FNGLA HORTICULTURE LANDSCAPE MAINTENANCE 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.

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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. In pruning terminology, what does a thinning cut do?

A. Removes a branch back to a larger limb or trunk.

B. Shortens a branch tip.

C. Removes only dead wood.

D. Removes the entire branch.

2. Which pest causes defoliation and silk/webbing on landscape trees, signaling a common Florida issue?

A. Scale insects — honeydew and sooty mold on leaves.

B. Bagworms cause defoliation and silk/webbing.

C. Aphids cause honeydew and mold.

D. Spider mites cause stippling.

3. How would you determine irrigation run time using a simple constant-rate system?

A. Guess based on plant height

B. Run each zone until water is visibly present on mulch

C. Measure zone output in inches per hour, then apply the needed soil water deficit, adjusting for rainfall and plant type.

D. Use the rainfall total for the month

4. Why should mulch be kept away from the base of tree stems?

A. To prevent moisture accumulation and disease at the collar and trunk; can also harbor pests.

B. To improve nutrient uptake at the stem.

C. To promote root growth directly at the trunk.

D. To increase soil pH around the trunk.

5. Name two common lawn pests and basic management strategies.

A. Grubs — maintain turf health and apply treatment if thresholds are met; Chinch bugs — ensure proper irrigation; treat if populations reach threshold.

B. Grubs — monitor soil temperature; never treat; Chinch bugs — ignore irrigation; treat only with soil injections.

C. Armyworms — spray broadly; Grubs — never treat.

D. Chinch bugs only — ignore irrigation; treat seasonally.

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6. What is a typical fertilizer schedule for warm-season turf in Florida?

A. Single annual application in spring only

B. Split applications every 6-8 weeks during the growing season, with the first after green-up and avoiding late fall/winter

C. Monthly applications year-round

D. Apply only after signs of yellowing

7. What is the role of a wetting agent in irrigation management?

A. Increases soil pH, which can improve nutrient availability.

B. Improves water penetration in hydrophobic soils and reduces runoff.

C. Decreases soil salinity.

D. Increases drainage through soil profile.

8. What is a recommended planting depth guideline for trees and shrubs during transplanting?

A. Plant 2-3 inches below the previous soil line.

B. Plant at the same depth as the container or root ball; root flare is at or slightly above grade.

C. Plant 6 inches above the original soil line to promote drainage.

D. Plant deeper than the root ball to encourage rooting.

9. How can nutrient deficiency symptoms be diagnosed and corrected in landscape plants?

A. Identify leaf symptoms (e.g., chlorosis), test soil and adjust fertilization or pH to correct imbalances; apply chelated iron if needed.

B. Apply any fertilizer when leaves show color change.

C. Ignore leaf symptoms and wait for natural recovery.

D. Water more frequently without soil testing.

10. What is one environmental benefit of clipping lawn clippings?

A. Increased thatch accumulation

B. Decreasing soil fertility

C. Recycling of nutrients

D. Attracts pests

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Answers

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

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Explanations

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1. In pruning terminology, what does a thinning cut do?

A. Removes a branch back to a larger limb or trunk.

B. Shortens a branch tip.

C. Removes only dead wood.

D. Removes the entire branch.

A thinning cut removes a branch where it meets a larger limb or the trunk. This takes the branch out at its junction, which opens up the canopy, reduces density, and improves light and air movement while keeping the overall shape and the longer, healthier limbs intact. It's different from shortening a branch tip, which is a heading cut intended to stimulate new growth and tighten the canopy. It's also not just removing dead wood or taking out an entire branch, which would be a different prune objective.

2. Which pest causes defoliation and silk/webbing on landscape trees, signaling a common Florida issue?

A. Scale insects — honeydew and sooty mold on leaves.

B. Bagworms cause defoliation and silk/webbing.

C. Aphids cause honeydew and mold.

D. Spider mites cause stippling.

Defoliation accompanied by silk or webbing on landscape trees is a giveaway sign of bagworms. These caterpillars build protective silk bags from bits of foliage and weather debris, then feed from inside the bags. As they grow, they strip branches of leaves, causing noticeable defoliation and a network of silk on the tree, which is especially common in Florida's warm climate. That combination of leaf loss and visible silk webs is the hallmark that sets bagworms apart from other pests. For comparison, scale insects produce honeydew and sooty mold on leaves, aphids also produce honeydew and mold, and spider mites cause stippling and fine webbing but not the distinctive hanging bags and heavy defoliation seen with bagworms. In Florida, look for small bag-like cases hanging from branches; early detection is key—remove bags by hand or prune infested shoots, and consider targeted insecticides such as Bt kurstaki or spinosad when larvae are young to keep populations in check.

3. How would you determine irrigation run time using a simple constant-rate system?

A. Guess based on plant height

B. Run each zone until water is visibly present on mulch

C. Measure zone output in inches per hour, then apply the needed soil water deficit, adjusting for rainfall and plant type.

D. Use the rainfall total for the month

When sizing run time for a simple constant-rate irrigation system, you compare how much water the zone needs with how much water the system can apply each hour. First, identify the soil water deficit for the zone—how many inches of water are needed to meet the plants' current moisture needs, taking into account soil type, current moisture, and the plants being grown. Next, determine the zone's output rate in inches per hour by doing a straightforward test: run the zone for a known period and measure how much water was applied in inches. With those two pieces, you calculate the run time as deficit divided by the output rate, giving you the number of hours to run. Adjust this runtime for rainfall (which reduces the deficit) and for plant type (which influences how much water the plants actually require). For example, needing 1.5 inches of water and a zone delivering 0.5 inches per hour means 3 hours of runtime. This approach is precise and avoids relying on guesswork, visible wetting, or monthly rainfall alone, which don't reflect actual soil moisture or plant water demand.

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4. Why should mulch be kept away from the base of tree stems?

A. To prevent moisture accumulation and disease at the collar and trunk; can also harbor pests.

B. To improve nutrient uptake at the stem.

C. To promote root growth directly at the trunk.

D. To increase soil pH around the trunk.

Keep mulch away from the base of tree stems to prevent a damp, sheltered area at the trunk. When mulch rests against the bark, it traps moisture and limits airflow, creating a perfect environment for fungal diseases, trunk/collar rot, and pests. The recommended practice is a ring of mulch around the root zone with a gap of several inches between the mulch and the trunk so air can circulate and moisture can dry. The other statements don't fit because mulch won't improve nutrient uptake at the stem (nutrients are taken up by roots in the root zone, not the trunk), it doesn't promote root growth directly at the trunk, and it isn't used to reliably change soil pH around the trunk.

5. Name two common lawn pests and basic management strategies.

A. Grubs — maintain turf health and apply treatment if thresholds are met; Chinch bugs — ensure proper irrigation; treat if populations reach threshold.

B. Grubs — monitor soil temperature; never treat; Chinch bugs — ignore irrigation; treat only with soil injections.

C. Armyworms — spray broadly; Grubs — never treat.

D. Chinch bugs only — ignore irrigation; treat seasonally.

The main idea here is using preventive care together with threshold-based treatment in lawn pest management. Grubs and chinch bugs are two common lawn pests, and the smart approach balances keeping the turf healthy with treating only when pests reach a level that could cause economic damage. Grubs feed on grass roots, so healthy, well-maintained turf is less susceptible to serious injury. Focus on turf health through proper mowing height, adequate fertility, consistent watering, and good soil conditions. This reduces the damage grubs can cause and helps you avoid unnecessary treatments. When grub numbers meet an established threshold, then apply an approved insecticide or consider approved biological controls, following label directions. Chinch bugs attack the leaves and are especially problematic when the lawn is stressed by heat or drought. Providing uniform, adequate irrigation helps keep the turf less attractive to chinch bugs and more able to recover from pressure. If chinch bug populations exceed their threshold, treat with an appropriate product at the right time, again following label instructions. This approach avoids blanket spraying and emphasizes maintaining turf health and treating only when pest pressure justifies it.

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6. What is a typical fertilizer schedule for warm-season turf in Florida?

A. Single annual application in spring only

B. Split applications every 6-8 weeks during the growing season, with the first after green-up and avoiding late fall/winter

C. Monthly applications year-round

D. Apply only after signs of yellowing

Regular, split fertilizer applications during the active growing season are how warm season turf in Florida should be fed. This approach provides nitrogen in manageable amounts as the grass is actively growing, helping to maintain green color, density, and recovery after wear. Start with the first application after green-up in spring to support the resume of growth, then continue with applications every 6–8 weeks throughout the growing season to keep nutrients steady rather than letting growth spike from one large, early feed. Avoid fertilizing in late fall or winter because these grasses slow their growth and new, lush growth then is more vulnerable to cold injury and disease; stopping fertilization helps the turf prepare for cooler conditions and reduces risk. This schedule is better than a single spring application, which would leave the turf undernourished for much of the season; worse than monthly year-round feeding, which is unnecessary and can increase leaching and disease pressure; and better than waiting for yellowing, which is a reactive cue that stress has already occurred rather than proactive, preventative nutrition.

7. What is the role of a wetting agent in irrigation management?

A. Increases soil pH, which can improve nutrient availability.

B. Improves water penetration in hydrophobic soils and reduces runoff.

C. Decreases soil salinity.

D. Increases drainage through soil profile.

Wetting agents are soil surfactants that lower water's surface tension, helping water spread and infiltrate soils that resist wetting. In hydrophobic soils, water tends to bead up and run off, leaving the root zone dry. A wetting agent lowers these repellent forces, allowing water to enter more easily and move more uniformly through the soil, which reduces surface runoff and improves irrigation efficiency. They don't primarily change soil pH, nor do they directly alter salinity or function as a drainage enhancer; their main role is to overcome soil water repellence and promote better infiltration and distribution of irrigation water.

8. What is a recommended planting depth guideline for trees and shrubs during transplanting?

A. Plant 2-3 inches below the previous soil line.

B. Plant at the same depth as the container or root ball; root flare is at or slightly above grade.

C. Plant 6 inches above the original soil line to promote drainage.

D. Plant deeper than the root ball to encourage rooting.

Planting depth matters because the root system needs a proper interface with the soil, air, and moisture. The best approach is to place the tree or shrub so that the root flare—the point where the roots meet the trunk—is at or slightly above the soil surface. This matches how the plant rested in its container or root ball and allows roots to establish without being buried too deep. If the plant is set deeper than this, trunk tissues stay wet and can rot, or girdling roots may develop where the trunk is buried. If planted too shallow, the root ball can dry out and the plant risks instability. So, the recommended guideline is to plant at the same depth as the container or root ball, with the root flare at or just above grade.

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9. How can nutrient deficiency symptoms be diagnosed and corrected in landscape plants?

A. Identify leaf symptoms (e.g., chlorosis), test soil and adjust fertilization or pH to correct imbalances; apply chelated iron if needed.

B. Apply any fertilizer when leaves show color change.

C. Ignore leaf symptoms and wait for natural recovery.

D. Water more frequently without soil testing.

Diagnosing nutrient deficiencies in landscape plants relies on using symptoms as clues while confirming with soil data, then correcting with targeted actions. Leaf symptoms like chlorosis indicate insufficient chlorophyll production, but they aren't definitive on their own—other stresses such as drought, root damage, or soil moisture can mimic nutrient problems. The right approach is to examine pattern and severity of symptoms (for example, interveinal chlorosis on new growth often points to iron deficiency, while overall yellowing might suggest nitrogen deficiency), then perform soil testing (and, if possible, tissue testing) to identify which nutrients are lacking and whether the soil pH is hindering nutrient availability. With that information, correct in a precise, balanced way: supply the missing nutrients through appropriate fertilization and adjust soil pH to optimize nutrient uptake. If the soil pH is high and iron remains unavailable, applying chelated iron can rapidly relieve the deficiency while you address the pH. Ongoing monitoring is essential to ensure symptoms resolve and to prevent over-fertilization or salt buildup from excessive applications. Relying on fertilizer application based solely on a color change, ignoring symptoms, or simply increasing watering without testing can compound problems, as these steps don't address which nutrient is out of balance or how soil chemistry is affecting availability.

10. What is one environmental benefit of clipping lawn clippings?

A. Increased thatch accumulation

B. Decreasing soil fertility

C. Recycling of nutrients

D. Attracts pests

Returning nutrients to the soil is a key environmental advantage of clipping lawn clippings. Clippings carry nitrogen and other minerals that, as they break down, feed the grass and soil organisms. This reduces the need for synthetic fertilizers, lowers the chance of fertilizer runoff, and cuts yard waste that would otherwise go to landfills. They also add organic matter, improving soil structure and moisture retention over time. If clippings are removed instead of recycled, those nutrients are lost and you may rely more on fertilizers. The other options describe outcomes that aren't benefits: clippings aren't helpful for increasing thatch; removing nutrients would not improve soil fertility; and attracting pests isn't a environmental benefit.

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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:

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

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