically work to strengthen the hair structure in the way that conditioning or treatment products do. Their action is distinct in that it emphasizes cleansing and purification.

6. What can prevent the renewal of a professional license?

- A. Completing continuing education credits**
- B. Unpaid property taxes and child support**
- C. Having too many clients**
- D. Insufficient salon space**

Unpaid property taxes and child support play a critical role in the renewal of a professional license due to the legal and financial obligations that these liabilities represent. Many states, including Indiana, have regulations that stipulate that outstanding debts, particularly those that are court-ordered, can affect one's eligibility to maintain or renew professional credentials. This is designed to ensure that licensed professionals fulfill their civic responsibilities, including financial commitments to the state and family, which reflects their professionalism and reliability in their career. Licensing boards often view the resolution of such debts as a matter of good standing, reinforcing the principle that professional conduct extends beyond just skills and client service; it encompasses a broader societal responsibility. In contrast, completing continuing education credits is generally a requirement for license renewal and would not prevent renewal, while having too many clients is not a legitimate reason for license denial. Insufficient salon space, while potentially an issue for operational efficacy, generally wouldn't directly impact the license's renewability unless it violates specific regulations set by the licensing authority.

7. In a uniformly layered form, how are the layers cut?

- A. At 45 degrees**
- B. At different lengths**
- C. At 90 degrees all over**
- D. At random angles**

In a uniformly layered haircut, the layers are cut at the same angle consistently throughout the entire head, which is typically done at a 90-degree angle. Cutting hair at this angle allows for a balanced and even distribution of volume and creates a smooth transition between layers. This technique helps to maintain the structure of the haircut while providing movement and dimension without sudden changes in length. In this approach, each layer is elevated to the same height before being cut, ensuring that the overall silhouette of the style appears cohesive and well-blended. Using a uniform cutting angle also aids in controlling the weight of the hair, making it easier to style and manage. Thus, cutting at 90 degrees all over is essential for achieving the classic look associated with a uniformly layered haircut.

8. When should electrotherapy be avoided when treating hair?

- A. In cases of sensitive skin**
- B. To soften and emulsify grease deposits**
- C. During hair coloring**
- D. When using a straightening treatment**

Electrotherapy should be avoided in cases of sensitive skin because the electrical currents used in treatments can cause discomfort, irritation, or even a reaction in individuals with delicate or reactive skin. Sensitive skin may not respond well to the stimulating nature of electrotherapy, which is designed to enhance circulation, promote healing, or improve the appearance of skin and hair. It is crucial to prioritize the client's comfort and safety, ensuring the treatment chosen is appropriate for their skin type. In contrast, while there may be some specific circumstances where electrotherapy could be part of a regimen during hair coloring or straightening treatments, the direct association of these processes with sensitive skin highlights that avoiding electrotherapy for such clients is essential to prevent adverse reactions.

9. What is the objective of creating the illusion of an oval face shape?

- A. Widening the chin area**
- B. Lengthening the appearance of the neck**
- C. Balancing the face proportions**
- D. Making the forehead appear smaller**

Creating the illusion of an oval face shape is primarily about achieving balance in facial proportions. An oval face is generally considered the ideal shape because it is harmonious and aesthetically pleasing, with features that are well proportioned. By striving to mimic this shape, you can visually soften angular features or reduce the prominence of certain areas, helping to create a more symmetrical and balanced overall appearance. With techniques such as highlighting, contouring, and strategic hair styling, beauty professionals can enhance a client's natural features, draw attention to the center of the face, and soften any strong lines or angles. This approach effectively equilibrates the face, making it look more oval and pleasing to the eye. While other options may touch on aspects of face shape and structure, they do not directly relate to the overarching goal of achieving that oval symmetry and harmony. Hence, focusing on balancing face proportions is essential when creating the illusion of an oval face shape.

10. Which hair treatment is known to be self-heating?

- A. Acid perm**
- B. Alkaline perm**
- C. Deep conditioning treatment**
- D. Hot oil treatment**

The self-heating nature of a treatment often refers to its ability to generate heat as a part of the chemical process that occurs during the treatment. In the context of hair treatments, an alkaline perm is known for this characteristic. It is typically formulated with alkaline agents that allow for the hair cuticle to lift and allows for greater penetration of the perm solution. The reaction produces heat which can enhance the effectiveness of the perm by making the hair more pliable, thus enabling the chemical curls to set more effectively. This self-heating effect is beneficial as it accelerates the development of the curls and ensures that the hair can hold the desired shape post-treatment. By contrast, other treatments such as acid perms often require external heat, while deep conditioning treatments and hot oil treatments are primarily focused on hydration and nourishment, rather than chemical alteration of the hair structure through self-generated heat.

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://indianacosmetology.examzify.com>

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

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