

U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS) Civics 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. In what year was the Constitution written?**
 - A. 1785**
 - B. 1786**
 - C. 1787**
 - D. 1788**

- 2. What does freedom of religion mean?**
 - A. You must practice a religion**
 - B. You cannot practice any religion**
 - C. You can practice any religion, or not practice a religion**
 - D. You can only practice recognized religions**

- 3. Which holiday is observed on the fourth Thursday in November?**
 - A. Christmas**
 - B. Labor Day**
 - C. Thanksgiving**
 - D. Memorial Day**

- 4. What was one result of the civil rights movement in the United States?**
 - A. End of education**
 - B. Increased racial discrimination**
 - C. Voting rights for all citizens**
 - D. Less awareness of social issues**

- 5. What are the two major political parties in the United States?**
 - A. Democratic and Independent**
 - B. Republican and Green**
 - C. Democratic and Republican**
 - D. Libertarian and Democratic**

- 6. What did the Emancipation Proclamation do?**
- A. Established national parks**
 - B. Freed the slaves in the Confederate states**
 - C. Granted women the right to vote**
 - D. Created Social Security**
- 7. What is the name of the Speaker of the House of Representatives now?**
- A. Paul Ryan**
 - B. John Boehner**
 - C. Answers will vary**
 - D. Nancy Pelosi**
- 8. How many U.S. Senators are there?**
- A. Fifty**
 - B. One hundred**
 - C. Seventy-five**
 - D. One hundred and fifty**
- 9. What is the economic system in the United States?**
- A. Capitalist economy**
 - B. Socialist economy**
 - C. Mixed economy**
 - D. Planned economy**
- 10. What is the capital of the United States?**
- A. New York City**
 - B. Los Angeles**
 - C. Washington, D.C.**
 - D. Philadelphia**

Answers

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

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Explanations

1. In what year was the Constitution written?

- A. 1785
- B. 1786
- C. 1787**
- D. 1788

The Constitution was written in 1787 during the Constitutional Convention held in Philadelphia. This gathering was attended by delegates from the states who aimed to address the inadequacies of the Articles of Confederation. The result of their deliberations was a new framework for government that established a stronger federal authority while still ensuring the protection of individual liberties. The year 1787 is significant not only because it marks the drafting of the Constitution but also sets the stage for the subsequent ratification process, which began in 1788. Choices such as 1785 and 1786 denote years before the Constitution was actually created, and 1788 refers to the year after the Constitution was written, which would misrepresent the timeline of its drafting.

2. What does freedom of religion mean?

- A. You must practice a religion
- B. You cannot practice any religion
- C. You can practice any religion, or not practice a religion**
- D. You can only practice recognized religions

Freedom of religion means that individuals have the right to choose their beliefs and practices concerning religion without interference from the government. This encompasses both the freedom to practice any religion of one's choosing and the freedom to refrain from practicing any religion at all. The principle of freedom of religion is rooted in the First Amendment of the United States Constitution, which states that Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion, or prohibiting the free exercise thereof. This ensures that people can live according to their own beliefs, whether that means following a particular faith, adhering to a different belief system, or choosing to be agnostic or atheist. This understanding of freedom of religion is crucial in promoting a pluralistic society where diverse beliefs coexist, and it protects the rights of individuals from government coercion in matters of faith. Options suggesting compulsory practice of a religion or mandating non-practice do not align with the tenets of freedom of religion, nor do they uphold the principles set by the Constitution. Additionally, the idea that only recognized religions can be practiced undermines the very essence of individual freedom in choosing personal beliefs.

3. Which holiday is observed on the fourth Thursday in November?

- A. Christmas**
- B. Labor Day**
- C. Thanksgiving**
- D. Memorial Day**

Thanksgiving is celebrated on the fourth Thursday in November each year. This holiday is a time for people to come together with family and friends to reflect on what they are thankful for, often sharing a festive meal that traditionally includes turkey. This timing was established in 1941 when the U.S. Congress passed a law formalizing the holiday to be observed on this specific Thursday. Thanksgiving has deep roots in American history, dating back to early colonial times, and it emphasizes themes of gratitude and community. The other holidays listed do not fall in November, and their observances are set on different dates throughout the year. For example, Christmas occurs on December 25, Labor Day is celebrated on the first Monday in September, and Memorial Day is observed on the last Monday in May. Therefore, the correct association of Thanksgiving with the fourth Thursday in November highlights its significance in the American cultural tradition.

4. What was one result of the civil rights movement in the United States?

- A. End of education**
- B. Increased racial discrimination**
- C. Voting rights for all citizens**
- D. Less awareness of social issues**

One significant result of the civil rights movement in the United States was the achievement of voting rights for all citizens, particularly for African Americans. This was a pivotal aspect of the movement, which aimed to dismantle systemic racism and ensure equality for marginalized groups. The passage of the Voting Rights Act of 1965 was a landmark moment that prohibited racial discrimination in voting. This legislation made it illegal to deny any U.S. citizen the right to vote based on their race, therefore empowering millions and aiding in the pursuit of equality and representation in the political process. This transformation in voting rights exemplified the broader goals of the civil rights movement, which sought to rectify historical injustices and secure fundamental civil liberties for all individuals in the country. The movement not only highlighted the injustices faced by African Americans but also worked to reform laws and policies to promote fairness and inclusivity in the electoral system.

5. What are the two major political parties in the United States?

- A. Democratic and Independent**
- B. Republican and Green**
- C. Democratic and Republican**
- D. Libertarian and Democratic**

The two major political parties in the United States are the Democratic Party and the Republican Party. This distinction is important in the context of U.S. politics because these parties dominate the electoral landscape, influencing policy-making and governance at both federal and state levels. The Democratic Party is generally associated with more liberal policies, advocating for social equality and government intervention in the economy. In contrast, the Republican Party leans toward conservative values, emphasizing limited government, individual liberties, and free-market principles. While there are other political parties, like the Independent, Green, and Libertarian parties, they do not hold the same level of influence in elections or governance as the Democratic and Republican parties. The independents might represent a more moderate or third-party perspective, whereas the Green and Libertarian parties focus on specific issues like environmental concerns and personal freedoms, respectively. Thus, the prominence and historical significance of the Democratic and Republican parties position them as the major political players in the U.S. political system.

6. What did the Emancipation Proclamation do?

- A. Established national parks**
- B. Freed the slaves in the Confederate states**
- C. Granted women the right to vote**
- D. Created Social Security**

The Emancipation Proclamation is a pivotal document in U.S. history, issued by President Abraham Lincoln on January 1, 1863. Its primary purpose was to declare that all enslaved people in the Confederate states were to be set free. This action was a strategic move during the Civil War, as it aimed to weaken the Confederacy's economy and undermine their war effort by liberating the enslaved population, who were vital to the Southern labor force. The Proclamation specifically targeted areas in rebellion against the Union, leaving slavery untouched in border states loyal to the Union, which illustrates its tactical nature. This decision marked a significant shift in the focus of the war, as it not only aimed to preserve the union but also promoted the idea of freedom for all enslaved individuals. The Emancipation Proclamation paved the way for the eventual abolition of slavery nationwide, culminating in the ratification of the 13th Amendment in 1865. In contrast, the other choices are unrelated to the Emancipation Proclamation. The establishment of national parks pertains to conservation efforts and the natural environment, the granting of women's voting rights was realized through the 19th Amendment in 1920, and Social Security, a critical program for retirement and

7. What is the name of the Speaker of the House of Representatives now?

- A. Paul Ryan**
- B. John Boehner**
- C. Answers will vary**
- D. Nancy Pelosi**

The correct answer acknowledges that the name of the Speaker of the House of Representatives can change due to elections, resignations, or other political events. Therefore, responses may vary depending on the current political context. In this case, while Nancy Pelosi has been a notable Speaker in recent history, others like Paul Ryan and John Boehner have held the position in the past but are no longer serving. This acknowledgment of changing leadership is important within the understanding of U.S. governance and the role of the Speaker, who is the third in line for presidential succession and plays a crucial role in legislative processes. Staying aware of current political figures is essential for citizenship applicants as it reflects the dynamic nature of the U.S. political system.

8. How many U.S. Senators are there?

- A. Fifty**
- B. One hundred**
- C. Seventy-five**
- D. One hundred and fifty**

The correct answer is one hundred because the United States Senate is composed of two senators from each of the fifty states, resulting in a total of one hundred senators. This structure is established by the U.S. Constitution, specifically in Article I, Section 3. Each senator serves a six-year term, and they represent the interests of their states at the federal level. This equal representation helps to balance the power between larger and smaller states in the legislative process. The other numbers do not reflect the actual composition of the Senate, as there are not fifty, seventy-five, or one hundred and fifty senators.

9. What is the economic system in the United States?

A. Capitalist economy

B. Socialist economy

C. Mixed economy

D. Planned economy

The economic system in the United States is best described as a capitalist economy. In a capitalist economy, the means of production and distribution are primarily owned and operated by private individuals and businesses, rather than the government. This system allows for the creation of goods and services based on supply and demand dynamics within a market. The emphasis in a capitalist economy is on individual entrepreneurship, competition, and the potential for profit. These characteristics foster innovation and efficiency, driving economic growth. While the government does regulate certain aspects of the economy and provides some public services, the foundational elements of the U.S. economic system are rooted in capitalism. Although "mixed economy" might seem relevant, as it indicates a combination of private and public control, the predominant influence in the U.S. is that of the capitalist framework, where free market principles largely dominate. The other economic systems listed—socialist and planned economies—are characterized by greater government control over production and allocation of resources, differing significantly from the essence of American capitalism.

10. What is the capital of the United States?

A. New York City

B. Los Angeles

C. Washington, D.C.

D. Philadelphia

The capital of the United States is Washington, D.C. This city was chosen specifically to serve as the nation's capital due to its strategic location along the Potomac River, offering access to the Chesapeake Bay and the Atlantic Ocean. Unlike other major cities that have historically held prominence, such as New York City or Philadelphia, Washington, D.C. was established after the American Revolution intentionally as a federal district that would not belong to any state, thus housing the federal government and symbolizing unity among the states. Additionally, Washington, D.C. is home to many significant national monuments, government buildings, and the headquarters of the three branches of government, reinforcing its role as the seat of American democracy. The other cities mentioned, while significant in various historical and cultural contexts, do not serve this unique role in the governance of the United States.

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://uscis-civics.examzify.com>

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