

# South Dakota Cosmetology Practice Exam (Sample)

## Study Guide



**Everything you need from our exam experts!**

**Copyright © 2025 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 from reliable sources accurate, complete, and timely information about this product.**

**SAMPLE**

## **Questions**

- 1. What are the two main categories of hair types recognized in cosmetology?**
  - A. Coarse and fine**
  - B. Straight and curly**
  - C. Short and long**
  - D. Thick and thin**
- 2. Which tool is commonly used to create curls in the hair?**
  - A. Flat iron**
  - B. Blow dryer**
  - C. Curling iron**
  - D. Round brush**
- 3. What should a cosmetologist do if they have a cut on their hand while working?**
  - A. Ignore it and continue working**
  - B. Cover the cut with a waterproof bandage and avoid contact with clients**
  - C. Clean it with alcohol and proceed**
  - D. Let someone else handle the client**
- 4. Which of the following is essential for a successful hair color application?**
  - A. Proper lighting**
  - B. Test strands**
  - C. Use of a comb**
  - D. Washing hair immediately after**
- 5. What is the main purpose of using a shampoo and conditioner system?**
  - A. To add color to the hair**
  - B. To cleanse hair and provide moisture and nourishment**
  - C. To create volume and style**
  - D. To prepare for chemical treatments**

- 6. When performing a manicure, what is the first step?**
- A. Apply cuticle oil**
  - B. Remove old polish**
  - C. File the nails**
  - D. Wash hands**
- 7. What is the main purpose of using a cap during hair highlighting?**
- A. To lessen the amount of bleach used**
  - B. To control where the highlights are placed**
  - C. To protect the scalp from burns**
  - D. To minimize hair damage**
- 8. What type of haircut is characterized by layers of varying lengths?**
- A. Blunt cut**
  - B. Shag cut**
  - C. Bob cut**
  - D. Uneven cut**
- 9. Which ingredient is often added to hair products to combat frizz?**
- A. Silicone**
  - B. Vinegar**
  - C. Sugar**
  - D. Salt**
- 10. Which mineral is important for hair growth?**
- A. Zinc**
  - B. Iron**
  - C. Calcium**
  - D. Magnesium**

## **Answers**

SAMPLE

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

**SAMPLE**

## **Explanations**

SAMPLE



**1. What are the two main categories of hair types recognized in cosmetology?**

- A. Coarse and fine**
- B. Straight and curly**
- C. Short and long**
- D. Thick and thin**

The two main categories of hair types recognized in cosmetology focus primarily on the texture and shape of the hair strand, which is why straight and curly is the correct classification. Understanding the fundamental characteristics of hair texture is essential for cosmetologists because it impacts how hair behaves, the techniques used for styling, and the types of products that are most effective. Straight hair typically lies flat and can be easier to style with certain techniques and products, while curly hair tends to have more volume and requires different methods for maintenance and styling to enhance or manage the natural curl pattern. Recognizing these two main categories allows cosmetologists to provide tailored advice and services to clients based on their unique hair characteristics. The other classifications revolve around different aspects of hair but don't capture the fundamental textural differences — thickness and fineness pertain to the diameter of the hair strand rather than its overall categorization, while short and long refer more to length than to texture itself.

**2. Which tool is commonly used to create curls in the hair?**

- A. Flat iron**
- B. Blow dryer**
- C. Curling iron**
- D. Round brush**

The tool commonly used to create curls in the hair is the curling iron. This device typically features a heated barrel that allows you to wrap sections of hair around it, which in turn creates defined curls or waves. Curling irons come in various sizes, so they can produce different types of curls, from tight ringlets to loose beachy waves, depending on the diameter of the barrel and the technique used. Flat irons are primarily designed for straightening hair; while they can be used to create curls with a specific technique, they are not specialized for that purpose. A blow dryer is mainly used for drying hair, and while it can also assist in styling, it does not inherently create curls without the use of additional tools like a diffuser or specific styling brushes. A round brush is typically employed during blow drying to add volume and shape to hair but isn't a tool designed to create curls directly. Therefore, the curling iron stands out as the most effective and specialized tool for creating curls.

**3. What should a cosmetologist do if they have a cut on their hand while working?**

**A. Ignore it and continue working**

**B. Cover the cut with a waterproof bandage and avoid contact with clients**

**C. Clean it with alcohol and proceed**

**D. Let someone else handle the client**

When a cosmetologist has a cut on their hand while working, the most appropriate action is to cover the cut with a waterproof bandage and avoid contact with clients. This approach emphasizes the importance of hygiene and safety in a cosmetology setting. A waterproof bandage not only protects the cut from further injury and contamination but also prevents potential infection and cross-contamination to clients. Maintaining a clean environment is essential in beauty services, and even minor injuries can pose health risks if proper precautions are not taken. Additionally, avoiding direct contact with clients while having an open wound aligns with best practices in health and safety standards within the cosmetology industry. This ensures that clients are not exposed to any potential infections and that the cosmetologist can provide services safely and effectively without risking their health or that of their clients.

**4. Which of the following is essential for a successful hair color application?**

**A. Proper lighting**

**B. Test strands**

**C. Use of a comb**

**D. Washing hair immediately after**

A test strand is essential for a successful hair color application because it allows the stylist to determine how the hair will react to the color product being used. This involves taking a small section of hair, applying the color, and observing both the color result and the hair's condition after application. Conducting a test strand helps in assessing factors such as the appropriate processing time, the final shade, and the potential for adverse reactions. This preliminary step is vital to ensure that the final application meets the client's expectations and maintains the health of the hair. Proper lighting, while helpful for visibility, does not directly affect the chemical process of hair coloring. The use of a comb is a useful tool for application but is not as critical as the test strand for predicting outcomes. Washing hair immediately after color application is typically counterproductive, as the color needs time to develop. Therefore, the test strand stands out as the most crucial step in ensuring a successful hair color application.

**5. What is the main purpose of using a shampoo and conditioner system?**

**A. To add color to the hair**

**B. To cleanse hair and provide moisture and nourishment**

**C. To create volume and style**

**D. To prepare for chemical treatments**

The main purpose of using a shampoo and conditioner system is to cleanse the hair and provide moisture and nourishment. Shampoo is formulated to remove dirt, oil, and product buildup from the hair and scalp, promoting cleanliness and a healthy scalp environment. Conditioners, on the other hand, are designed to replenish moisture, improve texture, and add nourishment to the hair. Using both products together enhances the overall health of the hair by ensuring it is both clean and well-moisturized, which is essential for preventing damage and promoting manageability. While adding color to the hair, creating volume and style, and preparing for chemical treatments are important aspects of hair care and styling, they do not encapsulate the foundational purpose of shampoo and conditioner systems. Shampoo and conditioners primarily focus on cleansing and conditioning, which are critical steps in maintaining hair health before proceeding to styling or chemical processes.

**6. When performing a manicure, what is the first step?**

**A. Apply cuticle oil**

**B. Remove old polish**

**C. File the nails**

**D. Wash hands**

The first step when performing a manicure is to remove old polish. This is crucial because it prepares the nail surface for any further treatment. By starting with clean nails, you create a fresh canvas that allows for better application of nail enhancements, such as polish or gel. Washing hands typically follows after removing old polish to ensure hygiene, but it is not the initial step in the manicure process. Applying cuticle oil and filing the nails come later, as they're part of the shaping and conditioning of the nails after they've been cleared of previous polish. Thus, removing old polish restores the nail to a primed condition essential for a professional-looking finished result.

**7. What is the main purpose of using a cap during hair highlighting?**

- A. To lessen the amount of bleach used**
- B. To control where the highlights are placed**
- C. To protect the scalp from burns**
- D. To minimize hair damage**

Using a cap during hair highlighting primarily serves the purpose of controlling where the highlights are placed. The cap has small holes that allow the stylist to selectively pull strands of hair through, which ensures that the highlights are applied precisely where desired. This technique enables a more uniform application, helping to create a polished look. While the other options present potential benefits, they do not capture the main function of the cap. For instance, the cap can indirectly minimize the amount of bleach used by allowing targeted highlight application, but that is not its primary intent. Protecting the scalp from burns may be a benefit when using certain highlighting methods, but the cap itself is not designed specifically for scalp protection. Lastly, minimizing hair damage can be a result of careful application, but again, the cap's main role is focused on placement control rather than damage limitation.

**8. What type of haircut is characterized by layers of varying lengths?**

- A. Blunt cut**
- B. Shag cut**
- C. Bob cut**
- D. Uneven cut**

The shag cut is characterized by layers of varying lengths, which is a defining feature of this hairstyle. The shag is designed to create texture and volume, often with shorter layers on top and progressively longer layers below. This layering technique helps add movement and shape to the hair, giving it a more relaxed and slightly tousled appearance. It is particularly effective for enhancing natural waves and curls, making it a popular choice for those with textured hair. In contrast, a blunt cut involves cutting the hair straight across without any layering, resulting in an even, uniform length. A bob cut typically features a specific length that is uniform throughout the hair, often falling at the chin or shoulders, without the varied lengths associated with a shag. An uneven cut can refer to a style that intentionally has mismatched lengths, but it does not necessarily follow the layered approach that defines a shag cut.

**9. Which ingredient is often added to hair products to combat frizz?**

**A. Silicone**

**B. Vinegar**

**C. Sugar**

**D. Salt**

Silicone is often added to hair products to combat frizz because of its smoothening properties. It creates a protective barrier around the hair strands, which helps to lock in moisture and prevent humidity from causing hair to swell and frizz. Silicones can provide a silky texture and shine, making the hair appear more manageable and polished. They work by coating the hair shaft, reducing static, and smoothing down the cuticle layer of the hair, which is essential for maintaining a sleek look. Vinegar, while sometimes used as a natural hair rinse, does not have the same smoothing and frizz-fighting qualities as silicones. Sugar and salt are primarily used for different functions, such as providing exfoliation or enhancing texture, but do not effectively reduce frizz in the same way silicones do. Hence, silicone emerges as the most effective ingredient specifically targeted for frizz control in hair products.

**10. Which mineral is important for hair growth?**

**A. Zinc**

**B. Iron**

**C. Calcium**

**D. Magnesium**

Zinc plays a crucial role in hair growth and maintenance. This mineral is involved in several biological processes that are essential for healthy hair follicles. It supports the production of proteins and nucleic acids, which are necessary for hair structure and growth. Zinc also contributes to the proper functioning of hormones that regulate hair growth cycles. Deficiencies in zinc can lead to hair loss or stunted hair growth, highlighting its importance in maintaining healthy hair. Iron, calcium, and magnesium are also important for overall health, but they do not have the same direct impact on hair growth as zinc does. Iron deficiency, for instance, can lead to hair loss due to its role in oxygen transport to hair follicles, yet zinc is more directly tied to enhancing hair condition and stimulating growth at the follicular level.