

Red Cross Lifeguard Practice Test (Sample)

Study Guide



Everything you need from our exam experts!

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Table of Contents

Copyright	1
Table of Contents	2
Introduction	3
How to Use This Guide	4
Questions	5
Answers	8
Explanations	10
Next Steps	16

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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. In which scenario should a lifeguard use rescue breathing?**
 - A. When the victim is breathing normally**
 - B. When a victim is not breathing but has a pulse**
 - C. When the victim is conscious and alert**
 - D. When there are multiple victims present**

- 2. What should a lifeguard do if they suspect spinal injury in a victim?**
 - A. Perform a head-tilt, chin-lift**
 - B. Move the victim to a dry area**
 - C. Minimize movement and stabilize the victim**
 - D. Give rescue breaths immediately**

- 3. Signs and symptoms of sudden illness do not include:**
 - A. Changes in LOC.**
 - B. Nausea or vomiting.**
 - C. Bruising or rigidity of the abdomen.**
 - D. Loss of vision or blurred vision.**

- 4. After performing a rescue, what actions should a lifeguard take?**
 - A. Only provide care to the victim**
 - B. Call for backup and leave the scene**
 - C. Provide care, document the incident, and notify management**
 - D. Wait for the incident report to be prepared before acting**

- 5. Which of the following strategies can help lifeguards prevent drowning incidents?**
 - A. Limiting the number of lifeguards on duty**
 - B. Encouraging guests to swim during off-peak hours**
 - C. Implementing regular safety drills and educating swimmers**
 - D. Allowing free swim without supervision**

- 6. What type of environment is essential for effective use of an AED?**
- A. A wet environment**
 - B. A soft surface**
 - C. A clean and dry area free of obstructions**
 - D. A crowded beach**
- 7. When might a lifeguard perform a search and recovery operation?**
- A. During routine safety drills**
 - B. In cases of a missing person in or around the water**
 - C. When swimmers are exhibiting exhaustion**
 - D. After a minor emergency such as a cut**
- 8. What are the three stages of drowning?**
- A. Anger, shock, and acceptance**
 - B. Surprise, struggle, and passiveness**
 - C. Fear, confusion, and surrender**
 - D. Worry, panic, and relaxation**
- 9. When checking a victim during a secondary assessment, what does the C stand for in LOC?**
- A. Condition.**
 - B. Consciousness.**
 - C. Comprehension.**
 - D. Complication.**
- 10. What should be done if a victim starts breathing normally after receiving CPR?**
- A. Continue CPR until emergency services arrive.**
 - B. Place the victim in the recovery position.**
 - C. Check for additional injuries.**
 - D. Prepare to perform rescue breaths.**

Answers

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

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Explanations

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1. In which scenario should a lifeguard use rescue breathing?

- A. When the victim is breathing normally**
- B. When a victim is not breathing but has a pulse**
- C. When the victim is conscious and alert**
- D. When there are multiple victims present**

Rescue breathing is indicated when a victim is not breathing but still has a pulse. In this scenario, the victim requires assistance to provide adequate oxygen to their body, as they are unable to breathe on their own. By administering rescue breaths, a lifeguard can help maintain oxygen flow to vital organs until the victim resumes normal breathing or professional medical help arrives. The other scenarios do not warrant the use of rescue breathing. If the victim is breathing normally, as suggested in the first option, they are receiving adequate oxygen without assistance. A conscious and alert victim, as described in the third option, typically does not require rescue breathing since they are able to control their own breathing effectively. Lastly, the presence of multiple victims does not influence the decision to administer rescue breathing unless one of them is specifically in a situation where they are unresponsive and not breathing while having a pulse. In this case, priority should still be given to the individual in need of airway support.

2. What should a lifeguard do if they suspect spinal injury in a victim?

- A. Perform a head-tilt, chin-lift**
- B. Move the victim to a dry area**
- C. Minimize movement and stabilize the victim**
- D. Give rescue breaths immediately**

When a lifeguard suspects a spinal injury in a victim, minimizing movement and stabilizing the victim is crucial to prevent further injury. The spine is a delicate structure, and any unnecessary movement can exacerbate the injury or lead to paralysis. By stabilizing the victim, the lifeguard reduces the risk of worsening the condition while awaiting emergency medical personnel to take over. Maintaining the victim's position is also paramount, particularly in water, where buoyancy can make it challenging to assess the extent of injuries. Stabilization can include using the head, neck, and body alignment to keep the victim in a secure position until professional help can arrive. Primary assessments for airway, breathing, and circulation should still be conducted, but priority is given to ensuring the victim does not move unnecessarily if a spinal injury is suspected.

3. Signs and symptoms of sudden illness do not include:

- A. Changes in LOC.**
- B. Nausea or vomiting.**
- C. Bruising or rigidity of the abdomen.**
- D. Loss of vision or blurred vision.**

The signs and symptoms of sudden illness can vary widely, but certain indicators are more commonly associated with such conditions. Changes in level of consciousness (LOC), nausea or vomiting, and loss of vision or blurred vision are all recognized symptoms that can occur in various sudden illness scenarios. Bruising or rigidity of the abdomen, however, does not typically fall under the standard symptoms of sudden illness. While abdominal issues can manifest in sudden situations, presenting symptoms such as bruising or rigidity are often related to specific injuries rather than a broader category of sudden illness. This distinction is important because sudden illnesses often show a pattern of symptoms that reflect physiological changes in the body, rather than localized physical trauma indicators like bruising. Understanding this can help individuals differentiate between symptoms of sudden illness and those that may suggest an external injury.

4. After performing a rescue, what actions should a lifeguard take?

- A. Only provide care to the victim**
- B. Call for backup and leave the scene**
- C. Provide care, document the incident, and notify management**
- D. Wait for the incident report to be prepared before acting**

The appropriate actions a lifeguard should take after performing a rescue include providing care to the victim, documenting the incident, and notifying management. This approach ensures that the victim receives the necessary medical attention promptly, which is critical for their safety and recovery. Providing care is essential, as the lifeguard must assess the victim for any injuries or medical conditions and administer first aid or CPR if needed. Documentation is equally important; it creates a record of what occurred during the incident, including the time, location, and the actions taken, which can be vital for both medical follow-up and any legal considerations that may arise later. Finally, notifying management is crucial, as this keeps the facility informed about incidents that may require further investigation or adjustments to safety protocols. This comprehensive approach maintains the well-being of the victim while fulfilling the lifeguard's professional responsibilities and adhering to established procedures.

5. Which of the following strategies can help lifeguards prevent drowning incidents?

- A. Limiting the number of lifeguards on duty**
- B. Encouraging guests to swim during off-peak hours**
- C. Implementing regular safety drills and educating swimmers**
- D. Allowing free swim without supervision**

Implementing regular safety drills and educating swimmers is a vital strategy for preventing drowning incidents. Safety drills ensure that both lifeguards and swimmers are familiar with emergency procedures, allowing them to respond quickly and effectively in case of an emergency. Regular training keeps lifeguards' skills sharp and prepares them for various scenarios they may encounter while on duty. Educating swimmers about water safety, the principles of safe swimming, and the potential hazards present in a swimming environment empowers individuals to take responsibility for their own safety as well as the safety of those around them. It can include information such as recognizing signs of distress, understanding how to use flotation devices properly, and knowing the importance of swimming in designated areas. This combined approach of preparedness and education enhances overall safety, creating a culture of awareness and proactive measures that are crucial in reducing incidents of drowning.

6. What type of environment is essential for effective use of an AED?

- A. A wet environment**
- B. A soft surface**
- C. A clean and dry area free of obstructions**
- D. A crowded beach**

An effective environment for using an Automated External Defibrillator (AED) must be clean and dry, and free from obstructions to ensure both the rescuer's safety and the successful operation of the device. When utilizing an AED, it is crucial to maintain a dry surface to prevent electrical hazards and enhance the conductivity of the pads. A clear area allows the rescuer to move safely around the victim while also making it easier for bystanders to assist or to give the rescuer space to work. Furthermore, the clean environment helps avoid contamination around the patient, which can be particularly important in minimizing infections or other complications. This environment enhances the chances of a restart of the heart rhythm, significantly increasing the victim's chances of survival.

7. When might a lifeguard perform a search and recovery operation?

A. During routine safety drills

B. In cases of a missing person in or around the water

C. When swimmers are exhibiting exhaustion

D. After a minor emergency such as a cut

A lifeguard would perform a search and recovery operation primarily in cases of a missing person in or around the water. This situation typically requires immediate action to locate the individual who may be submerged or otherwise unable to reach safety. In such scenarios, time is of the essence, and the lifeguard must utilize specific techniques and protocols to conduct a thorough and effective search, ensuring the safety of all individuals involved. This type of operation is critical because the water can quickly become a dangerous environment for the missing person, and the likelihood of a successful rescue decreases with time. The lifeguard's training equips them with the skills to manage these high-pressure situations, coordinating with rescue teams and applying proper searching strategies to locate the individual safely and effectively. Performing a search and recovery operation would not typically occur during routine safety drills, when swimmers are exhibiting exhaustion, or after a minor emergency, as those situations require different responses and procedures tailored to their specific needs.

8. What are the three stages of drowning?

A. Anger, shock, and acceptance

B. Surprise, struggle, and passiveness

C. Fear, confusion, and surrender

D. Worry, panic, and relaxation

The three stages of drowning are characterized as surprise, struggle, and passiveness. In the initial stage, surprise occurs when a person unexpectedly finds themselves in a situation where they are submerging or unable to breathe. This acute realization can lead to a moment of panic or disbelief. Following the surprise, the struggle stage begins. During this phase, the individual attempts to fight against the water, which may involve thrashing about and trying to keep their head above water. This struggle consumes a significant amount of energy and can be quite dramatic, but it is also often misunderstood by onlookers who may assume that the person is merely playing or splashing. As the scenario progresses, if the individual cannot escape the dangerous situation, they enter the passiveness stage. At this point, exhaustion sets in, and the person may surrender to the water, resulting in a complete lack of movement and an inability to call for help. This final stage can be particularly perilous, as it reflects a state where life-threatening drowning is imminent. Understanding these stages is essential for lifeguards and others responsible for water safety, as it enables them to recognize when a person is in distress and take appropriate action.

9. When checking a victim during a secondary assessment, what does the C stand for in LOC?

- A. Condition.**
- B. Consciousness.**
- C. Comprehension.**
- D. Complication.**

In the context of a secondary assessment, particularly when evaluating a victim's level of consciousness, the "C" stands for Consciousness. This assessment is crucial as it helps determine how aware the victim is of their surroundings and situation. Checking consciousness allows lifeguards and first responders to ascertain whether the victim is alert, responsive to stimuli, or unresponsive, which can significantly influence the approach to care and necessary interventions. Understanding the victim's consciousness is vital in identifying potential injuries or conditions that may require immediate attention, such as head trauma or other medical emergencies. This factor helps inform the rescuer of the urgency of care required and guides them in deciding whether to activate emergency medical services or provide specific first aid measures.

10. What should be done if a victim starts breathing normally after receiving CPR?

- A. Continue CPR until emergency services arrive.**
- B. Place the victim in the recovery position.**
- C. Check for additional injuries.**
- D. Prepare to perform rescue breaths.**

When a victim begins to breathe normally after receiving CPR, placing them in the recovery position is crucial for their safety and well-being. The recovery position helps maintain an open airway and prevents the risk of aspiration if the person vomits. It also ensures that any secretions can drain from the mouth, reducing the likelihood of airway obstruction. Continuing CPR until emergency services arrive would not be appropriate once the victim is breathing normally, as CPR is intended for cases of unresponsiveness and absence of normal breathing. Checking for additional injuries can be important, but the immediate priority is to ensure the victim's airway remains clear, which is why placing them in the recovery position is essential. Preparing to perform rescue breaths is not necessary at this point since the victim has started to breathe on their own.

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://redcrosslifeguard.examzify.com>

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

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