CSLB C-36 Plumbing Contractor Practice Test

20 original practice questions for the California contractor license exam, with an answer key and explanations.

Format
Multiple choice, 4 options, one best answer

Topics
Grouped by the published CSLB topic areas

Question bank
Last updated: November 2026

How to use this test

1. Answer all 20 questions without notes — the CSLB exam is closed-book.
2. Check the answer key at the end and read the explanation for every miss.
3. Take the same test online for instant explanations and a result by topic: test2pro.com/free-practice-tests/c36-plumbing-contractor

Scan to take it online

Exam topic areas and approximate weights

Planning and Estimating	22%
Underground and Rough Systems	22%
Finish Plumbing Installations	20%
Service, Repair, and Remodel Plumbing Systems	19%
Safety	17%

Test2Pro provides online prep only; CSLB and PSI handle exam scheduling, testing, licensing, and results. These are original practice questions, not real CSLB exam questions.

Questions

1 PLANNING AND ESTIMATING

A rough-in needs 160 ft of 3/4-in supply pipe at $1.80 per foot and 120 ft of 1/2-in supply pipe at $1.40 per foot. What is the pipe material cost?

(A) $456
(B) $504
(C) $440
(D) $392

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2 PLANNING AND ESTIMATING

A drain runs 150 ft horizontally at a 2% grade. What is its total vertical drop in inches?

(A) 36 in
(B) 18 in
(C) 30 in
(D) 72 in

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3 PLANNING AND ESTIMATING

Static pressure at a water meter is 80 psi. Approximately what is the static pressure at an outlet 40 ft above the meter?

(A) 63 psi
(B) 80 psi
(C) 17 psi
(D) 97 psi

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4 PLANNING AND ESTIMATING

Above what static water pressure must a building's water supply have an approved pressure regulator?

(A) 100 psi
(B) 80 psi
(C) 60 psi
(D) 40 psi

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5 PLANNING AND ESTIMATING

What maximum weighted-average lead content is allowed on the wetted surfaces of pipes, fittings and fixtures that carry drinking water?

(A) 0.25%
(B) 2.5%
(C) 0.2%
(D) 0.5%

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6 UNDERGROUND AND ROUGH SYSTEMS

When must plumbing fixtures be protected from sewage backflow by an approved backwater valve?

(A) When the building drain discharges to the sewer through a sewage ejector
(B) When they are on a floor level lower than the street curb in front of the lot
(C) When they are on a floor level lower than the next upstream manhole cover of the sewer
(D) When they are on a floor level higher than the next upstream manhole cover of the sewer

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7 UNDERGROUND AND ROUGH SYSTEMS

Following the direction of flow on a sewage-ejector discharge, where does the fullway gate or ball valve belong?

(A) Between the ejector and its check valve
(B) On the gravity drain entering the sump
(C) On the vent serving the sump
(D) Downstream of the check valve

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8 UNDERGROUND AND ROUGH SYSTEMS

At what torque should a preset wrench release when tightening a standard-duty CISPI 310 no-hub cast-iron coupling?

(A) 60 in-lb
(B) 100 in-lb
(C) 120 in-lb
(D) 80 in-lb

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9 UNDERGROUND AND ROUGH SYSTEMS

What is the maximum spacing between supports for horizontal 3/4-inch PEX tubing?

(A) 32 in
(B) 36 in
(C) 48 in
(D) 24 in

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10 SAFETY

Which activity is Class I asbestos work under Cal/OSHA?

(A) Removing asbestos-containing floor tile
(B) Cleaning up debris from asbestos work
(C) Removing asbestos-containing pipe insulation
(D) Repairing piping while disturbing asbestos-containing insulation

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11 SAFETY

Above which outdoor work-area temperature does Cal/OSHA require shaded areas to be in place whenever employees are present?

(A) 80°F
(B) 90°F
(C) 85°F
(D) 95°F

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12 SAFETY

For planned, nonemergency excavation in California, what minimum notice must be given to 811, excluding the notification day?

(A) 4 working days
(B) 1 working day
(C) 2 working days
(D) 3 working days

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13 SERVICE, REPAIR, AND REMODEL PLUMBING SYSTEMS

Before reassembling a fuel-gas flange joint opened for maintenance, what must be done with its gasket?

(A) Inspect and reuse it if it is not cracked
(B) Coat it with sealant and reinstall it
(C) Discard it and install a suitable new gasket
(D) Leave it in place and add a second gasket

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14 SERVICE, REPAIR, AND REMODEL PLUMBING SYSTEMS

A meter still shows flow with a verified, leak-tight house shutoff closed. Irrigation and all other branches between the meter and that valve have been ruled out. Which piping should be checked for a leak?

(A) The hot-water piping beyond the house shutoff
(B) The service piping between the meter and the house shutoff
(C) The under-slab piping beyond the house shutoff
(D) The fixture supplies beyond the house shutoff

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15 SERVICE, REPAIR, AND REMODEL PLUMBING SYSTEMS

A ruptured copper medical-gas line in a hospital has been isolated. Which permanent repair restores the line using compliant joints?

(A) Replace the damaged section and seal threaded repair couplings with thread tape
(B) Replace the damaged section and soft-solder the coupling joints
(C) Replace the damaged section and use press-fit water-service couplings
(D) Replace the damaged section and braze the coupling joints

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16 SERVICE, REPAIR, AND REMODEL PLUMBING SYSTEMS

After a backflow preventer is installed, a water heater's T&P valve releases small amounts each heating cycle. What is the likely cause?

(A) An excessively high thermostat setting
(B) Uncontrolled thermal expansion
(C) Debris on the relief-valve seat
(D) Water hammer

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17 FINISH PLUMBING INSTALLATIONS

What is the highest permitted water temperature at an individual showerhead after its control valve has been adjusted?

(A) 120°F
(B) 110°F
(C) 125°F
(D) 140°F

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18 FINISH PLUMBING INSTALLATIONS

For an adult wheelchair-accessible water closet in a California public restroom, what side-wall-to-centerline range is required?

(A) 17–18 in
(B) 12–14 in
(C) 19–20 in
(D) 15–16 in

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19 FINISH PLUMBING INSTALLATIONS

What minimum clearance is required on all sides of an unlisted water heater?

(A) 6 in
(B) 9 in
(C) 12 in
(D) 18 in

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20 FINISH PLUMBING INSTALLATIONS

When CPC spacing and trap-placement requirements are met, one common trap may serve at most how many adjacent lavatories in the same room?

(A) 4
(B) 1
(C) 2
(D) 3

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Answer key and explanations

#	ANSWER	WHY
1	**A**	The cost is (160 × $1.80) + (120 × $1.40) = $288 + $168 = $456.
2	**A**	The drop is 150 × 0.02 = 3 ft. Multiplying by 12 gives 36 inches.
3	**A**	Water pressure decreases about 0.433 psi per foot of rise. The outlet pressure is 80 − (40 × 0.433) = 62.68 psi, or about 63 psi.
4	**B**	CPC 608.2 requires an approved pressure regulator, preceded by an adequate strainer, where the static pressure in the water supply piping exceeds 80 psi, and the static pressure must then be reduced to 80 psi or less. Regulators 1-1/2 inches and larger need no strainer.
5	**A**	CPC 604.2 limits the lead content of pipes, pipe fittings, plumbing fittings and fixtures that convey or dispense water for human consumption to a weighted average of 0.25 percent of the wetted surfaces. Solder and flux have a separate limit of 0.2 percent.
6	**C**	CPC 710.1 requires an approved backwater valve for fixtures on a floor level lower than the next upstream manhole cover of the public or private sewer serving them. Fixtures on that floor that are not themselves below the manhole cover need no backwater valve, and fixtures on floors above that elevation must not discharge through it.
7	**D**	CPC 710.4 places the fullway gate or ball valve on the discharge side of the backwater or check valve.
8	**A**	Standard CISPI 310 no-hub couplings are tightened to 60 inch-pounds. Heavy-duty couplings typically need more torque, often 80 to 120 inch-pounds, so follow the coupling manufacturer's instructions.
9	**A**	CPC Table 313.3 permits at most 32 inches between supports for horizontal PEX 1 inch and smaller. A 3/4-inch tube falls in that group.
10	**C**	Class I includes removal of asbestos-containing thermal system insulation, such as pipe insulation. Floor-tile removal is Class II; repair disturbance is Class III; cleanup is Class IV.
11	**A**	Title 8, section 3395(d)(1), requires shade to be present when outdoor temperature exceeds 80°F. At 80°F or below, timely access to shade is still required upon request.
12	**C**	Give at least two working days of notice. The notification day, weekends, and holidays do not count toward that minimum.
13	**C**	CPC 1208.5.12.5 requires a new gasket whenever a flanged joint is separated.
14	**B**	The closed, leak-tight valve isolates the house piping. With other branches ruled out, continued meter flow points to the service piping between the meter and the house shutoff.
15	**D**	Replace the damaged copper section using brazed joints and the required nitrogen purge. CPC 1321 requires appropriate medical-gas materials and brazing; complete the required testing before returning the line to service.
16	**B**	The backflow preventer prevents expanding water from returning to the supply. Without adequate expansion control, heating can raise pressure enough to open the T&P valve.
17	**A**	CPC 408.4.2 limits water discharged from an individual showerhead to 120°F. The valve or temperature limit stop must be set accordingly.

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#	ANSWER	WHY
18	**A**	CBC 11B-604.2 requires the centerline to be 17–18 inches from the side wall or partition. The ambulatory-compartment exception does not apply to this wheelchair-accessible fixture.
19	**C**	CPC 504.3.2 requires an unlisted water heater to be approved by the Authority Having Jurisdiction before it is installed and to have at least 12 inches of clearance on all sides. Listed water heaters follow their listing and the manufacturer's installation instructions (504.3.1).
20	**D**	CPC 1001.2 permits up to three adjacent lavatories on one trap in the same room. Outlet spacing and central trap placement must also meet that section.

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