Scuba Diving International (SDI) AFS 270 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. **During a buddy ascent, divers should offset themselves slightly to avoid kicking the other's fins during a buddy ascent. True or false?**

   A. True

   B. False

   C. Only when using heavy fins

   D. Never

2. **After exhaling to clear water from the second stage, how should you breathe?**

   A. Inhale cautiously, so that you can 'breathe past' any remaining water

   B. Inhale deeply, as you will likely be out of breath

   C. Inhale partially, then press the purge button

   D. None of the above

3. **Seasickness is caused by which of the following?**

   A. Factors such as smell of salt water and the sound of boat engines.

   B. A change in equilibrium in the middle ear.

   C. An elevation in adrenaline levels caused by anxiety over diving.

   D. None of the above.

4. **When signaling the dive for safety, which option reflects the proper abort signal?**

   A. Abort, reason

   B. Shorten, reason

   C. Continue, buddy

   D. Abort, buddy

5. **The types of fins commonly used by recreational scuba divers include:**

   A. Full-foot fins.

   B. Open-heel/adjustable fins.

   C. Detachable-blade fins.

   D. Both the first and third answers are correct.

6. If you suspect decompression sickness, which of the following actions is NOT listed as a first-aid measure?

A. Activate EMS and contact DAN.

B. Monitor the patient's vital signs.

C. Get the diver back in the water.

D. Administer pure oxygen.

7. Materials commonly used to make scuba cylinders include:

A. Aluminum and steel

B. Titanium

C. Brass

D. Plastic

8. Why would a diver adjust buoyancy during a dive?

A. To hover quietly in the water column.

B. To maintain optimal depth and conserve air.

C. To avoid rising to the surface during a safety stop.

D. All of the above.

9. First aid for suspected decompression sickness may include all of the following except:

A. Activate the EMS system and contact the Divers Alert Network (DAN).

B. Monitor the patient's vital signs.

C. Get the diver back in the water and repeat any missed or omitted decompression.

D. Administer pure oxygen.

10. Regarding contact lens wearers and mask clearing, the statement 'Contact lens wearers should not close their eyes when clearing a mask' is

A. True

B. False

C. Not sure

D. It depends

Answers

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

Explanations

1. During a buddy ascent, divers should offset themselves slightly to avoid kicking the other's fins during a buddy ascent. True or false?

A. True

B. False

C. Only when using heavy fins

D. Never

Keeping space between divers during a buddy ascent is essential for safe, controlled movement. Offsetting slightly to the side reduces the chance that your fins will strike your buddy as you kick, which helps prevent discomfort, gear interference, or a loss of control during the ascent. This small lateral offset also makes it easier to monitor the buddy, maintain visual contact, and provide assistance if needed while you both rise and approach the safety stop. The practice applies regardless of fin type and is about predictable, safe buddy movement. Therefore, true.

2. After exhaling to clear water from the second stage, how should you breathe?

A. Inhale cautiously, so that you can 'breathe past' any remaining water

B. Inhale deeply, as you will likely be out of breath

C. Inhale partially, then press the purge button

D. None of the above

After you've exhaled to clear water from the second stage, you want to resume breathing in a controlled, gentle way. Inhaling cautiously helps you "breathe past" any remaining water in the mouthpiece without forcing air in too hard or risking inhaling water. A slow, steady breath keeps the regulator delivering air smoothly and reduces the chance of drawing water into your lungs if a little remains. Taking a deep breath or trying to purge during an inhale isn't ideal: a deep inhale can draw in water, and using the purge while not needed can disrupt the flow or reintroduce water. None of the other options align with maintaining safe, steady breathing after clearing water.

3. Seasickness is caused by which of the following?

A. Factors such as smell of salt water and the sound of boat engines.

B. A change in equilibrium in the middle ear.

C. An elevation in adrenaline levels caused by anxiety over diving.

D. None of the above.

Seasickness comes from a mismatch between the signals your brain receives about motion and balance. The vestibular system in the inner ear detects movement of the boat, but your eyes may not register the same motion at the same time. This conflicting information—motion detected by the balance organs but not fully confirmed by vision—triggers nausea, dizziness, and sometimes vomiting. That's why the option describing a change in equilibrium of the balance system best explains seasickness. Smell or engine noise can irritate senses, and adrenaline from anxiety can heighten feelings, but they don't produce the core mechanism of motion sickness.

4. When signaling the dive for safety, which option reflects the proper abort signal?

A. Abort, reason

B. Shorten, reason

C. Continue, buddy

D. Abort, buddy

When signaling for safety, you must communicate both the action and the reason. The proper abort signal is to clearly indicate you are aborting and then give the reason. This two-part message lets your buddy understand what's wrong and how to respond, such as ascending or adjusting the plan. Giving just an abort cue or using a different cue without the reason leaves your buddy guessing and can delay a coordinated response. For example, signaling an abort with a reason like "low air" or "equipment problem" tells your buddy exactly why you're stopping the dive and what to do next.

5. The types of fins commonly used by recreational scuba divers include:

A. Full-foot fins.

B. Open-heel/adjustable fins.

C. Detachable-blade fins.

D. Both the first and third answers are correct.

Divers commonly choose two practical fin styles for recreational diving: full-foot fins and fins with detachable blades. Full-foot fins slip directly over the foot and are great for warm-water dives where booties aren't needed, offering a lightweight, simple setup that's easy to kick with. Fins with detachable blades provide versatility—having a blade that can be swapped or separated allows divers to adjust blade length or stiffness or to pack more compactly for travel. Together, these two styles cover a wide range of recreational diving needs and conditions, which is why they're highlighted as the common choices.
Open-heel fins are also widely used in many contexts, especially with thicker booties in cooler water, but the combination of the first and third options reflects the common divers' gear choices emphasized here.

6. If you suspect decompression sickness, which of the following actions is NOT listed as a first-aid measure?

A. Activate EMS and contact DAN.

B. Monitor the patient's vital signs.

C. Get the diver back in the water.

D. Administer pure oxygen.

The scenario tests what to do first when decompression sickness is suspected. The essential moves are to call for professional help, monitor the diver's condition, and provide high-flow oxygen while keeping the diver still and warm. Oxygen is important because it helps nitrogen off-gas from tissues and bubbles, reducing their size and aiding recovery, and it stabilizes oxygen delivery to the body during transport. Monitoring vital signs keeps you aware of any changes in breathing, circulation, or consciousness, so you can relay accurate information to responders. Activating EMS or DAN ensures rapid access to hyperbaric treatment, which is the definitive care for DCS. Keeping the diver still, calm, and warm minimizes energy use and movement that could aggravate symptoms or bubble movement. The action that is not appropriate as first aid is getting the diver back in the water. Re-immersing or descending again can worsen gas bubbles and delay definitive treatment, so it is not part of the first-aid plan.

7. Materials commonly used to make scuba cylinders include:

A. Aluminum and steel

B. Titanium

C. Brass

D. Plastic

Devices that hold compressed gas must be strong, durable, and able to resist corrosion while being practical to manufacture and handle. The two most common materials for scuba cylinders are steel and aluminum alloys. Steel cylinders are very strong and relatively inexpensive, providing a compact, rugged option, though they're heavier to carry. Aluminum cylinders are lighter, easier to handle, and offer good corrosion resistance; they tend to be more buoyant when empty, which affects buoyancy management in the water. Other materials aren't used for scuba cylinders because they don't meet the necessary balance of strength, weight, cost, and long-term stability. Titanium, while strong and corrosion-resistant, is cost-prohibitive for typical recreational gear. Brass isn't suitable due to weight and corrosion concerns, and plastic wouldn't reliably withstand the high pressures or long-term performance required.

8. Why would a diver adjust buoyancy during a dive?

A. To hover quietly in the water column.

B. To maintain optimal depth and conserve air.

C. To avoid rising to the surface during a safety stop.

D. All of the above.

Buoyancy control is used to keep you at the right depth with minimal effort, letting you move smoothly through the water as conditions change. Hovering quietly is possible when you achieve neutral buoyancy, which reduces the effort needed to stay in place and minimizes disturbance of the surrounding water. Keeping a stable depth and moving with less drag also helps conserve air, since you don't fight constant ascent or descent and can breathe more efficiently. At a safety stop, you want to hold a shallow, fixed depth, typically around 5 meters, so a precise buoyancy balance prevents you from rising too quickly or sinking past the stop. Because all of these scenarios involve adjusting buoyancy, the best choice is that all of the above. You'll typically fine-tune buoyancy with the BCD, breathing, and weight distribution as you descend, level off, and ascend.

9. First aid for suspected decompression sickness may include all of the following except:

A. Activate the EMS system and contact the Divers Alert Network (DAN).

B. Monitor the patient's vital signs.

C. Get the diver back in the water and repeat any missed or omitted decompression.

D. Administer pure oxygen.

The main idea is that suspected decompression sickness is treated by stopping further exposure, giving high-flow oxygen, and getting professional care as quickly as possible, not by trying to re-create decompression in the field. Re-entering the water to repeat any missed decompression can worsen bubbles and symptoms and is not a valid first-aid step. The appropriate actions are to activate EMS and contact DAN so experts can arrange rapid hyperbaric treatment, monitor the diver's vital signs to catch any deterioration, and administer pure oxygen to accelerate nitrogen washout and improve tissue oxygenation.

10. Regarding contact lens wearers and mask clearing, the statement 'Contact lens wearers should not close their eyes when clearing a mask' is

A. True

B. False

C. Not sure

D. It depends

Closing your eyes during a mask-clearing maneuver is a sensible safety step when wearing contact lenses. The clearing process involves water entering the eye area as you exhale through your nose, and keeping the eyes closed helps minimize direct water exposure to the lenses and reduces the chance of lens displacement or irritation. The technique itself stays the same—tilt the mask, blow gently through the nose to push the water out, then reopen your eyes once the mask is clear. So the idea that you shouldn't close your eyes isn't correct; closing the eyes protects the lenses and enhances comfort during clearing.

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://sdiafs270.examzify.com

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