BOATSWAIN'S MATE CHIEF (BMC) SWE PRACTICE EXAM (SAMPLE)

STUDY GUIDE



SAMPLE STUDY GUIDE WITH LIMITED QUESTIONS

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Table of Contents

Copyright 1

Table of Contents 2

Introduction 3

How to Use This Guide 4

Questions 5

Answers 8

Explanations 10

Next Steps 15

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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.

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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!

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Questions

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1. What law gives the authority for frocking?

A. Section 632, Title 14 USC

B. Commandant CGPC-EPM2-

C. The Military Pay Act

D. Navy Personnel Manual

2. In a crossing situation, which vessel is the give-way vessel?

A. The vessel on the port side of the other.

B. The vessel that has the other vessel on its starboard side.

C. The faster vessel.

D. The vessel that is closer to the other.

3. What should board questions evaluate?

A. 30 days

B. 60 days

C. 90 days

D. 120 days

4. How often is hydraulic oil sampled?

A. Weekly

B. Semi-annual

C. Monthly

D. Annually

5. What is the President's song?

A. The Star-Spangled Banner

B. Hail to the Chief

C. America the Beautiful

D. Yankee Doodle

6. To ensure the Ship/Boat is not dragging anchor, how many fixes should you take in the first 30 minutes?

A. 5 Fixes

B. 10 Fixes

C. 15 Fixes

D. 20 Fixes

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7. If a mishap results in a fatality, which class is it?

A. Class B mishap

B. Class A mishap

C. Class C mishap

D. Class D mishap

8. Which MARSEC level corresponds to a focused posture?

A. MARSEC I

B. MARSEC II

C. MARSEC IV

D. MARSEC III

9. Which fund code is associated with Civil Engineering – the shore unit program?

A. 43

B. 45

C. 57

D. 90

10. How many Major Stages are there in SAR?

A. Three

B. Four

C. Six

D. Five

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Answers

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

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Explanations

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1. What law gives the authority for frocking?

A. Section 632, Title 14 USC

B. Commandant CGPC-EPM2-

C. The Military Pay Act

D. Navy Personnel Manual

Frocking authority comes from Coast Guard policy, not from statute or a pay act. The ability to frock—allowing a member to wear the insignia and receive the pay of a higher grade before formal promotion—is defined by a directive issued by the Commandant through the Coast Guard Personnel Command, specifically the Enlisted Programs Management channel (CGPC-EPM2-). This policy establishes who is eligible, under what conditions, and the approvals required. Why this is the best fit: it shows that frocking is a management decision grounded in internal policy, delegated down from the top-level command to the appropriate personnel office. The other options are general laws or manuals that don't grant or define frocking authority: statutory pay laws govern compensation broadly but not the specific policy to wear a higher insignia; the Navy Personnel Manual is Navy-specific guidance and not the source of Coast Guard frocking authority; and a section of Title 14 USC refers to statutory authority over Coast Guard matters, not the frocking policy itself.

2. In a crossing situation, which vessel is the give-way vessel?

A. The vessel on the port side of the other.

B. The vessel that has the other vessel on its starboard side.

C. The faster vessel.

D. The vessel that is closer to the other.

In a crossing, the vessel that has the other vessel on its starboard side must give way. Being on the starboard side means the other vessel is on your right, so you must take action to avoid it and let it pass. The stand-on vessel is the one that does not have the other on its starboard side (typically the one the other vessel is to the right of). Speed or distance doesn't determine which vessel yields—the relative position to the other vessel does. So the vessel with the other on its starboard side is the give-way vessel.

3. What should board questions evaluate?

A. 30 days

B. 60 days

C. 90 days

D. 120 days

Board questions assess how well you can recall and apply material you've recently learned and can put into practice. Using a window of about two months keeps the content current with procedures and standards you're actively training on, while still giving enough breadth to cover the essential topics you should know. If the window were too short, you'd miss topics that require integrating knowledge from multiple recent trainings. If it were much longer, you risk testing material that may no longer reflect current practices or procedures. So, a roughly two-month window hits the right balance for evaluating practical readiness and understanding.

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4. How often is hydraulic oil sampled?

A. Weekly

B. Semi-annual

C. Monthly

D. Annually

Regular sampling of hydraulic oil checks for contamination, moisture, and degradation in shipboard hydraulic systems. The frequency is chosen to balance catching issues early with maintenance efficiency. Sampling semi-annually provides timely trend data—enough to detect moisture ingress, particulate buildup, or oil breakdown before performance is affected—without the extra labor and cost of monthly testing. If sampling were done more often, the workload and costs increase without a proportional gain in reliability; if done only once a year, slower-developing problems could go unnoticed. Typical tests during sampling include moisture content, particle contamination, viscosity, and sometimes acid number to assess oil condition and determine if maintenance actions are needed.

5. What is the President's song?

A. The Star-Spangled Banner

B. Hail to the Chief

C. America the Beautiful

D. Yankee Doodle

When the President appears at official events, a specific tune is traditionally played to announce their presence. That piece is Hail to the Chief, the cue heard as the President enters or takes the stage. The other songs serve different ceremonial roles: The Star-Spangled Banner is the national anthem sung or played to honor the country, America the Beautiful is a patriotic song often used for national pride, and Yankee Doodle is an old Revolutionary-era tune with no single ceremonial association to the President. So the best choice is Hail to the Chief.

6. To ensure the Ship/Boat is not dragging anchor, how many fixes should you take in the first 30 minutes?

A. 5 Fixes

B. 10 Fixes

C. 15 Fixes

D. 20 Fixes

When anchored, you must actively verify the anchor is holding during the critical initial period. The first thirty minutes are when set can be unstable as wind, current, and tide interact with the rode, so you want frequent position checks to catch any movement quickly. Taking ten fixes in the first half-hour gives a practical sampling rate—about one check every three minutes—so you can detect even small drift early and respond before the vessel drags or swings into danger. If movement is observed, you have time to take appropriate action, such as adjusting chain, paying out more rode, or resetting the anchor. Fewer fixes could miss drift, while many checks aren't necessary once a stable hold is established.

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7. If a mishap results in a fatality, which class is it?

A. Class B mishap

B. Class A mishap

C. Class C mishap

D. Class D mishap

Mishap classifications are driven by the severity of the outcome. A fatality represents the worst possible result, so it places the event in the highest severity category, which is Class A. This category also includes cases like permanent total disability or very large property damage that meet the threshold, but the presence of a fatality alone already meets the top level. The other classes cover progressively less severe outcomes, such as nonfatal injuries with varying days away from work or smaller amounts of property damage. So, when a mishap results in a fatality, it is categorized as the most severe class.

8. Which MARSEC level corresponds to a focused posture?

A. MARSEC I

B. MARSEC II

C. MARSEC IV

D. MARSEC III

The concept here is how security posture shifts to focus resources where the threat is greatest. A focused posture means directing intensified security efforts toward specific vulnerabilities, targets, or locations rather than applying broad, generic measures everywhere. When the threat level rises to MARSEC III, authorities tighten security to the maximum and concentrate actions on identified risks—this includes concentrated patrols, stricter access control, heightened screening at key points, and rapid coordination with other agencies to protect specific vessels, facilities, or cargo that are considered high risk. In short, MARSEC III is the level at which security becomes highly targeted and resource-heavy to address a credible threat. Normal MARSEC I involves routine, baseline security. MARSEC II adds heightened measures but not the same level of targeted focus. MARSEC III represents the most stringent, focused security posture, which is why it's the correct match.

9. Which fund code is associated with Civil Engineering – the shore unit program?

A. 43

B. 45

C. 57

D. 90

Fund codes are numeric tags that categorize funding and personnel actions by program or activity. For Civil Engineering – the shore unit program, the code assigned in the budgeting and records system is 43. Using this code ensures all shore-based civil engineering work is tracked consistently and funded correctly. The other numbers represent different programs, so they wouldn't apply to the shore unit Civil Engineering program.

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10. How many Major Stages are there in SAR?

A. Three

B. Four

C. Six

D. Five

The way SAR work is organized, from the moment a distress event is identified through to its completion, is into five distinct stages. The first stage is the initial alert and assessment, where the event is confirmed, priorities are set, and a plan begins to form. The second stage is planning and mobilization, which involves outlining the search area, allocating assets, establishing safety and communications, and preparing for action. The third stage is on-scene search and rescue operations, where the actual search is conducted, survivors are located, and immediate safety is maintained during extraction. The fourth stage is medical care and evacuation, providing any necessary stabilization and transporting victims to medical facilities if required. The fifth stage is demobilization, debrief, and case closure, covering the return of assets, administrative follow-up, and a review of what happened to improve future responses. This five-stage structure helps ensure a clear, safe, and coordinated progression from alert to resolution, with defined triggers to move from one stage to the next.

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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://bmcswe.examzify.com

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

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