



National Cosmetology Theory Examination CIB
National-Interstate Council of State Boards of Cosmetology (NIC)

Effective July 01, 2022

CONTENTS

Contents

CANDIDATE INFORMATION BULLETIN (CIB)	3
IMPORTANT INSTRUCTIONS	4
General	4
Standardized Administration	4
Prohibited Items	4
COSMETOLOGY THEORY EXAMINATION CONTENT OUTLINE	6
Domain Details	6
NATIONAL COSMETOLOGY THEORY EXAMINATION SAMPLE	
QUESTIONS	11
NIC NATIONAL INSTRUCTOR EXAMS REFERENCES	13
Standard	13
Supplemental	13



CANDIDATE INFORMATION BULLETIN (CIB)

EXAMINATION CONTENT AND IMPORTANT INSTRUCTIONS

Please visit your official examination provider website OR www.nictesting.org for the most current bulletin prior to testing.

The National Cosmetology Theory Examination is a licensure examination for Cosmetology, developed by the National-Interstate Council of State Boards of Cosmetology (NIC).

This bulletin contains IMPORTANT INFORMATION regarding National Cosmetology Theory Examination content and references.

The time allowed for this examination is 90 minutes.

PLEASE REVIEW ALL INFORMATION CAREFULLY.

For each NIC National Theory Examination, there are multiple parts to every Candidate Information Bulletin (CIB):

- **Important Instructions and Examination Content Domain Sections** – This provides information and guidelines related to administration of the Theory examination and information about the scope of content covered in the examination.
- **References** – This provides a list of references used to develop and support

IMPORTANT INSTRUCTIONS

the content covered in NIC examinations. References will be the same for Theory, Practical, Written Practical, and Additional Sections for each exam.

BE CERTAIN TO REVIEW ALL PARTS OF THIS NIC EXAMINATION CIB CAREFULLY!

IMPORTANT INSTRUCTIONS

General

- Do not leave the examination area without permission. Permission must be obtained to leave the examination area for any reason, including restroom usage or at the completion of the examination. *Picture ID is required for re-entry into the examination.*
- All examinations are administered in a testing environment.

Standardized Administration

Due to standardization of the NIC National Examinations, proctors and examiners are required to adhere to the following standards:

- With the exception of verbal instructions, proctors and examination administration personnel are NOT allowed to speak with candidates.
- If a candidate experiences an emergency situation, they may notify the proctor by raising their hand.

Prohibited Items

- The following provides examples of materials and actions that are prohibited in the examination room during the examination administration:
 - Possession of cellular phones, watches (of any kind), pagers, tablets,

IMPORTANT INSTRUCTIONS

computers, projectors, cameras, or any other electronic or recording devices, printed materials, or handwritten notes.

- Purses, bags, coats, hats, and any other personal items not directly needed to complete the examination, are not allowed.
- Communicating to other candidates or any examiner.
- Exhibiting disruptive behavior. The above referenced items or actions are not an exhaustive list.

Failure to comply with any of these conditions or exhibiting ANY behavior that suggests an effort to cheat will result in immediate dismissal from the examination and the candidates' actions reported to the proper authorities.

COSMETOLOGY THEORY EXAMINATION CONTENT OUTLINE

COSMETOLOGY THEORY EXAMINATION CONTENT OUTLINE

Domain Details

The following outlines the scope of content covered by the NIC National Cosmetology Theory Examination. The percentages represent the percentage of items from each domain. The examination contains 110 items, of which 100 items are weighted and contribute to the candidate's final score.

- I. Scientific Concepts (35%)
 - A. Infection control and safety practices
 1. Identify cause/transmission of diseases and infections
 2. Identify the purpose and differentiate among the categories of infection control
 - a. Sanitation
 - b. Disinfection
 - c. Sterilization
 3. Recognize how cross-contamination occurs and how it can be prevented (e.g., single use and multi-use items)
 4. Apply blood exposure procedures
 5. Identify requirements of government agencies
 - a. OSHA
 - b. EPA
 - B. Human anatomy and physiology
 1. Identify function and structure of the:
 - a. Hair and scalp
 - b. Skin
 - c. Nails
 2. Recognize signs and symptoms of conditions, disorders, and diseases related to:
 - a. Hair and scalp

COSMETOLOGY THEORY EXAMINATION CONTENT OUTLINE

- b. Skin
 - c. Nails
 - 3. Identify muscles and joints and their functions related to:
 - a. Head and face
 - b. Arms and hands
 - c. Legs and feet
 - 4. Identify functions of:
 - a. Nervous system
 - b. Circulatory system
- C. Basic chemistry used in Cosmetology
- 1. Recognize purpose and effects of ingredients
 - 2. Recognize interactions between chemicals
 - 3. Recognize chemical reactions (e.g., overexposure, chemical burn)
 - 4. Recognize the values of the pH scale
- II. Hair Care and Services (45%)
- A. Client consultation, analysis, and documentation
 - 1. Evaluate condition of client's hair and scalp
 - 2. Recognize conditions that would prohibit service (i.e., contraindications)
 - 3. Utilize preliminary tests (e.g., predisposition and strand tests)
 - 4. Recommend services or products based on client needs
 - 5. Establish/Maintain client records (e.g., service history, client card, medical history)
 - B. Hair care and services- Tools used in hair care services
 - 1. Identify purpose, function, and infection control procedures of items
 - a. Equipment (e.g., chair, workstation)
 - b. Implements (e.g., razors, shears, combs/brushes)

COSMETOLOGY THEORY EXAMINATION CONTENT OUTLINE

- c. Supplies and materials (e.g., towels, drapes, neck strips)
 - d. Electrical tools (e.g., irons, blow dryers, clippers)
2. Demonstrate safe practices
 - a. Tools/Implements
 - b. Ergonomics
- C. Hair care principles and procedures
 1. Demonstrate shampooing and conditioning
 2. Demonstrate scalp treatments and scalp massage
 3. Demonstrate draping (e.g., chemical, shampoo, cutting, styling)
 4. Recognize differences in hair care principles and procedures based on various hair types and textures
- D. Hair design principles and procedures
 1. Demonstrate hair cutting and shaping
 2. Demonstrate hair styling
 - a. Wet styling
 - b. Thermal styling
 - c. Natural hair styling (e.g., braiding)
 3. Apply, maintain, and remove hair enhancements
 - a. Wigs and hairpieces
 - b. Hair additions (e.g., taping, bonding, fusion, linking)
 4. Apply principles of balance and hair design (e.g., facial shape, physical structure)
 5. Recognize differences in hair design principles and procedures based on various hair types and textures
- E. Chemical services principles and procedures
 1. Perform hair color services (e.g., virgin, retouch, lightening, foiling, balayage, color formulation, color correction)
 2. Perform chemical hair relaxer/restructurizer and curl reduction (e.g., hydroxide, thio, keratin) service

COSMETOLOGY THEORY EXAMINATION CONTENT OUTLINE

3. Perform chemical waving/texturing (e.g., alkaline, acid, non-thio) services

4. Understand the chemical products used for the various hair texture types

III. Skin Care and Services (10%)

- A. Client consultation, analysis, and documentation

1. Evaluate client's skin
 - a. Type

- b. Condition

2. Recognize conditions that would prohibit service (i.e., contraindications)

3. Recommend services or products based on client needs

4. Establish/Maintain client records (e.g., service history, client card, medical history)

- B. Tools used for skin care services

1. Identify purpose, function, and infection control procedures of items

- a. Equipment (e.g., chair, steamer)

- b. Implements (e.g., tweezers, brushes, extractors)

- c. Supplies, products, and materials (e.g., creams, masks, towels, wax, head coverings)

2. Demonstrates safe practices

- a. Tools/Implements

- b. Ergonomics

- C. Skin care principles and procedures

1. Apply knowledge of a basic facial

2. Apply knowledge of hair removal

3. Apply knowledge of makeup application

4. Apply knowledge of electrical equipment

IV. Nail Care and Services (10%)

- A. Client consultation, analysis, and documentation

COSMETOLOGY THEORY EXAMINATION CONTENT OUTLINE

1. Evaluate condition of client's nails
 2. Recognize conditions that would prohibit service (i.e., contraindications)
 3. Recommend services or products based on client needs
 4. Establish/Maintain client records (e.g., service history, client card, medical history)
- B. Tools used for nail care services
1. Identify purpose, function, and infection control procedures of items
 - a. Equipment (e.g., workstation, pedicure basin)
 - b. Implements (e.g., nippers, file)
 - c. Supplies, products, and materials (e.g., towels, creams, polish)
 2. Demonstrates safe practices
 - a. Tools/Implements
 - b. Ergonomics
- C. Nail care service principles and procedures
1. Apply knowledge of a basic manicure and pedicure
 2. Apply, maintain, and remove nail enhancements

**NATIONAL COSMETOLOGY THEORY EXAMINATION SAMPLE
QUESTIONS**

**NATIONAL COSMETOLOGY THEORY EXAMINATION
SAMPLE QUESTIONS**

The following sample questions are similar to those on the NIC National Cosmetology Theory Examination. Each question is followed by four answer options. Only one option is correct. Correct answers (keys) are listed along with the sample questions.

1. Which of the following will reinforce and reconstruct the hair shaft?
 - A. Scalp treatment
 - B. Balancing shampoo
 - C. Hair brushing
 - D. Protein conditioner
2. When damaged, which of the following will cause the hair growth to be inhibited?
 - A. Papilla
 - B. Shaft
 - C. Cuticle
 - D. Arrector pili
3. A condition caused by an infestation of head lice is
 - A. tinea barbae.
 - B. scabies.
 - C. pediculosis capitis.
 - D. tinea capitis.
4. Debris is removed from tools and implements using which of the following procedures?
 - A. Cleaning
 - B. Disinfection
 - C. Sterilization
 - D. Decontamination
5. What implement adds shine and smooths wavy ridges on the natural nail during a manicure?
 - A. Coarse file

**NATIONAL COSMETOLOGY THEORY EXAMINATION SAMPLE
QUESTIONS**

- B. Metal file
 - C. Nail brush
 - D. Nail buffer
6. What is another name for the dermis layer of the skin?
- A. Spiny layer
 - B. Horny layer
 - C. True skin
 - D. Basal cell
7. The massage movement intended to soothe muscles is
- A. petrissage.
 - B. tapotement.
 - C. friction.
 - D. effleurage.
8. What product can be used to equalize the porosity of the hair?
- A. Shampoo
 - B. Fillers
 - C. Lightener
 - D. Developer

Table 1: Answer Key

Item	Key
1	D
2	A
3	C
4	A
5	D
6	C
7	D
8	B

NIC NATIONAL INSTRUCTOR EXAMS REFERENCES

NIC NATIONAL INSTRUCTOR EXAMS REFERENCES

This list provides the references used to develop and support the content covered in the NIC National Cosmetology examinations. References will be the same across exam types for each exam. Candidates are responsible for using these most updated versions of references, as these editions were used to reference test material.

Standard

Milady Standard Cosmetology and Foundations

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Supplemental

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National Cosmetology Written Practical Examination CIB

National-Interstate Council of State Boards of Cosmetology (NIC)

Effective: July 01, 2022

Table of Contents

CANDIDATE INFORMATION BULLETIN (CIB).....	2
IMPORTANT INSTRUCTIONS	2
General.....	2
Standardized Administration	3
Prohibited Items	3
COSMETOLOGY WRITTEN PRACTICAL EXAMINATION CONTENT OUTLINE	4
Domain Details	4
NATIONAL COSMETOLOGY WRITTEN PRACTICAL EXAMINATION SAMPLE QUESTIONS	9
NATIONAL-INTERSTATE COUNCIL OF STATE BOARDS OF COSMETOLOGY (NIC)	
REFERENCES	11
Standard.....	11
Supplemental	12



CANDIDATE INFORMATION BULLETIN (CIB)

EXAMINATION CONTENT AND IMPORTANT INSTRUCTIONS

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The National Cosmetology Written Practical Examination is a licensure examination for Cosmetology, developed by the National-Interstate Council of State Boards of Cosmetology (NIC).

This bulletin contains IMPORTANT INFORMATION regarding National Cosmetology Written Practical Examination content and administration for core services and additional sections and references.

The time allowed for this examination is 120 minutes.

PLEASE REVIEW ALL INFORMATION CAREFULLY.

For each NIC National Written Practical Examination, there are multiple parts to every Candidate Information Bulletin (CIB):

- **Important Instructions and Examination Content Domain Sections** – This provides information and guidelines related to administration of the Written Practical examination and information about the scope of content covered in the Written Practical examination.
- **References** – This provides a list of references used to develop and support the content covered in NIC examinations. References will be the same for Theory, Practical, Written Practical, and Additional Sections for each exam.

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COSMETOLOGY WRITTEN PRACTICAL EXAMINATION CONTENT OUTLINE

Domain Details

The following outlines the scope of content covered by the NIC National Cosmetology Written Practical Examination. The percentages represent the percentage of items from each domain. The examination contains 75 items, of which 65 items are weighted and contribute to the candidate's final score. The Core Domain Sections are based on the national job analysis.

I. Scientific Concepts (20%)

A. Infection Control and Safety Practices

1. Recognize purpose and/or effects of infection control principles
 - a. Process of infection control: Recognize when cross-contamination occurs
 - b. Process of infection control: Prevention of cross-contamination
 - c. Process of infection control: Differentiate between the purpose of single- and multi-use tools
2. Apply blood contact procedures

B. Basic Chemistry of Products Used in Cosmetology

1. Recognize purpose and effects of products and ingredients
2. Recognize physical interactions with chemicals
3. Recognize chemical reactions (e.g., overexposure, chemical burn)

II. Hair Care and Services (45%)

A. Client Consultation, Analysis and Documentation for Hair Care Services

1. Evaluate condition of client's hair and scalp (i.e., assessment)
2. Recognize conditions that would prohibit service (i.e., contraindications)
3. Determine services or products
4. Recognize purpose and interpret results of preliminary tests (e.g., predisposition and strand tests)

5. Establish/Maintain client records (e.g., service history, client card, medical history)

B. Tools used in Hair Care Services

1. Identify function, purpose and infection control procedures of tools used in hair services:
 - a. Equipment (e.g., chair, workstation)
 - b. Implements (e.g., razors, shears, combs/brushes)
 - c. Supplies and materials (e.g., towels, drape, neck strips)
 - d. Electrical tools (e.g., irons, blow dryers, clippers)
 - e. Proper disinfection procedures
2. Recognize safe practices for use of tools (i.e., equipment, implements, supplies, ergonomics)

C. Hair Care

1. Apply knowledge of principles and procedures for shampooing and conditioning
2. Apply knowledge of principles and procedures for scalp treatments and scalp massage
3. Apply knowledge of draping (e.g., chemical, shampoo, cutting)

D. Hair Design

1. Apply knowledge of principles, procedures and safety of hair cutting and shaping
2. Apply knowledge of principles, procedures and safety of hair styling:
 - a. Wet styling
 - b. Thermal styling
 - c. Natural hair styling (e.g., braiding)
3. Apply knowledge of principles, procedures and safety of hair enhancements

4. Apply principles of balance and design (e.g., facial shape, physical structure)

E. Chemical Services

1. Apply knowledge of principles, procedures and safety for:
 - a. Hair coloring (including corrective color)
 - b. Hair lightening
 - c. Foiling
 - d. Chemical hair relaxing/restructuring and curl reduction:
Hydroxide
 - e. Chemical hair relaxing/restructuring and curl reduction: Thio
 - f. Chemical hair relaxing/restructuring and curl reduction:
Keratin
 - g. Chemical waving/texturizing: Alkaline
 - h. Chemical waving/texturizing: Acid
 - i. Chemical waving/texturizing: Non-thio
 - i. Chemical waving/texturizing: Keratin

III. Skin Care and Services (15%)

- A. Client Consultation, analysis and Documentation for Skin Care Services
1. Evaluate condition of client's skin:
 - a. Skin type
 - b. Skin condition
 2. Identify contraindications:
 - a. Disorders
 - b. Diseases
 3. Determine services and products
 4. Establish/Maintain client records (e.g., service history, client card, medical history)

B. Tools used for skin care services

1. Identify function, purpose and infection control procedures of tools:
 - a. Equipment (e.g., chair, steamer)
 - b. Implements (e.g., tweezers, brushes, extractors)
 - c. Supplies, products, and materials (e.g., creams, masks, towels, body and hair drapes)
 - d. Proper disinfection procedures
2. Recognize and understand safe practices for use of tools (i.e., equipment, implements, supplies, ergonomics)

C. Facial skin care services

1. Apply knowledge of principles, procedures and safety for:
 - a. Cleansing
 - b. Steaming
 - c. Exfoliation
 - d. Extraction
 - e. Massage
 - f. Masks
 - g. Hair Removal: Tweezing
 - h. Hair Removal: Depilatory
 - i. Hair Removal: Hard wax
 - i. Hair Removal: Soft wax
 - j. Makeup application
 - k. Electrical equipment

IV. Nail Care and Services (20%)

- A. Client Consultation, Analysis and Documentation for nail care services
 1. Evaluate condition of client's nails
 2. Identify contraindications:

- a. Disorders
 - b. Diseases
 - 3. Determine services and products
 - 4. Establish/Maintain client records (e.g., service history, client card, medical history)
- B. Tools used in nail care services
- 1. Identify function, purpose and infection control procedures of tools:
 - a. Equipment (e.g., workstation, pedicure basin)
 - b. Implements (e.g., nippers, file)
 - c. Supplies, products, and materials (e.g., towels, creams, polish)
 - d. Proper disinfection procedures
 - 2. Recognize and understand safe practices for use of tools (i.e., equipment, implements, supplies, ergonomics)
- C. Apply knowledge of principles, procedures and safety for basic manicure and pedicure
- D. Apply knowledge of principles, procedures and safety for application, maintenance, and removal of nail enhancements:
- 1. Nail tips
 - 2. Acrylics

NATIONAL COSMETOLOGY WRITTEN PRACTICAL EXAMINATION SAMPLE QUESTIONS

The following sample questions are similar to those on the NIC National Cosmetology Written Practical Examination. Each question is followed by four answer options. Only one option is correct. Correct answers (keys) are listed along with the sample questions.

1. The FIRST step prior to disinfecting implements is to
 - A. rinse thoroughly with hot water.
 - B. remove all hair and visible debris.
 - C. completely immerse in a sanitizing solution.
 - D. expose to UV light for 15 minutes.
2. The application of facial makeup will become unsafe when which of the following occurs?
 - A. Product is transferred to a pallet
 - B. Fingers are used to transfer product to a pallet
 - C. Hand is used to brace during application
 - D. Fingers are used for product application
3. During the client consultation for a manicure, the practitioner determines the client has brittle nails. Which of the following treatments is recommended for this condition?
 - A. Apply a clear top coat
 - B. Perform a paraffin treatment
 - C. Conditioning oil manicure
 - D. Buff with 3-way buffer

Answer Key

Item Key

1 B

2 B

3 C

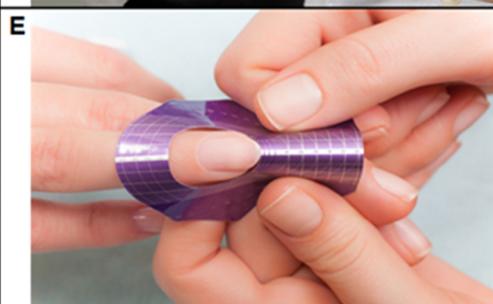
4 A, B

Answer Key

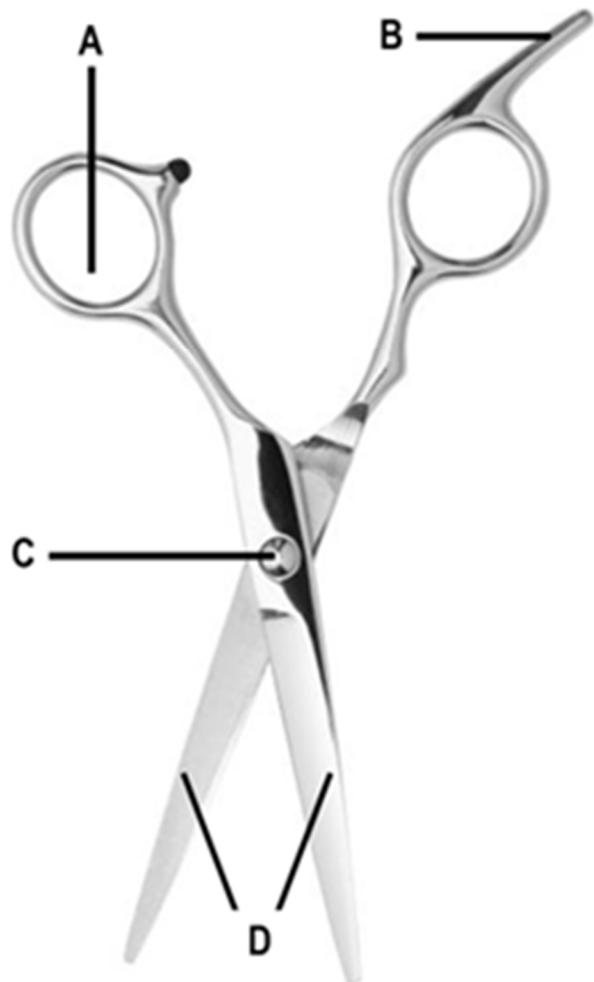
Item Key

5 B

4. Please select all images of multi-use items.



5. Select the finger hole on the image below.



NATIONAL-INTERSTATE COUNCIL OF STATE BOARDS OF COSMETOLOGY (NIC) REFERENCES

This list provides the references used to develop and support the content covered in the NIC National Cosmetology examinations. References will be the same across exam types for each exam. Candidates are responsible for using these most updated versions of references, as these editions were used to reference test material.

Standard

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Supplemental

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