

Wildland TB 190 - Brush Tools and Handline Construction 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 done to maintain communication among crew members?**
 - A. All directions and hazards should be repeated and called out by every member of the crew.**
 - B. Only the crew leader should call out directions and hazards.**
 - C. Communication is optional if everyone can see each other.**
 - D. Radio communication replaces verbal direction calls.**

- 2. Why is safety important when using hand tools?**
 - A. To prevent accidents and injuries while effectively managing wildland fires.**
 - B. To maximize speed.**
 - C. To minimize tool maintenance.**
 - D. To reduce training requirements.**

- 3. Holding in line construction is intended to prevent what kind of progression?**
 - A. Uncontrolled progression beyond the current point.**
 - B. Excessive slow progress causing delays.**
 - C. Movement into unburned zones.**
 - D. Completion of the handline.**

- 4. When using hand tools, which PPE should be worn?**
 - A. Safety glasses and gloves**
 - B. Helmet and hearing protection**
 - C. Safety glasses only**
 - D. Boots and gloves**

- 5. What is a handline?**
 - A. A fireline constructed with chainsaws and hand tools to remove the fuel supply by clearing flammable material around the fire's edge.**
 - B. A line of hose connected to a water supply.**
 - C. A policy guideline for firefighter rest periods.**
 - D. A ceremonial line at training exercises.**

- 6. What is the recommended saw team configuration for moderate fuel types?**
- A. 2 saw/swamper teams and an equal number of cutters and scrapers**
 - B. 1 saw/swamper team with more scrapers**
 - C. 3 saw/swamper teams with more cutters**
 - D. 0 saw teams with only scrapers**
- 7. Which crew configuration is recommended for heavy fuel types?**
- A. 3+ saw/swamper teams, more cutters, and fewer scrapers**
 - B. 2 saw teams, equal cutters and scrapers**
 - C. All cutters with no scrapers**
 - D. Only scrapers**
- 8. What is the purpose of trenching in wildland fire management?**
- A. To create barriers that prevent the spread of fire by removing flammable materials.**
 - B. To drain water from the area.**
 - C. To create trenches for drainage near roads.**
 - D. To plant vegetation.**
- 9. In cup trench construction, where is the berm placed to catch rolling material?**
- A. On the outermost downhill side.**
 - B. On the uphill side.**
 - C. Across the trench center.**
 - D. No berm is used in cup trench construction.**
- 10. What is the minimum separation distance recommended for crew safety?**
- A. A minimum of 10 feet should be maintained between crew members.**
 - B. A minimum of 5 feet.**
 - C. A minimum of 20 feet.**
 - D. No fixed distance is required.**

Answers

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

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Explanations

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1. What should be done to maintain communication among crew members?

- A. All directions and hazards should be repeated and called out by every member of the crew.**
- B. Only the crew leader should call out directions and hazards.**
- C. Communication is optional if everyone can see each other.**
- D. Radio communication replaces verbal direction calls.**

Clear, redundant communication keeps everyone aligned and reduces the chance of mistakes in difficult terrain and noisy environments. When every crew member repeats directions and hazards out loud, the message is heard by all, and it reinforces understanding across the team. This practice creates a shared sense of the plan, confirms that messages were received, and helps catch any mishearing or misinterpretation before actions are taken. It also builds accountability, as each person actively contributes to the safety and coordination of the task. Relying on a single person to call out directions and hazards can lead to missed messages if that person is out of range, distracted, or overrun by noise. Assuming that everyone can see each other doesn't guarantee that critical information is received or understood, especially when terrain, weather, or equipment conditions change. Radio communication is important, but it doesn't replace the need for immediate verbal calls on the ground, since radios can fail or introduce delays, and hearing each other directly reduces ambiguity.

2. Why is safety important when using hand tools?

- A. To prevent accidents and injuries while effectively managing wildland fires.**
- B. To maximize speed.**
- C. To minimize tool maintenance.**
- D. To reduce training requirements.**

Focusing on safety when using hand tools is about preventing harm so you can keep working effectively on the fireline. Hand tools are essential for cutting, clearing, and constructing lines, but they can also cause serious injuries if used improperly or if tools are in poor condition. By inspecting tools, using proper PPE, maintaining good grip and body mechanics, choosing the right tool for the task, and working with awareness of teammates and surroundings, you reduce the risk of cuts, strains, burns, or tool failures that could stop operations or compromise the crew. Safety supports effective fire management because a crew that avoids injuries stays capable, maintains steady progress, and minimizes delays caused by accidents or tool-related problems. While speed, maintenance, and training are important in their own right, they don't capture the core purpose of safety, which is to prevent harm and keep everyone able to perform their duties on the fireline.

3. Holding in line construction is intended to prevent what kind of progression?

- A. Uncontrolled progression beyond the current point.**
- B. Excessive slow progress causing delays.**
- C. Movement into unburned zones.**
- D. Completion of the handline.**

Holding in line construction is about keeping the fire from advancing beyond the built line in an uncontrolled way. When you're building a handline, the goal is to secure that edge so the fire cannot cross it, even with wind or hot spots. Practically, this means ensuring the line holds by cooling the edge, removing fuels next to the line, and watching for spotting that could ignite beyond the line. The core idea is to prevent progression past the current point. It's not about slowing progress to a crawl, moving into unburned zones as a deliberate aim, or simply completing the handline—the focus is maintaining control at the edge during construction.

4. When using hand tools, which PPE should be worn?

- A. Safety glasses and gloves**
- B. Helmet and hearing protection**
- C. Safety glasses only**
- D. Boots and gloves**

Protecting your eyes and your hands is essential when using hand tools. Eye protection, like safety glasses, shields you from flying wood chips, dust, and other debris that can cause serious injuries. Gloves guard against cuts, splinters, blisters, and heat, and also help you maintain a secure grip on tools. Other PPE, such as a helmet or hearing protection, is more about different hazards or louder equipment like chainsaws, and wouldn't address both eye and hand protection needed for basic hand tools. Boots and gloves protect feet and hands but don't safeguard the eyes, so safety glasses plus gloves provides the most complete protection for typical hand-tool use.

5. What is a handline?

- A. A fireline constructed with chainsaws and hand tools to remove the fuel supply by clearing flammable material around the fire's edge.**
- B. A line of hose connected to a water supply.**
- C. A policy guideline for firefighter rest periods.**
- D. A ceremonial line at training exercises.**

A handline is a fireline created by clearing fuels with hand tools (and sometimes a chainsaw) to remove flammable material around the fire's edge, forming a barrier that stops or slows the fire. The goal is to reach mineral soil or non-flammable material so heat transfer is interrupted and the fire cannot easily cross the line. It's not a hose line used to apply water, and it's not a policy guideline or ceremonial line. In practice, crews remove grasses, brush, and other fuels along the fire's perimeter to create a fuel break that helps contain the blaze.

6. What is the recommended saw team configuration for moderate fuel types?

- A. 2 saw/swamper teams and an equal number of cutters and scrapers**
- B. 1 saw/swamper team with more scrapers**
- C. 3 saw/swamper teams with more cutters**
- D. 0 saw teams with only scrapers**

Moderate fuel types require a balance of cutting power and finishing tasks to keep the fireline advancing efficiently and safely. Using two saw/swamper teams provides enough cutting capability to quickly knock down brush and small trees, while still leaving enough crew to handle handline work. Having an equal number of cutters and scrapers ensures the line is both cleared and cleaned to the required width. Cutters handle the brush and woody debris, while scrapers focus on removing loose material and shaping the edge so the line won't rekindle or fail to contain the fire. This setup avoids slowing down the crew by having too few saws, and it avoids overstaffing with saws at the expense of finishing tasks. It also maintains a practical balance—not as wasteful as adding a third saw team, and not as slow as relying on a single saw or no saws at all.

7. Which crew configuration is recommended for heavy fuel types?

- A. 3+ saw/swamper teams, more cutters, and fewer scrapers**
- B. 2 saw teams, equal cutters and scrapers**
- C. All cutters with no scrapers**
- D. Only scrapers**

Heavy fuels demand maximum cutting capacity to clear dense vegetation quickly. When the line must break through thick brush and small trees, having more people dedicated to cutting and limbing keeps the work moving faster than focusing on soil scraping. A setup with three or more saw/swamper teams and a higher number of cutters ensures continuous clearance, while scraping is slower and less effective in heavy fuels, so fewer scrapers helps the crew stay focused on removing the heavy material. Other configurations would bottleneck on cutting or waste time on soil removal when the priority is rapid vegetation clearance.

8. What is the purpose of trenching in wildland fire management?

- A. To create barriers that prevent the spread of fire by removing flammable materials.**
- B. To drain water from the area.**
- C. To create trenches for drainage near roads.**
- D. To plant vegetation.**

Trenching creates a fuel-free barrier to interrupt the fire's path. By digging down to mineral soil and removing flammable materials—duff, litter, brush, and small vegetation—you break the continuous fuel bed the fire would burn through. With no readily ignitable material across the trench, the fire has a much harder time crossing, slowing or stopping its spread and giving crews a safer line to work on. This is why trenching is used to establish firelines in wildland settings. It isn't about drainage or planting vegetation, which wouldn't serve the purpose of stopping fire spread.

9. In cup trench construction, where is the berm placed to catch rolling material?

- A. On the outermost downhill side.**
- B. On the uphill side.**
- C. Across the trench center.**
- D. No berm is used in cup trench construction.**

In cup trench construction, the berm is placed on the downhill outer edge. This setup uses gravity to your advantage: material that loosens or slides on the slope will roll toward and be caught by the berm, preventing it from sliding into or past the trench and helping keep the fireline clean and stable. Placing a berm on the uphill side wouldn't intercept material that starts to move downhill, and putting it across the trench center wouldn't stop rolling debris from bypassing the trench. Omitting a berm altogether removes that catch mechanism, increasing the risk of debris causing erosion or undermining the line.

10. What is the minimum separation distance recommended for crew safety?

- A. A minimum of 10 feet should be maintained between crew members.**
- B. A minimum of 5 feet.**
- C. A minimum of 20 feet.**
- D. No fixed distance is required.**

The key idea is keeping a safe working distance between crew members to prevent injuries when tools are in use. A 10-foot gap acts as a buffer so swinging tools, thrown debris, or a tool that kicks back won't strike a teammate. It also gives space to move quickly to safety if needed and reduces the chance of entanglement or confusion in the line. Five feet is too close for reliable protection against tool swings and kickbacks. Twenty feet is more than necessary for typical handline work and can hinder coordination and efficiency. There is a fixed safety distance in standard practice, so saying no fixed distance would miss the established guideline. So, the minimum separation distance for crew safety is 10 feet.

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://tb190brushtoolshandlineconst.examzify.com>

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

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