

VIRGINIA CONTRACTORS LICENSE PRACTICE TEST (SAMPLE)

STUDY GUIDE



SAMPLE STUDY GUIDE WITH LIMITED 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. 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 is typically included in a standard mortar mix?**
 - A. Gravel
 - B. Hydrated lime
 - C. Heavy metal
 - D. Cement only
- 2. In how many hours must a fatality be reported to OSHA?**
 - A. Within 12 hours
 - B. Within 24 hours
 - C. Within 8 hours
 - D. Within 48 hours
- 3. What is the minimum width of footings used for a one-story structure built on clay sand soil?**
 - A. 8 inches
 - B. 10 inches
 - C. 12 inches
 - D. 14 inches
- 4. What is the maximum allowable slope in type C soil?**
 - A. 1:1
 - B. 1 1/2:1
 - C. 2:1
 - D. 3:1
- 5. What type of drawing would show the front, back, right, and left side of a structure?**
 - A. Site Plan
 - B. Blueprint
 - C. Elevation
 - D. Section

- 6. What is the minimum space required between a handrail and an adjacent wall?**
- A. 1 inch
 - B. 1 1/2 inches
 - C. 2 inches
 - D. 2 1/2 inches
- 7. Which of the following is added to concrete in hot weather to make it set up slower?**
- A. Accelerator
 - B. Retardant
 - C. Water
 - D. Filler
- 8. What type of equipment is recommended to excavate a basement?**
- A. Hand shovel
 - B. Power shovel
 - C. Excavation truck
 - D. Backhoe loader
- 9. Which type of drawing provides the most detailed information about penetrations through walls?**
- A. Blueprints
 - B. General drawings
 - C. Detailed drawings
 - D. Elevation drawings
- 10. What is the term used for the basic starting point of a building?**
- A. Foundation
 - B. Benchmark
 - C. Footing
 - D. Grid

Answers

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

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Explanations

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1. What is typically included in a standard mortar mix?

- A. Gravel
- B. Hydrated lime**
- C. Heavy metal
- D. Cement only

A standard mortar mix is typically composed of cement, sand, and hydrated lime. Hydrated lime is included in the mix to improve the workability and durability of the mortar. It helps to enhance the bonding properties and flexibility of the mortar, making it easier to work with and more resistant to cracking over time. Gravel, while used in concrete mixes, is not a standard component of mortar because mortar requires a finer mix, primarily to bond masonry units. Heavy metal would be inappropriate and unsafe for such applications, as it does not serve any beneficial purpose in the mortar's composition. Cement alone would not achieve the desired performance characteristics that hydrated lime provides, resulting in a weaker and less durable mortar. Therefore, hydrated lime is essential for the structural integrity and functionality of a standard mortar mix.

2. In how many hours must a fatality be reported to OSHA?

- A. Within 12 hours
- B. Within 24 hours
- C. Within 8 hours**
- D. Within 48 hours

The requirement to report a workplace fatality to OSHA (Occupational Safety and Health Administration) is established to ensure a prompt investigation and response to prevent future incidents. When a fatality occurs, it must be reported within 8 hours. This urgent timeframe is essential for ensuring that OSHA can assess the situation accurately and deploy necessary resources to investigate the fatality effectively. The swift reporting allows OSHA to gather evidence while it is still fresh and to assess workplace conditions that could pose ongoing dangers. This timeframe contributes to workplace safety by emphasizing the importance of reporting incidents quickly.

3. What is the minimum width of footings used for a one-story structure built on clay sand soil?

- A. 8 inches
- B. 10 inches
- C. 12 inches**
- D. 14 inches

The minimum width of footings for a one-story structure built on clay sand soil is 12 inches. This specification is based on structural engineering principles which account for the load-bearing capability of different soil types, as well as the safety and stability of the building. Clay sand soil can have varying bearing capacities, and wider footings help distribute the load more evenly across the soil. A footing that is 12 inches wide is generally sufficient for providing adequate support to a one-story structure while minimizing settlement and structural failure due to soil movement or changes in moisture content. In addition, building codes typically set minimum standards to ensure safety and performance, which also influence the dimensions of footings in different soil conditions. Therefore, a footing width of 12 inches is considered a prudent dimension that appropriately supports one-story structures under typical loading scenarios.

4. What is the maximum allowable slope in type C soil?

- A. 1:1
- B. 1 1/2:1**
- C. 2:1
- D. 3:1

The maximum allowable slope in type C soil is 1 1/2:1, which indicates that, for every 1.5 units of horizontal distance, there can be a 1 unit vertical drop. This particular slope ratio is considered appropriate for type C soils under normal conditions as it takes into account the characteristics of such soils, which are typically loose, moist, and very low in cohesion. These properties can make them less stable than soils with higher cohesion levels, thus a more conservative slope is necessary to ensure safety and prevent excavation collapse. In practical applications, adhering to this slope ratio helps in maintaining the integrity of excavations and ensuring worker safety. Type C soils require a gentler slope compared to soils with higher stability, which is reflected in the recommended slope ratios for various soil types.

5. What type of drawing would show the front, back, right, and left side of a structure?

- A. Site Plan
- B. Blueprint
- C. Elevation**
- D. Section

The correct answer is elevation, as elevation drawings provide detailed representations of the vertical faces of a structure. They show how the building will appear from different viewpoints, specifically illustrating the front, back, and both sides of the building. Each elevation gives insight into the architectural style, the materials used, and important features such as windows and doors, allowing stakeholders to visualize the structure in a way that is not possible with other types of drawings. In contrast, while a site plan indicates the positioning of a building in relation to other structures and terrain, it does not depict the building's vertical dimensions. Blueprints generally refer to technical drawings that may include various aspects of a project but can be broader and more detailed than just the exterior views. Section drawings offer a cut-through view of the building, showing internal structures and layouts, which means they focus on different aspects than the elevations do. Elevation drawings are therefore crucial for understanding the exterior appearance of a building from multiple sides.

6. What is the minimum space required between a handrail and an adjacent wall?

- A. 1 inch
- B. 1 1/2 inches**
- C. 2 inches
- D. 2 1/2 inches

The minimum space required between a handrail and an adjacent wall is 1 1/2 inches. This measurement is established to ensure a safe and comfortable grip on the handrail while also providing enough clearance for users' hands. Insufficient space may restrict the ability to grasp the rail effectively or could create hazards if someone's hand gets pinched or caught against the wall. The requirement of 1 1/2 inches specifically addresses safety standards, which are crucial in building design to prevent accidents, especially in stairs and ramps where handrails are essential for support. Adhering to this standard is important for compliance with building codes and regulations, ensuring that structures are safe for all users.

7. Which of the following is added to concrete in hot weather to make it set up slower?

- A. Accelerator
- B. Retardant**
- C. Water
- D. Filler

In hot weather conditions, concrete tends to set more quickly due to higher temperatures, which can lead to challenges such as reduced workability and increased risk of cracking. To manage this issue, a retardant is added to the concrete mix. Retardants are chemical admixtures that specifically slow down the setting time of the concrete. This allows for extended workability, enabling contractors to place and finish the concrete more effectively before it hardens. Using a retardant helps to ensure that the concrete maintains its quality and integrity despite the heat, allowing for proper mixing and placement processes. This is essential for achieving the desired strength and durability of the concrete once it has cured. While other options like water or filler might influence the concrete properties, they do not specifically serve the primary function of slowing down the setting process in hot weather as effectively as a retardant does.

8. What type of equipment is recommended to excavate a basement?

- A. Hand shovel
- B. Power shovel**
- C. Excavation truck
- D. Backhoe loader

When it comes to excavating a basement, the use of a power shovel is highly recommended due to its efficiency and capability. A power shovel is a type of heavy equipment designed specifically for moving large amounts of earth quickly. It typically features a digging bucket that can penetrate deep into the ground, making it ideal for tasks like basement excavation, where significant amounts of soil need to be removed. In comparison, while a hand shovel is a simple tool that can be used for small-scale digging, it is not practical for a job as large as excavating a basement, where the volume of earth to be removed is substantial. An excavation truck is not designed for digging but rather for transporting material once it has been excavated. A backhoe loader is also a versatile piece of equipment capable of excavation; however, a power shovel is generally more effective for larger excavations, as it can handle greater depths and volumes more efficiently. Thus, the power shovel is the most suitable choice for this specific task, facilitating swift and effective basement excavation.

9. Which type of drawing provides the most detailed information about penetrations through walls?

- A. Blueprints
- B. General drawings
- C. Detailed drawings**
- D. Elevation drawings

Detailed drawings are specifically designed to convey precise information about various construction elements, including how penetrations, such as pipes, ducts, or electrical conduits, interact with walls. These drawings highlight critical aspects like dimensions, connections, and materials, ensuring that the construction team understands exactly how to execute those penetrations without compromising the structural integrity of the wall. Blueprints often provide an overall layout and are less focused on the specifics of individual components. General drawings give a broad overview and may lack the intricate details necessary for specific construction tasks. Elevation drawings typically represent how the structure will appear from a certain viewpoint, but they do not provide the finer details required for penetrations through walls. Therefore, detailed drawings are the most informative in this context, making them the correct choice.

10. What is the term used for the basic starting point of a building?

- A. Foundation
- B. Benchmark**
- C. Footing
- D. Grid

The basic starting point of a building is best referred to as a benchmark. A benchmark is a permanent reference point that establishes a known elevation or position, which serves as a critical reference in the construction process. It ensures consistency and accuracy in measurements throughout the project, particularly when establishing the grade or elevation at which the foundation will be placed. In construction, benchmarks are crucial for ensuring that all elements of the building are aligned properly and meet the intended design specifications. They help contractors and builders maintain uniformity and guide the overall layout. Knowing the benchmark allows construction teams to manage elevations correctly, preventing potential issues as the building progresses. The foundation, footing, and grid are important elements within the construction, but they relate to different aspects of building design and structure. The foundation is the actual structure that supports the building, while footings are the underlying supports that distribute the weight of the building's walls. The grid is a layout method for organizing the space and dimensions of the building design but does not serve as the critical reference point established through the benchmark.

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://vacontractors.examzify.com>

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

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