

West Virginia Underground Miner 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

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- 1. What should be the minimum oxygen level inside a shelter when occupied?**
 - A. 20.9%**
 - B. 19.5%**
 - C. 16%**
 - D. 18%**

- 2. If you suspect a spine or back injury, what is the most important action?**
 - A. Move the victim onto a chair to avoid lying down**
 - B. Check for a pulse and breathing first**
 - C. Immobilize head and neck before and after placing on stretcher**
 - D. Remove jewelry from around the neck**

- 3. What is the proper tool used to set timbers?**
 - A. Wrench**
 - B. Hammer**
 - C. Screwdriver**
 - D. Pry bar**

- 4. Which item is described as a temporary curtain erected to deflect air and can be traveled through by mobile equipment and miners?**
 - A. Brattice**
 - B. Face curtain**
 - C. Check curtain**
 - D. Barrier curtain**

- 5. How close to the face should a line curtain be hung?**
 - A. Not to exceed 12 feet**
 - B. Not to exceed 10 feet**
 - C. Not closer than 15 feet**
 - D. Any distance if visibility is maintained**

- 6. Which statement best describes safe operation of a man-trip?**
- A. It should be operated irregularly**
 - B. It should be operated under full control at all times**
 - C. It should be shared between two operators on each trip**
 - D. It should be run at maximum speed**
- 7. What is the minimum distance from a check curtain or a fly curtain for parking equipment?**
- A. Five (5) feet**
 - B. Ten (10) feet**
 - C. Fifteen (15) feet**
 - D. Twenty (20) feet**
- 8. Methane tends to rise and accumulate in which location in the mine air?**
- A. Near the floor**
 - B. At mid-height**
 - C. Near the ceiling**
 - D. It is lighter than air and migrates upward to high places.**
- 9. Where must you keep your personal SCSR?**
- A. In a box at the surface**
 - B. Worn on your person or within immediate arms reach**
 - C. In your backpack**
 - D. Inside the shelter storage**
- 10. What is required in escapeways from the last permanent stopping to the surface or nearest escape facility in WV coal mines?**
- A. Fire extinguisher**
 - B. Lifeline cord**
 - C. Lighting**
 - D. Ventilation**

Answers

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

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Explanations

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1. What should be the minimum oxygen level inside a shelter when occupied?

- A. 20.9%
- B. 19.5%**
- C. 16%
- D. 18%

Oxygen level safety for people inside a shelter is the main idea. Air normally has about 21% oxygen, but safety standards set 19.5% as the minimum acceptable concentration for occupied spaces. At or above 19.5%, most people can breathe normally and continue to function; once the level drops toward 18% or lower, symptoms of oxygen deprivation can appear and performance and judgment suffer. 16% is clearly dangerous. So the minimum safe level to maintain inside an occupied shelter is 19.5%. If it falls below that, increase ventilation or evacuate to ensure safety.

2. If you suspect a spine or back injury, what is the most important action?

- A. Move the victim onto a chair to avoid lying down
- B. Check for a pulse and breathing first
- C. Immobilize head and neck before and after placing on stretcher**
- D. Remove jewelry from around the neck

When a spine or back injury is suspected, the priority is to prevent any movement of the spine. Immobilizing the head and neck keeps the spine in a neutral alignment, protecting the spinal cord from further injury as you assess and transport the person. Start by gently stabilizing the head and neck in line with the body, and keep this stabilization as you move the person onto a stretcher or backboard, continuing to maintain that alignment throughout transport. Breathing and circulation are important too, so monitor them while you stabilize, but the key action that minimizes the risk of worsening injury is keeping the head and neck immobile. Moving the person to a chair or removing neck jewelry isn't necessary for spinal protection and can expose the spine to additional movement.

3. What is the proper tool used to set timbers?

- A. Wrench
- B. Hammer**
- C. Screwdriver
- D. Pry bar

Setting timbers is about getting a secure, tight fit so the timber can actually support the rock above. A hammer provides the necessary controlled impact to drive the timber into its seat and to drive wedges if needed, seating it firmly against the rock and against neighboring timbers. This direct force helps eliminate gaps that could weaken the support. The other tools don't fit this purpose: a wrench is for turning fasteners, a screwdriver for screws, and a pry bar is for levering or prying—actions that can loosen or misalign the timber and won't reliably seat it.

4. Which item is described as a temporary curtain erected to deflect air and can be traveled through by mobile equipment and miners?

- A. Brattice**
- B. Face curtain**
- C. Check curtain**
- D. Barrier curtain**

Airflow control in underground mines is managed with curtains that shape where the air goes. A check curtain is a temporary, movable curtain erected to deflect the air stream as needed, such as directing or splitting airflow around a working area. Because it's designed to be moved and made of lighter material, miners and mobile equipment can pass through it without removing it, keeping the ventilation flexible while maintaining air deflection. In contrast, a brattice mainly directs air toward a face and is typically set up as more of a fixed ducting element; a face curtain is used at the face to regulate air close to that opening; a barrier curtain serves as a more permanent obstruction to stop air from entering a certain area and isn't meant to be travelled through.

5. How close to the face should a line curtain be hung?

- A. Not to exceed 12 feet**
- B. Not to exceed 10 feet**
- C. Not closer than 15 feet**
- D. Any distance if visibility is maintained**

Line curtains are a protective barrier placed near the face to intercept debris, dust, and fly rock during blasting or cutting operations. To be effective, they must be close enough to the face so that any flying material passes through the curtain before reaching workers. The standard is that the curtain should not exceed ten feet from the face, keeping it within reach of the debris and providing proper interception. If the curtain is placed farther away, its ability to stop or deflect debris decreases, increasing exposure risk. Options suggesting a greater distance or that any distance is acceptable ignore this protective requirement and weaken safety.

6. Which statement best describes safe operation of a man-trip?

- A. It should be operated irregularly
- B. It should be operated under full control at all times**
- C. It should be shared between two operators on each trip
- D. It should be run at maximum speed

Keeping the man-trip under full, continuous control at all times is essential because it ensures predictable movement you can start, stop, and slow down as needed, respond quickly to signals, and stop safely if anything unsafe appears. In underground settings, conditions can change rapidly—obstacles, workers, or equipment may appear in the route—so the operator must be able to manage speed and direction and stay in contact with the hoist operator. This disciplined control helps prevent sudden or erratic movement and reduces the chance of collisions or injuries. Operating irregularly introduces unpredictable motion, which is dangerous. Having two operators on a single trip can create confusion and conflicting commands, undermining safe control. Running at maximum speed eliminates the necessary stopping distance and responsiveness, greatly increasing the risk of collision or derailment.

7. What is the minimum distance from a check curtain or a fly curtain for parking equipment?

- A. Five (5) feet
- B. Ten (10) feet
- C. Fifteen (15) feet**
- D. Twenty (20) feet

Keep a safe clearance from curtains that direct airflow. Check curtains and fly curtains are flexible barriers near the working and parking areas, and they can move with air or when equipment passes by. Parking equipment too close risks snagging or tearing the curtain, or having the curtain shift into the machine, which can cause entanglement or injury. The distance needs to be enough for the curtain to clear the vehicle, for the operator to maneuver safely, and to maintain a stable working space. That's why fifteen feet is required. Five or ten feet would be too close for the curtain to clear, and twenty feet would waste space and hinder efficiency.

8. Methane tends to rise and accumulate in which location in the mine air?

- A. Near the floor
- B. At mid-height
- C. Near the ceiling
- D. It is lighter than air and migrates upward to high places.**

Methane is lighter than air, so it rises when released into mine air. This buoyancy drives it to the highest parts of a mine, where it can accumulate near the ceiling or roof of workings. That's why the statement describing methane as migrating upward to high places best captures its behavior. The others place methane at lower levels, which contradicts its tendency to rise.

9. Where must you keep your personal SCSR?

- A. In a box at the surface
- B. Worn on your person or within immediate arms reach**
- C. In your backpack
- D. Inside the shelter storage

In an underground emergency, you need breathing protection you can grab and use immediately. A personal SCSR is designed for rapid donning, so it must be worn on your body or kept within immediate reach. That way, when smoke or toxic gas appears, you can seal in air right away and start evacuating without losing precious seconds. Storing it in a box at the surface, in a backpack, or in shelter storage makes it inaccessible or slow to get to once you're underground or in a hazardous area. The point of having it close to you is specifically to ensure you can access it quickly and continue moving to safety.

10. What is required in escapeways from the last permanent stopping to the surface or nearest escape facility in WV coal mines?

- A. Fire extinguisher
- B. Lifeline cord**
- C. Lighting
- D. Ventilation

Escapeways must include a fixed lifeline cord along the route from the last permanent stopping to the surface or to the nearest escape facility. This lifeline provides a continuous, physical guide that a miner can follow in smoke, darkness, or other impaired visibility, helping them stay oriented and reach safety even if lighting or other systems fail. While lighting and ventilation are important for normal operations, the lifeline is the dedicated safety feature that ensures a reliable escape path along the route.

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://wvundergroundminer.examzify.com>

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

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