EPA 608 Study Guide

How to prepare for the EPA Section 608 certification exam

EPACerts.com · Updated September 2026 · (626) 737-3100 call/text

The exam isn't easy, and the real test questions are kept secure — no course or practice exam can show you the actual questions. Practice exams alone are not enough to fully prepare for the certification exam. For the **best chance of success**, use the practice exams *and* review the Preparatory Manual (provided with any purchase) and/or complete the online preparatory course, using this study guide as your roadmap.

As you study, **recognize the rule, procedure, or requirement that applies to a real-world situation.**

FOCUS ESPECIALLY ON THESE AREAS

- **Know the terminology.** Understand terms such as recovery, recycling, reclamation, evacuation, major repair, small appliance, high-pressure appliance, and low-pressure appliance.
- **Know the rules and requirements.** Understand what technicians are required to do and when those requirements apply.
- **Pay attention to numbers.** Exam questions may require you to recognize evacuation levels, pressures, leak-rate thresholds, refrigerant quantities, timeframes, and other regulatory limits.
- **Study the tables and charts.** Do not skip recovery/evacuation tables, refrigerant classifications, and pressure-temperature information. Be comfortable locating and using information from them.
- **Understand refrigerant differences.** Pay attention to refrigerant classifications, pressure characteristics, flammability, environmental impact, and special handling or safety requirements.
- **Learn the procedures, not just the facts.** When the manual describes recovery, evacuation, charging, leak detection, dehydration, or servicing, understand *what should be done and why*.
- **Watch for conditions that change the answer.** Requirements can change depending on the type of appliance, refrigerant, refrigerant charge, system pressure, equipment being used, or service being performed.
- **Study safety requirements carefully.** Cylinder handling, pressure, ventilation, refrigerant exposure, flammability, oxygen displacement, and proper service practices are important parts of the material.
- **Think like a technician.** As you read a procedure, ask yourself: "If I encountered this situation in the field, what would I do next?"

After studying a section, see if you can explain the major concepts in your own words:

What is the rule? When does it apply? What should the technician do? Why?

When you miss a practice question, **don't just memorize the correct answer.** Return to the manual, locate the subject, and determine why that answer is correct and why the other choices would not apply.

Before the exam, review the tables, charts, definitions, highlighted requirements, safety information, and important numerical values one more time. These are easy to overlook during a normal read-through but can be important when applying the material on the exam.

Use this roadmap while working through the online course and/or the Preparatory Manual. Each section of the exam is 25 multiple-choice questions and you need 70% (18 of 25) on each section. Universal certification is Core plus Type I, II and III.

Core

FOCUS YOUR STUDY ON

- **Environmental concepts:** ozone depletion, environmental effects, ODP/GWP, and why refrigerant releases are regulated.
- **Refrigerant characteristics:** CFCs, HCFCs, HFCs and other refrigerants covered in your manual; pressure, toxicity, flammability, and refrigerant blends.
- **EPA rules & terminology:** venting prohibition, certification responsibilities, and the differences between recovery, recycling and reclamation.
- **Recovery & evacuation:** recovery equipment, factors that affect recovery/evacuation, moisture, non-condensables, vacuum and dehydration.
- **Cylinders & safety:** recovery cylinders, disposable/refillable cylinders, temperature and pressure concerns, transportation and safe handling.
- **Tables & charts:** know how to use the refrigerant information, evacuation information and temperature-pressure charts provided in the manual.

BEFORE THE EXAM, MAKE SURE YOU CAN…

- ☐ Explain recovery, recycling and reclamation in your own words.
- ☐ Recognize why appliance type, refrigerant and system conditions can change the required procedure.
- ☐ Use a temperature-pressure chart rather than relying only on memorized values.
- ☐ Identify the major safety concerns when recovering, storing and transporting refrigerant.
- ☐ Recognize the important regulatory limits and requirements emphasized in the Core section.

Type I — Small Appliances

FOCUS YOUR STUDY ON

- **Small appliances:** know what equipment falls under the Type I / small-appliance category and the certification requirements that apply.
- **Recovery equipment:** understand self-contained versus system-dependent recovery and when each method can be used.
- **Recovery procedures:** study access fittings, compressor operation, restrictions, liquid/vapor recovery and ways to improve recovery.
- **Refrigerant condition:** understand contaminated refrigerant, compressor burnouts, non-condensables and the use of temperature-pressure information.
- **Refrigerants & appliance safety:** review the refrigerants discussed for household refrigerators/freezers and their handling and safety considerations.
- **Safe work practices:** review PPE, nitrogen use, cylinders, pressure, ventilation and precautions during recovery.

BEFORE THE EXAM, MAKE SURE YOU CAN…

- ☐ Identify which appliances are considered small appliances.
- ☐ Explain how compressor operation or a system restriction affects recovery.
- ☐ Recognize when a recovery procedure should not begin and what conditions should be checked first.
- ☐ Use pressure and temperature information to recognize possible contamination or non-condensables.
- ☐ Explain the safety precautions associated with the refrigerants discussed in the Type I section.

Type II — High-Pressure Appliances

FOCUS YOUR STUDY ON

- **System classifications:** know which appliances fall under Type II and how system/refrigerant characteristics affect requirements.
- **Leak detection & repair:** study leak indicators, leak-rate categories, repair requirements, verification and recordkeeping.
- **Recovery:** understand preparation before recovery, liquid versus vapor recovery, recovery equipment and ways to improve the process.
- **Required evacuation levels:** know how to use the recovery/evacuation table based on appliance category, refrigerant charge and equipment date.
- **System components:** review receivers, accumulators, filter-driers, compressors, metering devices and other components discussed in the manual.
- **Evacuation & charging:** understand dehydration, deep vacuum, nitrogen use, charging practices and temperature-pressure relationships.

BEFORE THE EXAM, MAKE SURE YOU CAN…

- ☐ Determine which row of the recovery/evacuation table applies to a given system.
- ☐ Recognize common signs of refrigerant leaks.
- ☐ Distinguish a major repair from routine service.
- ☐ Explain why liquid is generally recovered before vapor when appropriate.
- ☐ Identify the purpose and location of major refrigeration-system components.
- ☐ Explain how vacuum, moisture, nitrogen and temperature affect evacuation and charging.

Type III — Low-Pressure Appliances

FOCUS YOUR STUDY ON

- **Low-pressure systems:** understand why these systems operate differently and how operation below atmospheric pressure affects servicing.
- **Leak detection:** review air infiltration, purge-unit operation, tube leaks and indicators that a low-pressure system may be leaking.
- **Leak repair requirements:** know the applicable leak-rate categories, repair responsibilities and verification requirements discussed in the manual.
- **Recovery procedures:** study liquid and vapor recovery, required evacuation levels, pressure rise after recovery and methods used to improve recovery.
- **Freezing prevention:** understand why water circulation, nitrogen and controlled pressure are important during evacuation and recovery.
- **Recharging & safety:** review vapor-before-liquid charging, pressure controls, rupture disks, refrigerant monitoring, ventilation and chiller-room safety.

BEFORE THE EXAM, MAKE SURE YOU CAN…

- ☐ Explain the purpose of a purge unit and what frequent purging may indicate.
- ☐ Recognize signs of air or tube leakage in a low-pressure chiller.
- ☐ State what to do after reaching the required recovery vacuum.
- ☐ Explain why water can freeze during evacuation and how technicians reduce that risk.
- ☐ Explain why vapor may be introduced before liquid when recharging.
- ☐ Recognize the important pressure-relief and refrigerant-monitoring safety requirements.

READY TO CHECK YOURSELF? Free, unlimited practice exams for Core, Type I, II and III at **epacerts.com/epa-608-practice-test**. When you're passing every section, request your exam voucher from your Student Portal. Questions any time: **chad@epacerts.com** or **(626) 737-3100** (call/text).