

# **Test Study Guide for Ham Radio Written Tests**

The following is a helpful guide to use when studying to pass the FCC ham radio written examinations. If you read this and follow the methodology, you will pass! That is my promise to you. –Briggs Longbothum, ab2nj VE and Amateur Extra Class licensee

These tests consist entirely of multiple-choice type questions. All of the questions you will see on the examinations you will take are drawn from a much larger pool of questions and possible answers. To your distinct advantage, all of the questions and all of the responses to each question, both the correct and incorrect ones, that comprise those question pools are published word-for-word and are freely available to you. They can be purchased from various sources or you can see and print them for free off the internet for no more than the cost of paper and ink.

All questions and all answers appear word-for-word just as you will see them on the actual exam. The only difference will be in the order in which the answers will be presented to you. In other words, where the correct answer to a particular question may have been “B” in the question pool, it may appear as answer “C” on the actual test you take. But everything will be word-for-word as you’ve seen it in your studies.

The question pools for each test element are different and are updated every five years or so. Make sure you study from the currently used question pool!

One more thing: Keep in mind that this study method is designed to teach you how to pass the exam only. Whether or not you learn anything is up to you. This may sound improper to some, but learning is an ongoing process and should/will continue throughout your ham career. Simply passing a licensing exam does not imply or prove that you know a lot or even enough to be a good ham radio operator. That comes from experience and the enjoyment of doing ham radio. You really need to be on the air to do that. To that end, I want to help you get licensed and welcome you to the hobby so you can enjoy all it has to offer! We’re all looking forward to catching you on the bands.

Now let’s get down to passing those written test elements, here’s how:

**Rule Number One:** STOP what you’re doing and do no more until you read and understand this method! Trust me for now, this works and the closer you follow this method the easier it all will be all the way up through the Amateur Extra Class test examination.

**Rule Number Two:** Re-read rule number one and promise yourself you will study only this method. It is so surprisingly easy, there’s no reason not to follow along plus, it makes sense too...just read on!

Get yourself a fresh, unmarked, and printed copy of the question pool for the written test elements you need. You can print this off the internet or go buy a study guide that contains the current question pool. You can easily find such guides at Radio Shack or you can order from the ARRL, Gordon West, etc.

Make sure you have the appropriate correct answer list too.

Begin by allotting yourself totally undisturbed time. I suggest a minimum of one to two hours as a minimum. You will need multiple sessions of this “quality time.” More if you dedicate shorter time sessions, fewer (2-3) if you commit to longer sessions...your choice!

FIRST: Read the very first question, think and understand precisely what it is that the question asks for.

SECOND: Look up the correct answer letter (a, b, c, or d) and put a check mark next to that answer amongst the other choices.

THIRD: Read that correct answer and **ONLY THAT CORRECT ANSWER!**

**DO NOT EVER, EVER, EVER, READ AN INCORRECT ANSWER!**

FOURTH: It is so important and critical to your success that it bears repeating

**DO NOT EVER, EVER, EVER, READ AN INCORRECT ANSWER!**

FIFTH: Do the same thing with the second question and so on until you have read all of the questions in the entire pool and designated their correct answers.

By this time, you have invested significant time in your studies and you are well on your way to success. Congratulations, take a break! (for a day or two only though).

SIXTH: Make time to go back through the entire question pool in one sitting. Read all of the questions and **ONLY** their correct answers. Remember, you are never to read an incorrect answer!

SEVENTH: You may reread the question pool again anytime, but it is suggested that the last time you do this is the night before you sit for the exam. Do not reread or review on the morning of your exam! Just don't do it! Be confident that you are prepared and ready to pass the test. Congratulations!

Now then, you are probably asking: Is that all there is to it? (Answer=YES!)

The reason it works is simple. You have mentally associated each question with only the correct answer. Your brain will now easily recognize that correct answer when you see it again on the test. The correct answer will be easily stand out for you on the test. More than that, the incorrect answers, which you will now be seeing for the very first time, will stand out even more distinctly since they are new and unfamiliar to your brain. You may or may not know why they are wrong, but you will have that old feeling that “something just ain’t right with it” when you see those incorrect options.

Think about it! You’ve known this “déjà vu” feeling before. The correct answer “just fits” whereas the wrong ones don’t seem to sit right with you. It’s all in the effective mental association you have made with the individual questions and their respective correct answers. Simple isn’t it? Don’t be surprised if you score 100%, in fact, you should expect it!

Again, congratulations to you! Catch you on the air.