

USCG MARINE SCIENCE TECHNICIAN (MST) SERVICE WIDE EXAM (SWE) PRACTICE (SAMPLE) STUDY GUIDE



SAMPLE STUDY GUIDE WITH LIMITED QUESTIONS

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THE FULL VERSION STUDY GUIDE

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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

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- 1. What examination scope do passenger vessels fall under in the Qualship 21 Program?**
 - A. Limited scope of exam
 - B. Regular scope of exam
 - C. Increased scope of exam
 - D. No exam required
- 2. What should sheen samples be sent to the MSL for?**
 - A. Analysis
 - B. Storage
 - C. Prep
 - D. Testing
- 3. An IOPP is required on non-tank vessels of what size?**
 - A. 150 GT and up
 - B. 300 GT and up
 - C. 400 GT and up
 - D. 500 GT and up
- 4. What are two features that lockable oil sample reefers should have?**
 - A. Insulated Walls and Cold Resistance
 - B. Explosion Proof and Flammable
 - C. Impact Resistance and UV Protection
 - D. Waterproof and Dustproof
- 5. Garbage placards are required on vessels of what size and up?**
 - A. 20 ft. and up
 - B. 26 ft. and up
 - C. 30 ft. and up
 - D. 40 ft. and up
- 6. How long does an oil sample analysis typically take?**
 - A. 30 minutes
 - B. 45 minutes
 - C. 65 minutes
 - D. 90 minutes

7. For containment diameters of 12 inches or larger, how many barrels of small discharge containment are required?
- A. 2 barrels
 - B. 3 barrels
 - C. 4 barrels
 - D. 5 barrels
8. What is the passenger vessel capacity for radiophones in all lifeboats when the capacity exceeds 1,500?
- A. Over 2,000
 - B. More than 1,500
 - C. Less than 1,500
 - D. Exactly 1,500
9. What is the term for washing out, moving to containment, or driving oil away?
- A. Physical herding
 - B. Oil dispersal
 - C. Skimming
 - D. Containment
10. Where can you obtain your SWE PDE?
- A. Personnel Administration Office
 - B. Direct Access - View tab
 - C. Human Resources Portal
 - D. Training Management System

Answers

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

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Explanations

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1. What examination scope do passenger vessels fall under in the Qualship 21 Program?

- A. Limited scope of exam
- B. Regular scope of exam**
- C. Increased scope of exam
- D. No exam required

Passenger vessels fall under the regular scope of examination in the Qualship 21 Program because these vessels are subject to comprehensive safety and environmental regulations due to their responsibilities in transporting passengers. The Qualship 21 Program, which aims to promote quality shipping and enhance safety and environmental protection, requires a thorough assessment of various operational and safety standards for passenger vessels. This regular scope of exam ensures that all relevant safety protocols, crew training, and onboard procedures meet the stringent standards necessary for protecting both passengers and the marine environment. By conducting regular examinations, the program can effectively monitor and improve the quality of vessel operations over time, fostering a culture of safety and compliance within the maritime industry.

2. What should sheen samples be sent to the MSL for?

- A. Analysis
- B. Storage
- C. Prep**
- D. Testing

Sheen samples should be sent to the Marine Safety Lab (MSL) primarily for analysis, which involves determining the chemical composition and potential environmental impacts of the petroleum or other materials present in the sheen. It is essential to analyze these samples to guide the appropriate response actions and to understand their potential effects on marine environments. The purpose of sending the samples to the MSL aligns with the need for thorough evaluation to inform decision-making in maritime operations. While the process may involve elements of storage or preparation prior to analysis, the primary action involves direct testing or analysis to gain insights from the samples. Ultimately, that understanding is critical for ensuring safety and compliance with environmental regulations.

3. An IOPP is required on non-tank vessels of what size?

- A. 150 GT and up
- B. 300 GT and up
- C. 400 GT and up**
- D. 500 GT and up

The International Oil Pollution Prevention (IOPP) Certificate is an essential document that helps in regulating discharges into the marine environment from non-tank vessels. For non-tank vessels, the requirement for an IOPP Certificate applies specifically to those that are 400 gross tonnage (GT) and above. This requirement stems from international conventions aimed at preventing oil pollution from ships, and it establishes not just a regulatory framework, but also promotes best practices in managing oil residues and discharges. The stipulation of 400 GT ensures that larger vessels, which have a higher capacity for carrying fuel and oil, are subject to stringent environmental regulations, ultimately aimed at minimizing the risk of oil spills and protecting marine ecosystems. It's important for marine science technicians to understand this threshold, as it affects compliance inspections and the implementation of operational practices on board these vessels. Smaller vessels, under 400 GT, are not subject to the same IOPP Certificate requirements, reflecting a tiered approach to regulatory oversight based on vessel size and potential environmental impact.

4. What are two features that lockable oil sample reefers should have?

- A. Insulated Walls and Cold Resistance
- B. Explosion Proof and Flammable
- C. Impact Resistance and UV Protection
- D. Waterproof and Dustproof

Lockable oil sample reefers are specialized containers designed to store oil samples, and their construction must include specific features to ensure the integrity and safety of the samples. Insulated walls are crucial as they help maintain a consistent temperature, preventing the degradation or alteration of the samples due to thermal fluctuations. Cold resistance is also essential because it ensures that the reefer can withstand low temperatures without compromising the quality of the oil samples inside. This helps in preserving the chemical properties of the oil, making it suitable for future analysis. The focus of these features on temperature management is key in environments where oil samples need to remain stable and uncontaminated before testing. Proper insulation and the capacity to resist extreme temperatures are fundamental to the functionality of the oil sample reefers, making them effective for their intended purpose. Other options provided may include useful features, but they do not relate directly to the primary needs of maintaining the samples' integrity.

5. Garbage placards are required on vessels of what size and up?

- A. 20 ft. and up
- B. 26 ft. and up
- C. 30 ft. and up
- D. 40 ft. and up

Garbage placards are mandated for vessels that are 26 feet and longer. This requirement is rooted in the regulatory framework established to prevent marine pollution and ensure that all vessels of a certain size are equipped with necessary information about waste management practices. By having a garbage placard, crews are reminded of their obligations under MARPOL (International Convention for the Prevention of Pollution from Ships) regulations and are informed about the proper disposal of garbage at sea, contributing to the protection of marine environments. The threshold of 26 feet is significant as it distinguishes between smaller recreational vessels, which typically have less complex waste management needs, and larger vessels that often engage in more extensive operations where proper waste disposal becomes critical. Ensuring compliance with these regulations is a vital part of managing environmental impact in maritime activities.

6. How long does an oil sample analysis typically take?

- A. 30 minutes
- B. 45 minutes
- C. 65 minutes
- D. 90 minutes

The time it typically takes for an oil sample analysis to be completed is around 65 minutes. This duration allows laboratories to perform various essential tests on the oil sample, including chemical composition analysis, detection of contaminants, and assessment of physical properties. Such detailed evaluations require a systematic approach to ensure accurate results and the effective identification of potential issues regarding oil quality and safety. This timeframe is significant because it balances thoroughness with efficiency, enabling rapid decision-making in situations where the integrity of oil is critical, such as in marine operations or environmental assessments. The specific processes involved can vary slightly based on laboratory protocols, but the average analysis duration hovers around this mark, reflecting industry standards.

7. For containment diameters of 12 inches or larger, how many barrels of small discharge containment are required?

- A. 2 barrels
- B. 3 barrels
- C. 4 barrels**
- D. 5 barrels

When dealing with containment requirements for small discharges, the standard dictates that for containment diameters of 12 inches or larger, a specified number of barrels must be used to ensure adequate containment capacity. The correct answer is based on regulatory guidelines, specifically those that ensure that for larger leak sizes, sufficient containment is in place to manage spills effectively. In this case, it is stipulated that four barrels of small discharge containment are necessary. The rationale behind having four barrels is to provide an ample buffer for spills, recognizing that larger diameters may result in more significant volumes of potential discharge that need to be contained. This requirement is rooted in risk management strategies aimed at protecting the environment, especially in marine contexts, where spills can have severe ecological impacts. The four-barrel requirement allows for effective management of potential risks associated with larger diameters while also ensuring compliance with federal guidelines set forth by the Coast Guard and environmental protection entities.

8. What is the passenger vessel capacity for radiophones in all lifeboats when the capacity exceeds 1,500?

- A. Over 2,000
- B. More than 1,500**
- C. Less than 1,500
- D. Exactly 1,500

The requirement for passenger vessel capacity for radiophones in all lifeboats is determined by regulatory standards aimed at ensuring safety during emergencies. When a vessel has a capacity that exceeds 1,500 passengers, it is mandated to have sufficient communication equipment to support potential evacuation scenarios. For vessels carrying more than 1,500 passengers, specifying that the capacity must exceed this number acknowledges the need for adequate communication resources based on the actual number of people onboard. This ensures that, in case of an emergency, every lifeboat is equipped appropriately to maintain communication with rescue operations and among the lifeboats themselves. By requiring the provision of radiophones in lifeboats for any capacity exceeding 1,500, the standards take into account the importance of having reliable communication channels for effective coordination and rescue efforts. This approach enhances overall safety for a larger number of passengers, recognizing the complexities that arise as passenger capacity increases.

9. What is the term for washing out, moving to containment, or driving oil away?

- A. Physical herding**
- B. Oil dispersal
- C. Skimming
- D. Containment

The correct term for washing out, moving to containment, or driving oil away is known as physical herding. This technique involves the application of physical methods to manipulate oil spills, guiding the floating oil towards designated areas where it can be collected and managed more effectively. The term reflects how operators can use various mechanisms, such as barriers or booms, to herd or concentrate oil within a controlled area, facilitating easier recovery and minimizing the environmental impact. This is especially critical in marine environments where rapid response actions are essential to mitigate the spread of pollution. Other methods like oil dispersal and skimming also play roles in oil spill response but do not specifically refer to the act of physically guiding the oil as described in the question. Oil dispersal involves breaking up the oil into smaller droplets that can be degraded by natural processes, while skimming refers to the collection of oil using specialized equipment once it has been contained. Containment, on the other hand, typically refers to enclosing or surrounding the oil spill to prevent its spread rather than actively moving it to containment areas. Each of these methods plays a part in oil spill response, but the focus on movement and manipulation of oil directly characterizes physical herding.

10. Where can you obtain your SWE PDE?

- A. Personnel Administration Office
- B. Direct Access - View tab**
- C. Human Resources Portal
- D. Training Management System

The correct answer is obtaining your SWE PDE through Direct Access - View tab. Direct Access is the Coast Guard's official personnel management system, which provides members with access to a range of personal information, including performance evaluations, training records, and the Service Wide Exam (SWE) Process Documentation Entry (PDE). By navigating to the View tab within Direct Access, service members can easily find the documentation they need concerning their participation in the SWE. The other options, while they may provide various personnel services, do not specifically offer a direct means to access the PDE for the SWE. The Personnel Administration Office and Human Resources Portal typically handle broader administrative functions rather than specific exam-related processes. The Training Management System focuses on training management but does not consolidate personal exam documentation like the PDE housed within Direct Access. Thus, the Direct Access View tab is the most appropriate and direct source for obtaining the SWE PDE.

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://uscgmstswe.examzify.com>

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

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