



# Nurse Aide Competency Test Guide

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# Table of Contents

Introduction.....	page 3
ADA Testing Accommodations.....	page 3
On the Day of the Exam.....	page 3-4
Exam Room Policies.....	page 4-5
The Written Exam.....	page 5-6
Written Exam Content Outline.....	page 6
Sample Study Questions.....	page 7-8
The Clinical Skills Exam.....	page 9
Sample Clinical Skills.....	page 9-14
Helpful Tips.....	page 14
Evaluations.....	page 14
Test Results.....	page 15
Retesting.....	page 15
Duplicate Score Report.....	page 15
Tips for Success.....	page 15-16

# Introduction

About the Nursing Assistant Competency Examination:

Federal regulations require that all nurse's aides pass both a written knowledge test as well as a clinical skills test. The exam is divided into two parts, the written exam is comprised of 60 multiple choice questions and the clinical skills test consists of four scenarios that you will be required to demonstrate to the test observer.

The written exam will be administered in a group setting. The written exam is administered in English. If the candidate requires the exam to be given to them orally, oral exams are offered on audio CD. Your test observer needs to be informed in advance if you require an oral exam. You will be given 90 minutes to complete the written exam.

The clinical skills exam is taken one at a time with the test observer. You will be given four randomly selected clinical skills to demonstrate. You will be required to fully perform these skills, **not** simulate. You will have 30 minutes to complete this section of the exam.

Both the written and the clinical skills test will be given on the same day. You will be given verbal results upon completion of both portions of the exam. If you do not pass a portion of the exam, you may reschedule with your training provider to retake that portion of the test. The test observer will counsel you at the end of the test regarding any failed results.

## ADA Testing Accommodations

Excel Testing complies with the Americans with Disabilities Act. If a candidate needs special arrangements for the exam due to a disability, they must submit a written request and provide documentation of their disability from a physician or other qualified professional indicating an explanation of the accommodations needed for their exam. Excel Testing will need documentation of reasonable accommodations previously made during the LNA training program. Every effort will be made for reasonable accommodation. Excel Testing does not discriminate against individuals with disabilities in the provision of services.

## On the Day of the Exam

- You must arrive at least 15 minutes before the scheduled exam.
- You will not be admitted into the examination room if you are late.
- You must bring 2 forms of identification.
  - One form must be a photo ID which includes a current (non-expired) driver's license, passport or government issued photo ID.

- Other acceptable forms of ID include a social security card, credit card, or car registration.
- If you do not bring proper identification, you will **NOT** be allowed to test.
- The name on your application must match the name on your IDs. If you have recently married or divorced, you must bring in a copy of a marriage certificate or divorce decree.
- You must wear a watch with a second hand.
- You are required to wear a uniform.
- Bring a pen with blue or black ink.

## Exam Room Policies

### Electronic Devices

Cell phones, pagers and any other electronic devices are not permitted to be used in the exam room and **MUST** be turned OFF during the testing process. Leave these items in your car or outside of the test room if available.

### Food & Beverages

You are not permitted to bring food or beverages into the exam room.

### Breaks

There are absolutely no smoking breaks. Use the bathroom facilities prior to the beginning of your test. You will be allowed to use the restroom in between the written and the clinical exams, one person at a time, but you must first check with your test observer.

### Lateness

Plan to arrive 15 minutes prior to the exam beginning. **Once the exam room door has been closed you will NOT be admitted into the test. There are no exceptions.**

### Misbehavior

If you display disruptive behavior during the exam, you will be dismissed from the exam room and will be required to retake the exam in its entirety.

### Visitors

No friends, family members, children or other guests are allowed at the exam site.

## Exam Aids

You are permitted to bring an unaltered translation dictionary into the exam room if English is not your primary language. Your test observer will inspect the dictionary prior to the exam. If any notes or markings are found in the dictionary you will not be permitted to test. You may not bring in any electronic dictionaries or calculators into the exam room.

## Cheating

You may not give or receive help from other candidates during the examination. If the test observer witnesses this, the examination will be stopped, and you will be dismissed from the test. Any form of cheating will be reported to the Vermont Office of Professional Regulation.

Once you have completed your test, you may NOT share any information regarding the written or clinical skills tests with anyone. These tests are copyrighted and the property of Excel Testing. Sharing information regarding the test either verbally or in writing is punishable by law. Attempting to remove an examination or skills card from the test site is also punishable by law.

# The Written Exam

The test observer will hand out the materials to each candidate taking the written exam. You will have a maximum of 90 minutes to complete the 60 multiple choice questions. Your test observer will tell you when there are 15 minutes remaining in the test.

You may not ask questions about the contents of the test (such as, “what does this question mean?”). Mark your answers on the answer sheet provided. Do NOT write in the test booklet. Any answers marked in the test booklet will NOT be accepted as answers. You should try to answer every single question. Any questions left blank will be marked wrong.

If a candidate chooses to take the test orally, they will also be provided with a copy of the written exam to follow along with. During the oral exam, the questions will be read to you two times each.

You must have a score of 70% or higher on the written portion of the test to pass the written exam.

All test materials must be left in the testing room. Anyone who attempts to take any materials from the testing room will be subject to prosecution. Their test will not be scored, and they will be reported to the Vermont Office of Professional Regulation.

The written and oral exam is comprised of 60 multiple choice questions. The content outline is as follows:

1. Role of the Nursing Assistant .....23%
  - a. Structure of the healthcare system
  - b. Communication
  - c. Resident Rights / Abuse
  - d. Legal and Ethical issues
  - e. Personal and Career Care
2. Safety .....7%
  - a. Restraints
  - b. Body Mechanics
  - c. Environmental Safety
  - d. Accident Prevention
  - e. Emergency Care
3. Human Needs / Development.....10%
  - a. Cultural needs
  - b. Spiritual needs
  - c. Emotional and Mental Health needs
  - d. Aging Process
4. Basic Nursing Skills.....30%
  - a. Infection Control
  - b. Vital Signs
  - c. Positioning, moving and ambulation
  - d. Admission Procedures
  - e. Data Collection
  - f. Reporting
  - g. Disease Process
  - h. Abbreviations
5. Personal Care / Activities of Daily Living.....30%
  - a. The Resident’s environment
  - b. Skin care
  - c. Bathing
  - d. Grooming
  - e. Dressing
  - f. Oral Care
  - g. Nutrition
  - h. Urinary and Bowel elimination
  - i. Restorative Care and Rehabilitation (includes ROM)
  - j. Death and Dying

## Sample Study Test Questions

- 1) Raising the bed to a comfortable position will help prevent:
  - a) Arm strain
  - b) Back strain
  - c) Neck strain
  - d) Leg strain
  
- 2) Body mechanics are best described as:
  - a) A surgical procedure
  - b) Frequent use of back muscles
  - c) Infection prevention
  - d) Prevention of body fatigue and injury
  
- 3) Which blood pressure reading would you report to the Nurse?
  - a) 120/80
  - b) 140/90
  - c) 96/64
  - d) 118/78
  
- 4) Mr. Jones needs to be transferred from his bed to his wheelchair. What action must the nursing assistant take?
  - a) Lock the wheelchair after the transfer
  - b) Lock the wheelchair during the transfer
  - c) Lock the wheelchair before the transfer
  - d) Locking the wheelchair is not necessary
  
- 5) Which of the following diets has no food restrictions?
  - a) Low sodium
  - b) Soft
  - c) Regular
  - d) Diabetic
  
- 6) What does the abbreviation BID stand for?
  - a) Three times a day
  - b) Four times a day
  - c) Two times a day
  - d) Before dinner

- 7) A newly admitted resident asks, "How do I reach you if I need help?" What would be the most appropriate answer?
- "Ask your roommate."
  - "Holler for help."
  - "Don't worry, someone will check in on you."
  - "Let me show you how to use your call light."
- 8) You observed a co-worker tying their resident to the wheelchair. What type of abuse is this?
- Mental
  - Physical
  - Psychiatric
  - Verbal
- 9) After removing gloves from caring for a resident, what should you do next?
- Wash your hands
  - Put on a new pair of gloves
  - Document the patient's vital signs
  - Raise the side rail
- 10) Mr. Martin drank 6 ounces of coffee for breakfast and 3 ounces of Orange Juice. How many CCs did he drink?
- 9 cc's
  - 18 cc's
  - 250 cc's
  - 270 cc's

Answer Key: 1) B 2) D 3) B 4) C 5) C 6) C 7) D 8) B 9) A 10) D

## The Clinical Skills Exam

To most fully prepare yourself for the clinical skills exam you should review all the skills in your textbook. You will be tested on your ability to perform the assigned skills. The test observer will



show you where the equipment is located and answer questions about the equipment. Your resident will be played by another candidate from the test. After you start your clinical skills test you will not be able to ask questions. If you make a mistake when performing your skills, let the test observer know and then repeat the skill correctly.

Not only will you be tested on your ability to perform the assigned skills but also on your ability to take instructions from your test observer. You will also be tested on your ability to document accurately.

The following skills may be included on the test, but it is not an all-inclusive list. A step that is highlighted in bold is considered an immediate failure if you do not perform it correctly. The other items are called skills errors and if you miss 4 or more it will result in failure.

You will be given a skills card to refer to during your clinical test. It will have your assignment listed. You are also being tested on your knowledge of indirect observations (listed below) as well as Resident's Rights, Communication, Infection Control and Safety.

#### Indirect Observations

- Knocks on door
- Provides privacy/curtain
- Checks ID of resident
- Introduces self
- Communicates procedures to resident
- **Leaves call bell in place**
- **Follows infection control practices**
- **Completes all assigned tasks**
- **Safety**

#### Handwashing

- Wets hands and applies soap
- **Rubs hands vigorously for at least 10 seconds**
- Rinses hands well with fingers pointed down
- Dries hands completely
- **Completes task without recontamination**

#### Denture Care / Mouth Care

- **Dons gloves before care and doffs after care**
- Transports dentures in lined basin

- Lines sink with washcloth or paper towels
- Brushes all surfaces of the dentures
- Stores clean dentures in denture cup with water
- Provides mouth care using toothette, cleaning all areas of mouth
- Offers resident opportunity to rinse

#### Dress Resident with Weak Side

- **Dress resident with weak side first**
- Supports affected arm while dressing
- Handles the body gently

#### Empty Catheter Drainage Bag

- **Dons gloves before care and doffs after care**
- Position graduate on clean paper towel below catheter drainage bag
- **Keep drainage bag below the level of the bladder**
- Use alcohol prep pad to clean drain after draining
- Drain bag, being careful not to let drain touch graduate
- **Measure and record urine output within 25 cc's of the test observer**

#### Range of Motion – Hip, Knee & Ankle

- Provide abduction and adduction to the hip
- Provide flexion and extension to the knee
- Provide dorsiflexion and plantar flexion to the ankle
- Supports joints while performing range of motion
- **Provides ROM to the correct side**

#### Assist with Bedpan

- **Don gloves prior and doff gloves after care**
- Position resident comfortably on bedpan
- Elevate head of bed
- Offer toilet tissue or state that you would clean resident
- Dispose of contents properly or state how you would dispose of contents

#### Position Resident on Side

- Handle resident's body gently
- **Position resident on side**

- Provide pillow behind back for support and between knees
- Make sure resident's body is in proper alignment
- Make sure resident is positioned comfortably

#### Radial Pulse for 1 Minute

- Locates radial pulse
- Count for 1 minute
- **Record results, measuring within 4 beats of the test observer**

#### Count Respirations for 1 Minute

- Count respirations for 1 full minute
- **Record results, measuring within 2 breaths of the test observer**

#### Calculate Fluid in CCs

- Accurately measures and converts from ounces to cc's.
- **Documents within 60 cc's of the test observer**

#### Nail Care

- Soak nails
- Clean under each nail
- File and smooth each nail
- **Don and doffs gloves**

#### Transfer Resident from Bed to Wheelchair

- Position wheelchair at head or foot of bed
- **Lock brakes of wheelchair to ensure safety of resident**
- Assist resident to sitting position
- Places gait belt around waist
- Assist resident to put on shoes or footwear
- Assist resident to stand, pivot and sit in wheelchair

#### Range of Motion – Shoulder, Elbow & Wrist

- Provide flexion and extension to the shoulder, elbow and wrist
- Support joint while performing range of motion
- **Gently handles the body**
- **Performs ROM on the correct side**

### Change Soaker Pad with Resident in Bed

- Don gloves before care and doff after care
- Gather soaker pad
- **Raise side rail opposite working side of bed**
- Raise bed to working height
- Assist resident to roll toward raised side rail
- Roll soiled soaker pad inside to the center of the bed
- Place clean soaker pad under resident by rolling
- Raise side rail nearest candidate
- Assist resident to roll over and remove dirty linen
- Pull through and smooth clean soaker pad

### Blood Pressure

- Places correct size BP Cuff snugly on upper arm and arrow is over the brachial artery
- Pushes start button and inflates up to 200 mm HG. (NOT OVER 200 mm HG)
- Waits for the BP reading on the device and the cuff to deflate, removes cuff
- **Records both systolic and diastolic BP results on the documentation pad as the display indicated.**

### Making an Occupied Bed

- Gather linen
- Place clean linen on back of chair or foot of bed
- Provide privacy
- **Raise side rail of the opposite working side of the bed**
- Raise bed to working height
- Resident remains covered
- Assist resident to roll onto side towards the raised side rail
- Roll soiled linen inside to the center of bed
- Place clean bottom sheet along the center of the bed
- **Raise second side rail**
- Roll resident over to the other side
- Remove soiled linen
- Pull clean linen through and smooth
- Dispose of linen in hamper

### Measure and Record Weight

- Balance the scale at zero before placing resident on the scale
- Assist the resident onto the scale
- Obtain the resident's weight
- **Document weight within two pounds of test observer**

### Place Elastic Stocking on Leg

- Hold the heel of the stocking and gather the rest of the stocking
- Support resident's foot at the heel
- Slip the front of the stocking over the toes, foot and heel
- Pull the stocking snugly and evenly up over the leg
- **Ensure the hose is not twisted or wrinkled**

### Modified Bed Bath (Face, One Arm, Hand)

- Covers resident with a blanket or sheet
- Fill basin with warm water
- Wash and dry resident's face without soap
- Expose residents arm and place a towel underneath
- Wash arm and hand using soap and water
- Rinse arm and hand and dry area
- Dispose of soiled linen in appropriate area

### Don and Doff Disposable Isolation Gown and Gloves

- Places arms through each sleeve of the gown
- Makes sure the gown is snug at the neck and tied at the waist, covering the uniform
- Dons gloves overlapping the gowns sleeves at the wrist
- Removes gloves before removing the gown
- Pulls each sleeve off by grasping each shoulder on the inside of the gown turning the gown inside out
- **Rolls the gown with the soiled side inside, not letting it touch the uniform**
- Disposes of gown and gloves in appropriate container

### Feed a Dependent Resident

- Looks at the diet card and verbally states resident has the right tray

- **Position resident upright at least 45 degrees**
- Place towel or clothing protector on chest
- Wash and dry resident's hands
- Sit down and face resident while feeding
- Feed resident in small bite size amounts and allow time for chewing and swallowing
- Offer fluids frequently
- Leave resident clean and dispose of dirty linens

Additional Clinical Skills You Should Know:

- Height
- Backrub
- Perineal Care
- Commode
- Bathing
- Temperature
- Semi-Fowlers Position

## Helpful Tips

- Practice and review the clinical skills in your textbook.
- Listen carefully to the instructions given by the test observer.
- Take your time and perform each skill correctly.
- Treat the actor playing the role of the resident as courteously as you would treat your resident at a nursing facility.

## Evaluations

You will be asked to complete an evaluation on the test observer as well as the testing site, at the end of the test. These evaluations are confidential and will not affect the scoring of your competency exam.

## Test Results

You will receive verbal results the day of your test. The verbal test results you receive are unofficial results. Excel Testing has a portal that stores your official score report in the account you created upon registration for the exam. Once Excel Testing receives your results the test will be verified and scored, and official results will be in your portal account within 3 business days. Your LNA program

coordinator will also receive a report as well as the Vermont Office of Professional Regulation and the Vermont Department of Disabilities, Aging and Independent Living. Your test results will state either pass or fail. There are no percentages sent to you.

Once you have successfully passed both the written/oral and skill test, you are eligible for a Vermont LNA provisional license if your background check is still pending, or for a traditional Vermont LNA license if both the exam and criminal background check requirements have been met.

## Retesting

If you fail the written/oral or skills exam, you may retake that portion of the exam. To schedule a retake, contact your LNA training provider or Excel Testing at 844-516-0600 for information regarding another test site. You may not retest until 1 day after taking the previous test.

If you do not pass a portion of the exam, the test observer will counsel you at the completion of the exam regarding any failed results. If you failed the clinical skills portion of the exam, the score report you receive will indicate which skills were performed unsatisfactorily. The written exam is based on Pass or Fail. Neither the test observer nor the score report will indicate the number right or wrong.

Please be aware that there is a fee to re-test.

## Duplicate Score Report

If you lose your score report or need a duplicate score report, please visit your Excel Testing portal and login with your account information, this process is FREE. You may also visit our website ([www.ExcelTestingVT.com](http://www.ExcelTestingVT.com)) to download a duplicate score report request form. Mail your completed form and the payment of \$30 to the address listed on the form. A duplicate will be sent to you once received. This process can be completed via email as well and paid online upon request.

## Tips for Success

- Get a good night's sleep the night before the test
- Arrange for childcare prior to the test and have a backup plan in place
- Take a drive to find the test site ahead of time so you know where you are going and where to park on the day of the test
- Eat a healthy, nutritious meal before the test
- If English is your second language, bring a translation dictionary
- Allow for a full 6 hours to complete the test. The written portion can take up to 1.5 hours and if you are the last candidate in a class of 8 students to perform your skills exam, you would be finishing 5.5 hours after the test begins.

- Practice deep breathing to help control your nerves
- Visualize a successful test day!