US MILITARY CHAIN OF COMMAND AND ARMY BASIC KNOWLEDGE 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. Which rank is directly above Captain?

A. Captain

B. Major

C. Lieutenant Colonel

D. Colonel

2. What is a guidon?

A. A small swallow-tailed flag carried by platoon and company level units signifying unit affiliation.

B. A national flag flown at front of formation.

C. A ceremonial banner used only in parades.

D. A weather flag indicating wind direction.

3. Who is the Chief Master Sergeant of the Air Force?

A. Chief Master Sergeant David R. Wolfe

B. Chief Master Sergeant James Smith

C. Chief Master Sergeant Aaron Jones

D. Chief Master Sergeant Philip Clark

4. Which rank is directly above Colonel?

A. Lieutenant Colonel

B. Colonel

C. Brigadier General

D. Major General

5. How many members are there in Congress?

A. 435

B. 100

C. 535

D. 50

6. How many cadets/soldiers make up a Company?

A. 60 - 200 cadets/soldiers

B. 16 - 44 cadets/soldiers

C. 8 - 14 cadets/soldiers

D. 300 - 1,000 cadets/soldiers

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7. What does the 14th Amendment guarantee?

A. Freedom of speech

B. Equal protection and due process

C. Right to bear arms

D. Prohibition of cruel and unusual punishment

8. What are three levels of distinction that a unit can earn?

A. Merit Unit, Honor Unit, and Honor Unit with Distinction

B. Merit Unit, Honor Unit, and Distinguished Unit

C. Honor Unit, Merit Unit, and Honor Unit with Distinction

D. Merit Unit, Distinction Unit, and Honor Unit

9. Which rank sits immediately above Sergeant in the enlisted ranks listed?

A. Private First Class

B. Sergeant First Class

C. Staff Sergeant

D. Master Sergeant

10. Which official is the top civilian leader of the Air Force?

A. Secretary of the Air Force

B. Chief of Staff of the Air Force

C. Vice Chief of Staff of the Air Force

D. Commander, Air Mobility Command

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Answers

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

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Explanations

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1. Which rank is directly above Captain?

A. Captain

B. Major

C. Lieutenant Colonel

D. Colonel

In the Army officer ladder, the rank directly above Captain is Major. Captain is an O-3, and Major is the next step up at O-4. This marks the shift from primarily leading a company at the front to taking on more staff responsibilities at the battalion or brigade level, and often preparing for command at the battalion level later on. The insignia reflect the jump: Captain has two parallel bars, while Major uses a gold oak leaf. This helps memorize the order of progression: Captain, then Major, then Lieutenant Colonel, then Colonel.

2. What is a guidon?

A. A small swallow-tailed flag carried by platoon and company level units signifying unit affiliation.

B. A national flag flown at front of formation.

C. A ceremonial banner used only in parades.

D. A weather flag indicating wind direction.

A guidon is the small swallow-tailed flag carried by platoon and company level units to signify unit affiliation. In Army formations, this flag serves as the unit's visible symbol of identity, bearing the unit's designation and insignia and being carried on parade or during drill to help organize and recognize subunits. It is specifically used for subunit identification, not the national flag flown at the front of a formation, and it's not limited to parades or a weather flag.

3. Who is the Chief Master Sergeant of the Air Force?

A. Chief Master Sergeant David R. Wolfe

B. Chief Master Sergeant James Smith

C. Chief Master Sergeant Aaron Jones

D. Chief Master Sergeant Philip Clark

The role of the Chief Master Sergeant of the Air Force is to be the senior enlisted leader, serving as the primary advisor to the Air Force Chief of Staff on all matters affecting enlisted personnel and as the voice of airmen at the highest level. This position guides policies and initiatives related to training, readiness, welfare, morale, and professional development for the enlisted force, and the CMSAF travels to bases to represent airmen's concerns to leadership. In this item, the name presented for that post is the person associated with the CMSAF role in the source material, making it the best choice for identifying who holds the position in this context. The other names do not correspond to the individual who occupies the CMSAF role in this scenario.

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4. Which rank is directly above Colonel?

A. Lieutenant Colonel

B. Colonel

C. Brigadier General

D. Major General

In Army officer ranks, Colonel is an O-6 level, and the next higher grade is Brigadier General, an O-7 and a one-star general officer. So Brigadier General is the rank directly above Colonel. After that comes Major General (O-8), then Lieutenant General (O-9), and General (O-10). For reference, a Lieutenant Colonel sits below Colonel, while a Major General is two steps above Colonel.

5. How many members are there in Congress?

A. 435

B. 100

C. 535

D. 50

Congress is made up of two houses, with a combined total of 535 voting members: 435 in the House of Representatives and 100 in the Senate. Those 535 voting members are the ones who cast votes on legislation. In addition, there are non-voting delegates from territories and the District of Columbia, but they don't vote on the floor. So the number 535 specifically reflects the voting membership across both houses. The other numbers refer to only one chamber or a factual detail not about total voting members: 435 would be the House alone, 100 the Senate alone, and 50 is the number of states, not members of Congress.

6. How many cadets/soldiers make up a Company?

A. 60 - 200 cadets/soldiers

B. 16 - 44 cadets/soldiers

C. 8 - 14 cadets/soldiers

D. 300 - 1,000 cadets/soldiers

In Army structure, a Company is formed from several platoons and is typically commanded by a captain. The usual strength of a company is about 100 to 200 soldiers, though exact numbers can vary with mission, branch, and organizational needs. That range best matches the option describing roughly sixty to two hundred soldiers, which covers the common company size and accounts for variations. To put it in context, a platoon is smaller—about 16 to 44 soldiers—while a squad is even smaller, roughly 8 to 14 soldiers. A battalion is much larger, typically around 300 to 1,000 soldiers. So the number of cadets/soldiers that make up a Company sits squarely between a platoon and a battalion, aligning with the range of about 60–200.

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7. What does the 14th Amendment guarantee?

A. Freedom of speech

B. Equal protection and due process

C. Right to bear arms

D. Prohibition of cruel and unusual punishment

The main idea being tested is that the 14th Amendment secures equal treatment under the law and fair legal processes by state governments. It contains two key protections: Equal Protection, which requires states to treat people in similar situations the same and prohibits unjustified discrimination; and Due Process, which prevents states from depriving anyone of life, liberty, or property without fair procedures and safeguards. Importantly, this amendment extends these protections to state and local governments, not just the federal level, and it also supports the incorporation of other fundamental rights from the Bill of Rights over time. Other rights listed are associated with other amendments: freedom of speech with the First Amendment, the right to keep and bear arms with the Second, and protection against cruel and unusual punishment with the Eighth. While those rights exist, the 14th Amendment's guarantee centers on equal protection and due process and their application at the state level.

8. What are three levels of distinction that a unit can earn?

A. Merit Unit, Honor Unit, and Honor Unit with Distinction

B. Merit Unit, Honor Unit, and Distinguished Unit

C. Honor Unit, Merit Unit, and Honor Unit with Distinction

D. Merit Unit, Distinction Unit, and Honor Unit

The concept being tested is the official levels of unit distinction. Units can earn three levels: Merit Unit Award, Honor Unit Award, and Honor Unit with Distinction. The first recognizes meritorious service, the second reflects exceptionally meritorious performance, and the third represents the highest level of recognition for outstanding, sustained performance. This combination is the official set of three distinctions, with the levels increasing in prestige.

9. Which rank sits immediately above Sergeant in the enlisted ranks listed?

A. Private First Class

B. Sergeant First Class

C. Staff Sergeant

D. Master Sergeant

In the Army enlisted ladder, promotions move you up one pay grade at a time. After Sergeant (E-5) comes Staff Sergeant (E-6), which is the next higher rank. Among the options, those other than Staff Sergeant are either below or above by more steps: Private First Class is below, Sergeant First Class is two steps above, and Master Sergeant is higher still. So Staff Sergeant is the rank that sits immediately above Sergeant, reflecting the next level of leadership responsibility.

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10. Which official is the top civilian leader of the Air Force?

A. Secretary of the Air Force

B. Chief of Staff of the Air Force

C. Vice Chief of Staff of the Air Force

D. Commander, Air Mobility Command

The top civilian leader is the Secretary of the Air Force, the civilian head of the Department of the Air Force within the Department of Defense. This person is appointed by the President and confirmed by the Senate and oversees policy, budgeting, personnel, and procurement for the Air Force. The Chief of Staff of the Air Force is the senior uniformed officer responsible for readiness, operations, and organization, and reports to the Secretary. The Vice Chief of Staff serves as the deputy to the Chief of Staff, while the Commander of Air Mobility Command leads a major warfighting command, not the civilian leadership. Civilian oversight like this ensures civilian control of the military while the Chief handles day-to-day military readiness and operations.

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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://usmilitarychainofcommand.examzify.com

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

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