

SOS Mechanic Certification - Suspension & Steering Practice Exam (Sample)

Study Guide



Everything you need from our exam experts!

This is a sample study guide. To access the full version with hundreds of questions,

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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. Don't worry about getting everything right, 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, and take breaks to retain information better.

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.

7. Use Other Tools

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!

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Questions

- 1. How is toe adjusted on a rack and pinion suspension?**
 - A. By rotating the outer tie rod**
 - B. By loosening the lock nut and turning the inner tie rod**
 - C. By adjusting the steering rack position**
 - D. By changing the tire pressure**
- 2. What is the typical appearance of tire tread when the toe setting is too high?**
 - A. Even wear across the tread**
 - B. Cupping on the edges**
 - C. Feathered edges**
 - D. Center wear only**
- 3. What does a bounce test assess in a vehicle's suspension system?**
 - A. The level of tire pressure**
 - B. The responsiveness of the shocks and struts**
 - C. The alignment of the wheels**
 - D. The amount of tread on the tires**
- 4. Which of these is NOT part of the normal procedure for replacing a front stabilizer bar?**
 - A. Disconnect the tie-rod ends**
 - B. Remove the bushings**
 - C. Inspect the bar for damage**
 - D. Install new mounting brackets**
- 5. What are the two main types of suspension systems?**
 - A. Active and passive suspension systems**
 - B. Dependent and independent suspension systems**
 - C. Hydraulic and mechanical systems**
 - D. Front and rear suspension systems**

- 6. What is an indicator of a properly functioning steering system?**
- A. Smooth steering response**
 - B. Increased noise when turning**
 - C. Excessive steering play**
 - D. Fluid leaks from under the vehicle**
- 7. What type of tire wear is caused by improper camber?**
- A. Feathered edges**
 - B. Cupped wear**
 - C. Chopped wear**
 - D. Camber wear**
- 8. What impact does incorrect toe setting have on a vehicle?**
- A. Increased acceleration**
 - B. Uneven brake wear**
 - C. Excessive tire wear and steering issues**
 - D. Rough engine performance**
- 9. If a mechanic pushes out and then pulls in on both tires of a jacked-up car and notices too much movement, what does that indicate?**
- A. The ball joints are loose**
 - B. The tie rod ends are worn**
 - C. The wheel bearings are tight**
 - D. The strut mounts need replacement**
- 10. When checking curb height on a car with torsion bars, the car should be checked on what type of surface?**
- A. A sloped surface**
 - B. A gravel surface**
 - C. A level surface**
 - D. An uneven surface**

Answers

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

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Explanations

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1. How is toe adjusted on a rack and pinion suspension?

- A. By rotating the outer tie rod
- B. By loosening the lock nut and turning the inner tie rod**
- C. By adjusting the steering rack position
- D. By changing the tire pressure

To adjust the toe on a rack and pinion suspension, it is essential to manipulate the inner tie rod. This is done by loosening the lock nut on the inner tie rod and then turning the inner tie rod itself. This movement changes the length of the tie rod, and consequently, it alters the angle of the wheels, which is critical for achieving proper toe alignment. Proper toe adjustment ensures that the wheels are aligned correctly relative to the centerline of the vehicle, which affects steering response, tire wear, and overall handling characteristics. Other methods mentioned in the question are not appropriate for toe adjustment in a rack and pinion suspension system. For instance, simply rotating the outer tie rod does not provide the necessary changes in toe adjustments and often only affects the steering response rather than the toe setting. Adjusting the steering rack position is generally used for centering the steering wheel rather than for toe adjustments. Lastly, changing tire pressure does not influence the toe angle; it may affect ride characteristics but doesn't adjust the wheel alignment itself.

2. What is the typical appearance of tire tread when the toe setting is too high?

- A. Even wear across the tread
- B. Cupping on the edges
- C. Feathered edges**
- D. Center wear only

When the toe setting is too high, the tread wear typically exhibits feathered edges. This occurs because when the wheels are misaligned, they may point inward or outward relative to each other. This misalignment causes the tires to scrub against the road surface at one angle, leading to uneven wear patterns where one edge of the tread wears down, while the opposite edge develops a slightly raised, rough texture. The edges of the tread feel smooth on one side and rough on the other, resembling a feathered appearance. This is a clear indication of toe misalignment, necessitating a proper wheel alignment to ensure even tire wear and optimal handling characteristics. In the context of tire tread wear conditions, other patterns, such as even wear, cupping, or center wear, correspond to different alignment or inflation issues, highlighting why feathered edges specifically indicate excess toe adjustment.

3. What does a bounce test assess in a vehicle's suspension system?

- A. The level of tire pressure**
- B. The responsiveness of the shocks and struts**
- C. The alignment of the wheels**
- D. The amount of tread on the tires**

A bounce test is a practical method used to evaluate the condition and functionality of a vehicle's shocks and struts. When performing a bounce test, a technician applies weight to the rear or front of the vehicle, pushing down hard and then releasing it to see how the vehicle rebounds. If the shocks or struts are functioning properly, the vehicle should bounce once and then settle back to its original position. However, if the shocks or struts are worn or failing, the vehicle may continue to bounce or oscillate after the initial compression, indicating a loss of damping ability. This test effectively reveals how well the suspension system can control the vehicle's movement and absorb road irregularities. By focusing on the responsiveness of the shocks and struts, the bounce test provides valuable insights into the overall suspension health, which is crucial for ride comfort, handling, and safety. Understanding this function helps mechanics diagnose issues that could affect vehicle performance, ensuring that repairs and maintenance can be effectively prioritized.

4. Which of these is NOT part of the normal procedure for replacing a front stabilizer bar?

- A. Disconnect the tie-rod ends**
- B. Remove the bushings**
- C. Inspect the bar for damage**
- D. Install new mounting brackets**

The process of replacing a front stabilizer bar (also known as an anti-roll bar) typically involves several steps that focus on removing and replacing specific components directly associated with the stabilizer bar itself. Disconnecting the tie-rod ends is generally not necessary for stabilizer bar replacement, as tie rods are part of the steering mechanism and are not directly linked to the stabilizer bar. Instead, the tasks usually required include removing the old bushings, inspecting the actual stabilizer bar for any signs of wear or damage, and installing new mounting brackets to secure the new bar in place properly. This separation of tasks highlights the targeted nature of replacing the stabilizer bar, where the focus remains on components that affect its function and connection, rather than unrelated steering components like the tie rods.

5. What are the two main types of suspension systems?

- A. Active and passive suspension systems
- B. Dependent and independent suspension systems**
- C. Hydraulic and mechanical systems
- D. Front and rear suspension systems

The classification of suspension systems into dependent and independent categories is based on how the wheels are connected and how they react to road conditions. In dependent suspension systems, the movement of one wheel can directly affect the movement of another; this means that if one wheel experiences a bump, it can influence the other wheel's position on the same axle. This type is commonly found in solid axle setups, where both wheels share a common beam. On the other hand, independent suspension systems allow each wheel to move independently of the others. This design helps improve ride comfort and handling, as the performance of one wheel does not interfere with the others. Independent systems are prevalent in modern vehicles and are appreciated for their ability to provide better traction and stability, especially in cornering or when negotiating uneven terrain. This classification is not just critical for understanding vehicle dynamics but also informs vehicle design choices based on intended use, performance, and comfort. Other listed options, such as active and passive suspension systems or hydraulic and mechanical systems, describe different characteristics or technologies within the broader category of suspension systems, rather than fundamental types of suspension setups. Similarly, front and rear suspension systems differentiate based on location rather than the underlying suspension technology.

6. What is an indicator of a properly functioning steering system?

- A. Smooth steering response**
- B. Increased noise when turning
- C. Excessive steering play
- D. Fluid leaks from under the vehicle

A properly functioning steering system is indicated by a smooth steering response. This characteristic denotes that all components of the steering system, including the steering gear, linking rods, and power assist mechanisms (if present), are working harmoniously. Smooth operation suggests that there is no friction, wear, or misalignment affecting the steering, allowing for precise handling and control of the vehicle. In contrast, increased noise when turning may signify issues such as worn bearings or damaged components, which can lead to decreased performance and potential safety concerns. Excessive steering play indicates slack in the system, which can cause imprecise steering and erratic vehicle handling. Fluid leaks from under the vehicle often suggest problems with power steering systems, indicating potential seal failures or component issues. Each of these conditions can negatively affect steering performance, making them undesirable indicators of the steering system's health.

7. What type of tire wear is caused by improper camber?

- A. Feathered edges
- B. Cupped wear
- C. Chopped wear
- D. Camber wear**

Improper camber can lead to a specific wear pattern on tires, aptly known as camber wear. This type of wear occurs when the tires are not perpendicular to the ground due to misalignment, causing one side of the tire to make more contact with the road than the other. When the camber angle is incorrect, typically tilted too far inwards or outwards, it results in uneven wear across the tread. In cases of excessive negative camber, for instance, the inner edge of the tire will wear down more rapidly than the outer edge. Conversely, too much positive camber causes the outer edge to wear more quickly. This pattern of wearing is distinctive and can be visibly observed when inspecting the tire, making it easy to identify as an issue directly related to camber alignment. Understanding this wear pattern is crucial for diagnosing alignment problems and ensuring proper vehicle handling and tire longevity.

8. What impact does incorrect toe setting have on a vehicle?

- A. Increased acceleration
- B. Uneven brake wear
- C. Excessive tire wear and steering issues**
- D. Rough engine performance

An incorrect toe setting significantly impacts a vehicle's handling and overall performance, primarily leading to excessive tire wear and steering issues. When the wheels are not aligned correctly in relation to the vehicle's centerline, they can point inwards (toe-in) or outwards (toe-out). This misalignment causes the tires to scrub against the road surface while the vehicle is in motion, resulting in uneven and accelerated tire wear. Moreover, incorrect toe settings can lead to steering complications, such as the vehicle pulling to one side or requiring constant adjustments to maintain a straight path. These issues can compromise driving safety and lead to additional stress on suspension components, making it crucial to maintain proper alignment to ensure optimal vehicle performance. The other choices do not directly relate to the consequences of incorrect toe settings. For example, while uneven brake wear can occur due to other misalignments or brake system issues, it is not a primary result of incorrect toe settings. Therefore, the impact of incorrect toe settings is best encapsulated by the excessive tire wear and steering challenges they create.

9. If a mechanic pushes out and then pulls in on both tires of a jacked-up car and notices too much movement, what does that indicate?

- A. The ball joints are loose**
- B. The tie rod ends are worn**
- C. The wheel bearings are tight**
- D. The strut mounts need replacement**

The observation of too much movement when pushing out and pulling in on both tires of a jacked-up car indicates that the tie rod ends are worn. The tie rod ends are critical components of the steering system, connecting the steering rack to the steering knuckle. When these components are worn or damaged, they lose their ability to hold the tire in the correct position relative to the steering mechanism, resulting in excessive play or movement. Under normal conditions, the tie rod ends should provide a stable connection that prevents any noticeable lateral movement when force is applied to the tires. If the joints are worn, they will not resist movement effectively, which can lead to issues such as poor steering response and uneven tire wear. While other components like ball joints, wheel bearings, and strut mounts also play significant roles in the suspension and steering systems, they each affect vehicle handling differently. The specific action of pushing and pulling the tires primarily tests the tie rod ends for play.

10. When checking curb height on a car with torsion bars, the car should be checked on what type of surface?

- A. A sloped surface**
- B. A gravel surface**
- C. A level surface**
- D. An uneven surface**

To accurately check the curb height on a vehicle equipped with torsion bars, it is essential to perform the measurement on a level surface. A level surface ensures that the car is in a neutral position, without any inclines or declines that could affect the suspension components. This way, the measurement reflects the vehicle's actual ride height as it would sit when parked normally. Using a level surface allows for precise determination of the vehicle's stance, which is critical for adjustments in the suspension system. If the check were conducted on a sloped or uneven surface, the weight distribution and suspension geometry would be altered, leading to misleading measurements of curb height. Thus, a level surface is the optimal choice for achieving an accurate reading.

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://sosmechsuspensionsteering.examzify.com>

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