



NATIONAL NAIL TECHNOLOGY  
THEORY EXAMINATION

CANDIDATE INFORMATION BULLETIN

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The National Nail Technology Theory Examination is the licensure examination for Nail Technicians, which is developed by the National-Interstate Council of State Boards of Cosmetology (NIC). This bulletin contains **IMPORTANT INFORMATION** regarding the examination, including content outline covered by the theory examination, sample questions and answers, and references. The time allowed for the Nail Technology Theory Examination is 90 minutes.

**PLEASE REVIEW ALL INFORMATION CAREFULLY.**

**IMPORTANT INSTRUCTIONS**

- 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 examination.
- With the exception of verbal instructions, the proctors and examination administration personnel are not allowed to communicate with candidates.
- If you have an emergency situation please notify the proctor.
- The following provides examples of materials and actions that are prohibited during the examination administration:
  - Possession of cellular phones, pagers, tablets, computers, projectors, cameras, or any other electronic or recording devices, printed materials, or handwritten notes.
  - 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 your immediate dismissal from the examination and your actions reported to the proper authorities.*

**NAIL TECHNOLOGY THEORY EXAMINATION CONTENT OUTLINE**

1. **SCIENTIFIC CONCEPTS (40%)**
  - A. Infection Control and Safety Practices
    1. Identify how disease and infection are caused and transmitted
    2. Recognize purpose and/or effects of infection control principles (e.g., cleansing, sanitation, disinfection, sterilization)
      - a. Levels of infection control
      - b. Process of infection control (e.g., dispensing of products, disposal of soiled materials, storage of supplies)
        1. Recognize when cross-contamination occurs
        2. Differentiate between the purpose of single- and multi-use tools
    3. Apply blood exposure/contact procedures
    4. Identify purpose of Material Safety and Data Sheets (MSDS)
    5. Identify ways to prevent work injuries (e.g., ventilation, ergonomics, environment)
  - B. Basic Human Anatomy and Physiology
    1. Identify function and structure of the skin
    2. Differentiate between disorders and diseases of the skin
    3. Identify bones of the arms and hands
    4. Identify bones of the legs and feet
    5. Identify muscles of the arms and hands and their functions
    6. Identify muscles of the legs and feet and their functions

- C. Nail Anatomy and Physiology
  - 1. Identify the parts of the nail (e.g., root, mantle, matrix)
  - 2. Identify function of structures of the nail
  - 3. Differentiate between signs and symptoms of nail conditions, disorders, and diseases
  
- D. Basic Chemistry of Nail Products
  - 1. Explain purpose and effects of products and ingredients
  - 2. Recognize interaction between chemicals
  - 3. Recognize physical interactions with chemicals
  - 4. Recognize chemical reactions (e.g., overexposure, chemical burn)

**2. NAIL TECHNOLOGY PROCEDURES (60%)**

- A. Client Consultation and Documentation
  - 1. Identify elements of a client consultation
  - 2. Evaluate condition of client's nail and skin (i.e., nail assessment)
  - 3. Recognize conditions that would prohibit service (i.e., contraindications)
  - 4. Determine services or products
  - 5. Maintain client records (e.g., service history, client card, health history)
  
- B. Nail Service Tools
  - 1. Identify function and effects of tools
    - a. Nail equipment (e.g., table, lamp, electric file, pedicure basin)
    - b. Nail implements (e.g., nail clippers, cuticle pusher)
    - c. Nail supplies, products, and materials (e.g., cotton, lotion, towels)
  - 2. Follow practices for safe use of tools (i.e., equipment, implements, supplies)
  
- C. Nail Service Preparation
  - 1. Perform set-up of work station/service area following infection control procedures
  - 2. Perform sanitation of client's and technician's hands and/or feet
  
- D. Manicure and Pedicure Services
  - 1. Perform procedures safely for basic manicure and/or pedicure service
    - a. Shape nails
    - b. Cuticle detailing (e.g., cuticle pushing, removal, conditioning)
    - c. Cleanse nails
    - d. Buff nails
    - e. Exfoliate (e.g., foot file, scrub, AHA)
    - f. Perform basic massage
      - 1. Identify mechanics of massage movements
        - a. Effleurage
        - b. Petrissage
        - c. Friction
        - d. Tapotement
      - 2. Recognize effects of massage types
        - a. Effleurage
        - b. Petrissage
        - c. Friction
        - d. Tapotement
  
- 2. Recognize purpose and procedures for add-on services
  - a. Paraffin
  - b. Hot oil/lotion
  - c. Masks (e.g., detox, moisture)
  - d. Soak-off gels

- E. Perform Application, Maintenance, and Removal Procedures for Nail Enhancement Services
  - 1. Nail tip
  - 2. Acrylics
  - 3. Light-cured gels
  
- F. Perform Post-service Procedures Following Infection Control Guidelines

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## NAIL TECHNOLOGY SAMPLE QUESTIONS

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

1. Pumice stone is used in pedicuring as
  - a. an abrasive.
  - b. a bleach.
  - c. a lubricant.
  - d. an astringent.
  
2. What is the **FIRST** step in performing a manicure?
  - a. Shape the nails
  - b. Soften the cuticles
  - c. Clean under free edge
  - d. Remove old polish
  
3. Where should all manicuring cosmetic supplies be kept when not being used?
  - a. On a clean shelf
  - b. On the manicuring table
  - c. In a clean manicuring kit
  - d. In clean, closed containers
  
4. Which one of the following is a condition in which the cuticle splits around the nail?
  - a. Hangnails
  - b. Pterygium
  - c. Onychophagy
  - d. Onychorrhexis
  
5. Nerves and blood vessels are found in the nail
  - a. bed.
  - b. wall.
  - c. plate.
  - d. grooves.
  
6. An antiseptic is used in manicuring to
  - a. bleach the nails.
  - b. treat minor cuts.
  - c. smooth corrugated nails.
  - d. give the nails a high sheen.
  
7. After each use, manicuring implements should be
  - a. wiped with a towel.
  - b. wiped with a tissue.
  - c. cleansed and disinfected.
  - d. placed in dry storage.

8. For which one of the following are oil manicures recommended?
- a. Leuconychia
  - b. Split nails
  - c. Brittle nails
  - d. Prevention of infection
9. What is the actively growing part of the nail?
- a. Lunula
  - b. Matrix
  - c. Mantle
  - d. Free edge
10. What should be applied to a split in the nail before wrapping it?
- a. Top coat
  - b. Base coat
  - c. Adhesive glue
  - d. Nail hardener

**Answers**

- |      |      |      |       |
|------|------|------|-------|
| 1. a | 4. a | 7. c | 10. c |
| 2. d | 5. a | 8. c |       |
| 3. d | 6. b | 9. b |       |

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TECHNOLOGY ONLINE  
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<http://www.iqttesting.com/registrationv2008/quickregister.aspx>

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PLEASE CALL IQT AT  
1-866-773-1114.  
(\$39.00 fee applies)**

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## NAIL TECHNOLOGY REFERENCES

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### PRIMARY REFERENCES

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*Salon Fundamentals Nails – A Resource for Your Skin Care Career*  
2007, 10<sup>th</sup> printing, 1st Edition, June 2013  
Pivot Point International, Inc.  
World Headquarters  
1560 Sherman Avenue, Suite 700  
Evanston, IL 60201  
800-886-4247  
[www.pivot-point.com](http://www.pivot-point.com)

*Milady's Standard Nail Technology*

2011, 6th Edition

Alisha Rimando Botero, Catherine M. Frangie, Jim McConnell, et al

Milady

5 Maxwell Drive

Clifton Park NY 12065-2919

[www.milady.cengage.com](http://www.milady.cengage.com)

*Nail Technician*

2007 2.1 Edition

Author: Randy Rick

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396 Pottsville/Saint Clair Highway

Pottsville PA 17901

[www.clicusa.com](http://www.clicusa.com)

*NIC Infection Control and Safety Standards*

Adopted 1998; Revised October 2002, Revised August 2014

National-Interstate Council of State Boards of Cosmetology

[http://nictesting.org/memberinfo/NIC\\_Health\\_&\\_Safety\\_Standards- Aug\\_2014.pdf](http://nictesting.org/memberinfo/NIC_Health_&_Safety_Standards- Aug_2014.pdf)

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**SUPPORTING REFERENCES**

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*Salon Fundamentals Nails – A Resource for Your Skin Care Career*

2007, 7th printing, 1st Edition, October 2011

Pivot Point International, Inc.

World Headquarters

1560 Sherman Avenue, Suite 700

Evanston, IL 60201

800-886-4247

[www.pivot-point.com](http://www.pivot-point.com)

*Milady's Standard Nail Technology*

2007, 5th Edition, Revised Edition

Catherine M. Frangie, Douglas Schoon, Sue Ellen Schultes plus 11 others

Thompson Delmar Learning Milady

5 Maxwell Drive

Clifton Park NY 12065-2919

[www.milady.com](http://www.milady.com)

*Nail Technician*

2007 1<sup>st</sup> Edition

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