

# Red Cross Lifeguard 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 appropriate action if a victim is responsive but bleeding?
  - A. Call for additional medical personnel immediately.
  - B. Apply a tourniquet as the first step.
  - C. Provide water to the victim.
  - D. Cover the wound with a sterile dressing and apply pressure.
  
2. What key aspect should a lifeguard focus on while scanning the water?
  - A. Obeying the rules of engagement
  - B. Identifying swimmers' abilities and fatigue levels
  - C. Absorbing the sun to stay warm
  - D. Counting the number of swimmers
  
3. What is the compression to ventilation ratio for adult CPR?
  - A. 30 compressions to 2 breaths
  - B. 15 compressions to 2 breaths
  - C. 20 compressions to 1 breath
  - D. 10 compressions to 1 breath
  
4. How can you best protect yourself from possible bloodborne pathogen transmission when providing care?
  - A. Ask the victim first if they have any communicable diseases.
  - B. Thoroughly wash your hands before providing care.
  - C. Use first aid supplies, such as dressings and bandages, as a barrier when in contact with the victim.
  - D. Use personal protective equipment (PPE), such as disposable gloves and a breathing barrier, when providing care.
  
5. When do emergency back-up coverage protocols take effect for lifeguards?
  - A. When a lifeguard does not show up for their shift.
  - B. When a lifeguard enters the water for a rescue.
  - C. Whenever the facility emergency action plan is activated.
  - D. When the facility has too many patrons for its capacity.

6. What should you do if a responsive victim has been injured?
- A. Have the victim walk to the first aid station to obtain consent
  - B. Provide care immediately based on the victim's condition
  - C. Speak with the victim to find out what happened and check for conditions
  - D. Obtain consent, check for life-threatening conditions, and speak with the victim
7. Which of the following symptoms is commonly associated with a heart attack?
- A. Headache and dizziness
  - B. Chest discomfort and shortness of breath
  - C. Feeling faint and lightheaded
  - D. Abdominal pain and nausea
8. In-service training for lifeguards involves recognizing distressed swimmers and other actions as part of a:
- A. Communications plan.
  - B. Secondary assessment.
  - C. Emergency action plan.
  - D. Staff debriefing.
9. 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
10. After removing a victim suspected of a spinal injury from the water, what is a key step you should not take?
- A. Contact 911 or the local emergency number
  - B. Dry the victim and apply AED pads
  - C. Protect the victim from becoming cold
  - D. Reassure the victim

## Answers

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

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## Explanations

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1. What is the appropriate action if a victim is responsive but bleeding?

- A. Call for additional medical personnel immediately.
- B. Apply a tourniquet as the first step.
- C. Provide water to the victim.
- D. Cover the wound with a sterile dressing and apply pressure.

When dealing with a responsive victim who is bleeding, the appropriate action is to cover the wound with a sterile dressing and apply pressure. This method is crucial for controlling bleeding and preventing further blood loss. By applying direct pressure to the wound, you can help reduce the flow of blood and promote clotting. Using a sterile dressing also minimizes the risk of infection while ensuring that the wound is protected from external contaminants. In situations where the bleeding is severe and does not stop with direct pressure, further measures may be necessary, but initiating care with a sterile dressing and pressure is the fundamental first step in bleeding management that can be applied immediately. This approach is essential as it can stabilize the victim until advanced medical personnel can take over if needed.

2. What key aspect should a lifeguard focus on while scanning the water?

- A. Obeying the rules of engagement
- B. Identifying swimmers' abilities and fatigue levels
- C. Absorbing the sun to stay warm
- D. Counting the number of swimmers

A lifeguard should primarily focus on identifying swimmers' abilities and fatigue levels while scanning the water because this observation is crucial for ensuring the safety of all individuals in the aquatic environment. By assessing swimmers' skills, lifeguards can determine who may require assistance and who is at risk of drowning or distress. Understanding a swimmer's fatigue level helps lifeguards predict potential problems, allowing them to intervene before a situation escalates. Additionally, while factors like counting the number of swimmers or following rules have their place in a lifeguard's responsibilities, they do not directly enhance the immediate safety monitoring that is fundamental to effective lifeguarding. Observing and identifying swimmers' comfort and ability levels equips lifeguards to respond swiftly and appropriately to emergencies, thereby fulfilling their primary role in preventing incidents and promoting a secured swimming area.

### 3. What is the compression to ventilation ratio for adult CPR?

- A. 30 compressions to 2 breaths
- B. 15 compressions to 2 breaths
- C. 20 compressions to 1 breath
- D. 10 compressions to 1 breath

The ratio of 30 compressions to 2 breaths is the established standard for adult CPR, as recommended by organizations such as the American Heart Association. This ratio is designed to maximize the effectiveness of chest compressions while providing adequate ventilation to support the victim's life. In adult CPR, the priority is to perform high-quality chest compressions to maintain blood flow to vital organs, especially the brain and heart. The 30:2 ratio allows for a rapid return to compressions after delivering breaths, which is crucial since every second counts in an emergency situation. The sequence emphasizes that rescuers should focus on compressions while delivering breaths at strategic intervals to ensure the victim receives both oxygen and circulating blood effectively. The other ratios presented are not the current recommendations for adult CPR. They either alter the emphasis on chest compressions or the number of breaths in a way that could diminish the efficacy of resuscitation efforts. The 30:2 ratio is widely taught and should be adhered to in adult CPR situations to maintain consistency and effectiveness in emergency responses.

### 4. How can you best protect yourself from possible bloodborne pathogen transmission when providing care?

- A. Ask the victim first if they have any communicable diseases.
- B. Thoroughly wash your hands before providing care.
- C. Use first aid supplies, such as dressings and bandages, as a barrier when in contact with the victim.
- D. Use personal protective equipment (PPE), such as disposable gloves and a breathing barrier, when providing care.

Using personal protective equipment (PPE), such as disposable gloves and a breathing barrier, is the best way to protect yourself from possible bloodborne pathogen transmission when providing care. PPE acts as a physical barrier between you and any potentially infectious materials, such as blood or body fluids, significantly reducing the risk of exposure to pathogens. Gloves protect your hands from direct contact with any contaminants when performing first aid, while a breathing barrier helps ensure safety during rescue breathing or mouth-to-mouth resuscitation. This approach is particularly important because bloodborne pathogens, such as HIV and hepatitis B and C, can be transmitted through direct contact with infected blood or other bodily fluids, making the proper use of PPE essential in minimizing these risks. Washing your hands thoroughly before providing care is important for general hygiene but does not provide immediate protection during the act of giving care. First aid supplies like dressings and bandages serve a different purpose—they are primarily to manage wounds, not to protect against pathogen exposure. Asking the victim about communicable diseases may not provide reliable information due to the victim's potential lack of awareness or honesty about their health status.

5. When do emergency back-up coverage protocols take effect for lifeguards?

- A. When a lifeguard does not show up for their shift.
- B. When a lifeguard enters the water for a rescue.
- C. Whenever the facility emergency action plan is activated.
- D. When the facility has too many patrons for its capacity.

The appropriate answer is that emergency back-up coverage protocols take effect when a lifeguard enters the water for a rescue. This is important because the lifeguard's primary responsibility is to ensure the safety of the patrons, and when they commit to a rescue, their ability to monitor the entire facility is compromised. Therefore, activating back-up coverage at this moment is crucial for maintaining safety and ensuring that the area remains supervised while resources are focused on the rescue effort. This ensures that other patrons continue to receive oversight and assistance as needed during an urgent situation. While other scenarios, such as lifeguard absences or exceeding capacity, are important considerations for overall safety management, they do not specifically trigger emergency back-up coverage protocols like entering the water for a rescue does. Activating the emergency action plan might involve various procedures but does not specifically relate to back-up coverage for a lifeguard currently engaged in a rescue.

6. What should you do if a responsive victim has been injured?

- A. Have the victim walk to the first aid station to obtain consent
- B. Provide care immediately based on the victim's condition
- C. Speak with the victim to find out what happened and check for conditions
- D. Obtain consent, check for life-threatening conditions, and speak with the victim

When dealing with a responsive victim who has been injured, it is essential to follow a systematic approach to ensure their safety and well-being. The correct answer emphasizes the importance of obtaining consent, which is a crucial aspect of providing first aid. Before administering any care, it is necessary to let the victim know who you are and what you plan to do, and to receive their consent to proceed. Once consent is obtained, checking for life-threatening conditions is vital. This includes assessing the victim for any severe injuries that could compromise their safety, such as excessive bleeding, difficulty breathing, or unresponsiveness. This step allows you to prioritize the care needed based on their specific condition. Additionally, speaking with the victim to gather information about how the injury occurred helps you understand the situation better and may provide clues about the potential severity of their injuries. This information can also guide further care and decision-making. This structured approach—consent, assessment for life-threatening conditions, and communication with the victim—ensures that you provide appropriate and effective assistance tailored to the victim's needs.

7. Which of the following symptoms is commonly associated with a heart attack?

- A. Headache and dizziness
- B. Chest discomfort and shortness of breath
- C. Feeling faint and lightheaded
- D. Abdominal pain and nausea

The symptoms commonly associated with a heart attack include chest discomfort and shortness of breath. During a heart attack, individuals often experience pressure, squeezing, or pain in the center or left side of the chest that may last for more than a few minutes or go away and come back. Shortness of breath can accompany this discomfort and may occur with or without chest pain. These symptoms are critical for recognizing a heart attack and can prompt quick response efforts. Understanding other symptoms is also important, but they are less specific to heart attacks. For instance, while feeling faint or lightheaded, along with headaches and abdominal discomfort, can be symptoms of various conditions, they are not characteristic indicators of a heart attack. Recognizing chest discomfort and shortness of breath as primary symptoms helps in the timely identification and treatment of a heart attack, which can save lives.

8. In-service training for lifeguards involves recognizing distressed swimmers and other actions as part of a:

- A. Communications plan.
- B. Secondary assessment.
- C. Emergency action plan.
- D. Staff debriefing.

In-service training for lifeguards is crucial for maintaining the skills and knowledge necessary to effectively respond to emergencies in aquatic environments. Recognizing distressed swimmers is a key component of an emergency action plan because it outlines the specific steps lifeguards must take when they identify a swimmer in trouble. This plan includes identifying potential hazards, assessing the situation, notifying other staff, and executing rescue protocols. An emergency action plan is designed to ensure a swift and efficient response to emergencies, thereby enhancing the safety of all individuals in the water. This training prepares lifeguards to act decisively and efficiently, improving their ability to protect patrons and reduce the risk of drowning or injury. While the other options are important aspects of a lifeguard's responsibilities, they do not directly encompass the recognition of distressed swimmers within the framework of immediate response actions, which is the focus of an emergency action plan. Effective communication, secondary assessments, and staff debriefings are all relevant but serve different functions in the overall safety protocol.

9. 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.

10. After removing a victim suspected of a spinal injury from the water, what is a key step you should not take?

- A. Contact 911 or the local emergency number
- B. Dry the victim and apply AED pads
- C. Protect the victim from becoming cold
- D. Reassure the victim

In the scenario described, the key step that should not be taken is drying the victim and applying AED pads. In cases of suspected spinal injuries, the primary focus is on stabilizing the victim and avoiding any movements that could exacerbate their condition. Applying AED pads isn't recommended at this stage because, primarily, the victim may not need defibrillation if they still have a pulse or if their cardiac status is uncertain. Additionally, drying the victim could involve movement that might compromise spinal alignment. Keeping the victim warm and stable while waiting for emergency medical personnel is critical, as cold can exacerbate shock and complicate their condition. Therefore, maintaining warmth and minimizing movement are essential until trained medical responders can take over.

## 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](mailto: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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