

SCA Barista Intermediate Practice Test (Sample)

Study Guide



Everything you need from our exam experts!

Copyright © 2026 by Examzify - A Kaluba Technologies Inc. product.

ALL RIGHTS RESERVED.

No part of this book may be reproduced or transferred in any form or by any means, graphic, electronic, or mechanical, including photocopying, recording, web distribution, taping, or by any information storage retrieval system, without the written permission of the author.

Notice: Examzify makes every reasonable effort to obtain accurate, complete, and timely information about this product from reliable sources.

SAMPLE

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

SAMPLE

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

SAMPLE

- 1. What is the role of the coffee roast profile in flavor development?**
 - A. It controls the brewing temperature**
 - B. It determines the coffee's acidity levels**
 - C. Different roast profiles emphasize various flavors and aromas in the coffee**
 - D. It affects the caffeine content of the brew**

- 2. What can occur if tamping and distribution of coffee are done poorly?**
 - A. Improved extraction quality**
 - B. Increased chance of channeling**
 - C. Faster brewing time**
 - D. Consistent flavor throughout**

- 3. How does water temperature affect coffee extraction?**
 - A. Higher temperatures can lead to under-extraction**
 - B. Lower temperatures decrease extraction rates**
 - C. Higher temperatures increase extraction rates**
 - D. Water temperature has no effect on extraction**

- 4. What is the significance of the "Greek coffee" preparation style?**
 - A. It involves using a French press for brewing**
 - B. It involves boiling finely ground coffee with sugar in a special pot known as a briki**
 - C. It requires brewing coffee with cold water only**
 - D. It uses instant coffee for faster preparation**

- 5. What characterizes espresso ristretto?**
 - A. A longer extraction producing a milder taste**
 - B. A standard extraction resulting in balanced flavor**
 - C. A shorter extraction that enhances flavor concentration**
 - D. A brewing method that uses less coffee**

- 6. What is one effect of using paper bags for coffee storage?**
- A. Prevents oxygen from entering**
 - B. Allows for moisture retention**
 - C. Increases oxidation**
 - D. Preserves flavor better than metal cans**
- 7. In a double espresso made with a 16g dose and 40g yield, what is the EBF?**
- A. 40%**
 - B. 50%**
 - C. 60%**
 - D. 30%**
- 8. Which coffee brewing method employs vacuum pressure?**
- A. The French press method**
 - B. The Aeropress method**
 - C. The siphon brewing method**
 - D. The pour-over method**
- 9. What is primarily measured during the cupping process?**
- A. The size of coffee beans**
 - B. The specific gravity of brewed coffee**
 - C. The subjective flavor characteristics of coffee**
 - D. The time taken to brew**
- 10. Which of the following insects is commonly a pest in coffee plantations?**
- A. Butterfly**
 - B. Coffee borer beetle**
 - C. Ladybug**
 - D. Dragonfly**

Answers

SAMPLE

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

SAMPLE

Explanations

SAMPLE

1. What is the role of the coffee roast profile in flavor development?

- A. It controls the brewing temperature**
- B. It determines the coffee's acidity levels**
- C. Different roast profiles emphasize various flavors and aromas in the coffee**
- D. It affects the caffeine content of the brew**

The role of the coffee roast profile is pivotal in flavor development because different roasting techniques and times can significantly accentuate or diminish certain flavors and aromas inherent in the coffee beans. During the roasting process, chemical reactions such as Maillard browning and caramelization occur, transforming the raw coffee into the roasted product we brew. These processes can bring out different notes—like fruity, floral, nutty, or chocolatey flavors—depending on the roast profile applied. For instance, lighter roasts often retain more of the coffee's original flavors, showcasing higher acidity and fruity notes, while darker roasts tend to produce more bitter, roasted flavors due to the longer exposure to heat. Thus, the roast profile is essential for baristas who aim to highlight specific flavor characteristics in their coffee, making it the correct answer in the context of flavor development.

2. What can occur if tamping and distribution of coffee are done poorly?

- A. Improved extraction quality**
- B. Increased chance of channeling**
- C. Faster brewing time**
- D. Consistent flavor throughout**

When tamping and distribution of coffee are performed poorly, one significant consequence is an increased chance of channeling. Channeling occurs when water finds paths of least resistance as it flows through the coffee puck, leading to uneven extraction. This uneven saturation can cause certain areas of the coffee to be over-extracted while others remain under-extracted. If the coffee grounds are not evenly distributed and tamped with consistent pressure, it creates gaps and inconsistencies in the puck. As water flows through these areas, it will travel more quickly through the less dense portions, avoiding the denser areas where the coffee is tamped more firmly. This results in an imbalanced extraction process, ultimately affecting the overall flavor and quality of the brewed coffee. In contrast, a well-tamped and evenly distributed coffee puck allows for a uniform flow of water, promoting balanced extraction, which enhances the final flavor profile and overall quality of the espresso.

3. How does water temperature affect coffee extraction?

- A. Higher temperatures can lead to under-extraction
- B. Lower temperatures decrease extraction rates
- C. Higher temperatures increase extraction rates**
- D. Water temperature has no effect on extraction

Water temperature significantly influences the extraction process of coffee, affecting both the solubility of coffee compounds and the overall flavor profile of the resulting brew. Higher temperatures increase the rate at which coffee solubles dissolve into the water. When water is heated, the kinetic energy of the molecules increases, allowing them to interact more vigorously with the coffee grounds. This interaction enhances the extraction of flavors, oils, and acids that contribute to the coffee's overall taste characteristics. The ideal water temperature for brewing coffee typically ranges from about 195°F to 205°F (90°C to 96°C). Within this range, most desirable flavors, including sweetness and acidity, are extracted while minimizing undesirable characteristics such as bitterness. Thus, higher temperatures can help achieve a more balanced and flavorful cup of coffee. If the water is too cold, it slows down the extraction process, resulting in under-extraction where not enough soluble compounds are dissolved, leading to a bland or sour taste. Therefore, understanding the relationship between water temperature and extraction is crucial for brewing high-quality coffee.

4. What is the significance of the "Greek coffee" preparation style?

- A. It involves using a French press for brewing
- B. It involves boiling finely ground coffee with sugar in a special pot known as a briki**
- C. It requires brewing coffee with cold water only
- D. It uses instant coffee for faster preparation

The significance of the "Greek coffee" preparation style lies in the method of brewing, which involves boiling finely ground coffee with sugar in a special pot called a briki. This traditional technique is not only about making coffee but also about the cultural and social rituals associated with its preparation and consumption. Using a briki allows for precise control of the brewing process, which is critical for achieving the desired flavor and texture. The coffee is prepared with a very fine grind, often referred to as "Greek coffee," and is typically served unfiltered, allowing the grounds to settle at the bottom of the cup. The sweetness can be adjusted by varying the amount of sugar added during the boiling process, making it a customizable experience. This method produces a rich, aromatic drink that is integral to Greek coffee culture, often enjoyed slowly during social gatherings. In contrast, the other choices do not accurately represent the characteristics or cultural significance of Greek coffee preparation. For instance, using a French press does not align with the traditional method, while brewing only with cold water or using instant coffee diverges from the essence of this particular style.

5. What characterizes espresso ristretto?

- A. A longer extraction producing a milder taste**
- B. A standard extraction resulting in balanced flavor**
- C. A shorter extraction that enhances flavor concentration**
- D. A brewing method that uses less coffee**

Espresso ristretto is characterized by a shorter extraction time compared to a standard espresso. This process involves brewing the coffee grounds with the same amount of coffee but using less water, leading to a smaller volume of liquid espresso. As a result, the flavors extracted during this shorter brewing time are more concentrated and intense. The balance of flavors shifts, often bringing out sweeter and more complex notes while diminishing some of the bitterness that can come from a longer extraction. This technique highlights the more desirable attributes of the coffee while providing a rich and bold flavor profile.

6. What is one effect of using paper bags for coffee storage?

- A. Prevents oxygen from entering**
- B. Allows for moisture retention**
- C. Increases oxidation**
- D. Preserves flavor better than metal cans**

Using paper bags for coffee storage has a notable effect regarding oxidation, primarily because paper is permeable to oxygen. When coffee is stored in a paper bag, it does not provide a barrier against oxygen, which can lead to increased oxidation of the coffee beans. Oxidation causes the flavors to deteriorate over time, leading to stale or off flavors in the coffee. In contrast, options that mention moisture retention or preservation of flavor are not accurate, as paper bags do not effectively protect against moisture either; they can absorb moisture, potentially compromising the coffee beans further. Additionally, metal cans, while they may preserve flavor better compared to paper bags, are not related to this specific context. Therefore, the characteristic of paper bags allowing greater exposure to oxygen and consequently increasing oxidation aligns with the effects observed in coffee storage.

7. In a double espresso made with a 16g dose and 40g yield, what is the EBF?

- A. 40%**
- B. 50%**
- C. 60%**
- D. 30%**

The extraction brew factor (EBF) provides insight into the efficiency of coffee extraction during brewing. It is used to express the relationship between the amount of coffee used and the amount of brewed coffee produced. The formula for calculating the EBF is:
$$\text{EBF} = \left(\frac{\text{yield}}{\text{dose}} \right) \times 100$$
 In this case, you have a double espresso with a dose of 16g of coffee and a yield of 40g of espresso. Using the formula:
$$\text{EBF} = \left(\frac{40\text{g}}{16\text{g}} \right) \times 100 = 250\%$$
 However, it seems there's a misunderstanding here regarding what is being calculated versus what was asked in the question. For the extraction yield (potentially confused with EBF), which traditionally can be expressed as a percentage, we should express it differently or clarify based on serving size of espresso typically being looked at in the practice of brewing. The expected understanding might relate to determining how concentrated the extraction is assessing ratios or strengths in terms of other indicative parameters. Nevertheless, if you strictly follow the calculation as required, understanding both yield

8. Which coffee brewing method employs vacuum pressure?

- A. The French press method**
- B. The Aeropress method**
- C. The siphon brewing method**
- D. The pour-over method**

The siphon brewing method is known for its unique use of vacuum pressure to brew coffee. This method involves two chambers where water is heated in the lower chamber, creating steam pressure that forces the water into the upper chamber containing the coffee grounds. Once the brewing process is complete, the heat is removed, and the resulting vacuum pulls the brewed coffee back down into the lower chamber, leaving the grounds behind. This process not only results in a visually engaging brewing experience but also produces a clean and aromatic cup of coffee. In contrast, the French press method relies on steeping coffee grounds in hot water and then pressing them down with a plunger, without utilizing vacuum pressure. The Aeropress, while employing air pressure to extract coffee, does not create a vacuum in the same manner as siphon brewing. Similarly, the pour-over method involves gravity and does not incorporate any vacuum mechanism, as water is poured over the coffee grounds and drips through a filter. Each of these other methods has its own characteristics and mechanisms but does not utilize vacuum pressure like the siphon method does.

9. What is primarily measured during the cupping process?

- A. The size of coffee beans**
- B. The specific gravity of brewed coffee**
- C. The subjective flavor characteristics of coffee**
- D. The time taken to brew**

During the cupping process, the main focus is on the subjective flavor characteristics of coffee. This method is employed by coffee professionals to evaluate and compare different coffees based on their aroma and taste profile. Cupping allows tasters to identify specific notes, such as fruity, nutty, floral, or herbal flavors, and to assess the overall balance and complexity of the coffee. Factors like aroma, acidity, body, sweetness, and aftertaste are central to this evaluation, making it a crucial step in quality control and product development in the coffee industry. The emphasis on sensory analysis during cupping stems from the need to understand how various beans and processing methods impact the final flavor of the brewed coffee. Other options, such as measuring the size of coffee beans, the specific gravity of brewed coffee, or the time taken to brew, do not directly relate to the primary goals of cupping, which are to explore and articulate the sensory attributes of the coffee itself.

10. Which of the following insects is commonly a pest in coffee plantations?

- A. Butterfly**
- B. Coffee borer beetle**
- C. Ladybug**
- D. Dragonfly**

The coffee borer beetle is widely recognized as a significant pest in coffee plantations. This small insect can cause substantial damage to coffee crops by tunneling into the coffee cherries and attacking the seeds, which can lead to a reduction in yield and quality. The females lay their eggs inside the cherry, and as the larvae develop, they feed on the seed, making it more susceptible to fungal infections. Understanding the impact of the coffee borer beetle is crucial for managing coffee production effectively, as integrated pest management strategies must be employed to mitigate its effects on the coffee plants. Other insects like butterflies, ladybugs, and dragonflies do not play a similar role in harming coffee plants. While butterflies are primarily pollinators and ladybugs are beneficial predators of pests like aphids, dragonflies are natural predators of many other flying insects. Therefore, they do not present the same direct threat to coffee crops as the coffee borer beetle does.

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://scabaristaintermediate.examzify.com>

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

SAMPLE