



**New York State  
Department of Civil Service**

*Committed to Innovation, Quality, and Excellence*

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*A Guide to the Written Test*

**for the**

**Entry-Level Custodians And Janitors Series**

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Eliot Spitzer  
*Governor*

Nancy G. Groenwegen  
*Commissioner*

## **INTRODUCTION**

The New York State Department of Civil Service has developed this test guide to familiarize you with the written test for the Entry-Level Custodians and Janitors Series. This test guide provides a general description of the subject areas which will be tested and the different types of questions you may see on the test. The Examination Announcement will specify the exact subject areas to be included on the particular examination you will be taking.

The written test for the Entry-Level Custodians and Janitors Series has an overall time allowance of 2 hours. The test questions will cover the following three subject areas:

- 1. CLEANING TOOLS AND THEIR USES:** These questions test for knowledge of various cleaning tools and equipment commonly used by custodians and janitors on the job. You will be presented with drawings of various tools and equipment. You must be able to recognize the tools and know their proper uses in order to answer the questions correctly. **NOTE:** *The tools pictured in this test guide and in the test booklet will not necessarily be drawn to scale.*
- 2. TOOLS USED FOR MINOR MAINTENANCE AND REPAIR:** These questions test for knowledge of various tools and equipment used for minor maintenance and repair. You will be presented with drawings of tools and equipment used for minor mechanical, electrical, plumbing, and carpentry repair. You must be able to recognize the tools and know their proper uses in order to answer the questions correctly. **NOTE:** *The tools pictured in this test guide and in the test booklet will not necessarily be drawn to scale.*
- 3. HEALTH AND SAFETY ISSUES IN CUSTODIAL WORK:** These questions test for knowledge of proper health and safety practices for cleaning, building operations and maintenance, and other areas relevant to the work of custodians and janitors. You will be presented with drawings which show work situations involving basic health and safety issues. You must be able to recognize unhealthy, unsafe, or hazardous work conditions and know how to correct them.

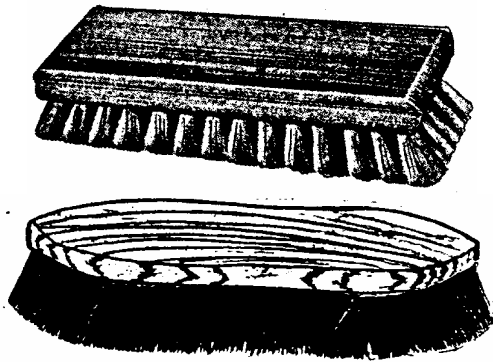
The remainder of this test guide explains how you will be tested in each of the subject areas listed above. A **TEST TASK** is provided for each subject area. This is an explanation of how a question will be presented and how to correctly answer it. Read each explanation carefully. This test guide also provides one **SAMPLE QUESTION** for each subject area. This sample question is similar to the type of questions that will be presented on the actual test. This test guide provides the **SOLUTION** and correct answer to each sample question. You should study each sample question and solution in order to understand how the correct answer was determined.

## **SUBJECT AREA 1**

**CLEANING TOOLS AND THEIR USES:** These questions test for knowledge of various cleaning tools and equipment commonly used by custodians and janitors on the job.

**TEST TASK:** You will be presented with drawings of various tools and equipment. You must be able to recognize the tools and know their proper uses in order to answer the questions correctly. **NOTE:** *The tools pictured in this test guide and in the test booklet will not necessarily be drawn to scale.*

### **SAMPLE QUESTION:**



The best use for the brushes shown above is to

- A. dust furniture
- B. scour toilet bowls
- C. wash floors
- D. clean windows

*The correct answer to this sample question is C.*

### **SOLUTION:**

*To answer this question correctly, you must be able to recognize that the brushes shown above are scrub brushes, and you must know that scrub brushes are generally used to wash flat surfaces, such as floors.*

**Choice A** is not the correct answer to the sample question. *The bristles on scrub brushes are too harsh to be used to dust furniture.*

**Choice B** is not the correct answer to the sample question. *Scrub brushes are too flat to effectively scour curved surfaces, such as toilet bowls.*

**Choice C** is the correct answer to the sample question. *Scrub brushes are generally used to wash flat surfaces, such as floors.*

**Choice D** is not the correct answer to the sample question. *The bristles on scrub brushes are generally too stiff to effectively clean windows.*

## SUBJECT AREA 2

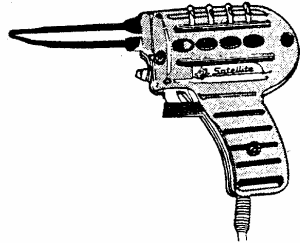
**TOOLS USED FOR MINOR MAINTENANCE AND REPAIR:** These questions test for knowledge of various tools and equipment used for minor maintenance and repair.

**TEST TASK:** You will be presented with drawings of tools and equipment used for minor mechanical, electrical, plumbing, and carpentry repair. You must be able to recognize the tools and know their proper uses in order to answer the questions correctly. **NOTE:** *The tools pictured in this test guide and in the test booklet will not necessarily be drawn to scale.*

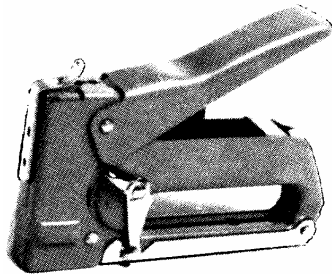
**SAMPLE QUESTION:**

Which one of the following tools would be best to use for attaching fiberglass insulation to wooden boards?

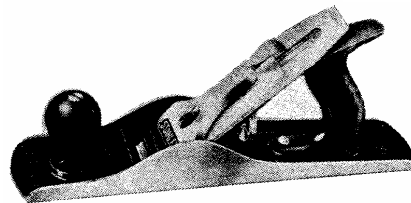
A.



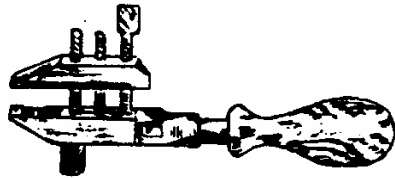
B.



C.



D.



*The correct answer to this sample question is B.*

**SOLUTION:**

*To answer this question correctly, you must be able to recognize the tools shown above and know their uses.*

**Choice A** is not correct. Choice A is a picture of a soldering gun, a tool generally used in electrical work.

**Choice B is the correct answer to this sample question.** Choice B is a picture of a staple gun, a tool generally used to attach thin or pliable materials to wooden surfaces.

**Choice C** is not correct. Choice C is a picture of a plane, a tool generally used to shave wood.

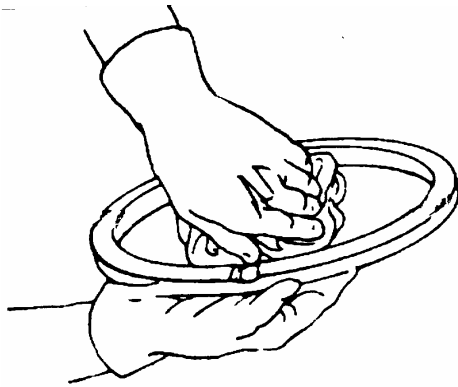
**Choice D** is not correct. Choice D is a picture of a clamp, a tool generally used to hold objects in place.

## **SUBJECT AREA 3**

**HEALTH AND SAFETY ISSUES IN CUSTODIAL WORK:** These questions test for knowledge of proper health and safety practices for cleaning, building operations and maintenance, and other areas relevant to the work of custodians and janitors at the entry level.

**TEST TASK:** You will be presented with drawings which show work situations involving basic health and safety issues. You must be able to recognize unhealthy, unsafe, or hazardous work conditions and know how to correct them.

### **SAMPLE QUESTION:**



Which one of the following is the most important reason why workers should wear gloves when cleaning a soap dish, as shown above?

- A. to avoid leaving fingerprints on the surface
- B. to keep the hands from smelling like soap
- C. to get a better grip on the soap dish
- D. to protect against germs and chemicals

*The correct answer to this sample question is D.*

### **SOLUTION:**

*To answer this question correctly, you must be able to recognize the health and safety issue involved in the situation pictured. Although all the choices present reasons why it is good practice to wear gloves while cleaning a soap dish, only one of the choices relates to the health and safety of the worker.*

**Choice A** is not correct. Leaving fingerprints on the surface is more a cosmetic concern than a safety issue.

**Choice B** is not correct. Keeping the hands from smelling like soap is more a personal preference than a safety issue.

**Choice C** is not correct. Getting a better grip on the soap dish may make it easier to clean, but is not the most important reason why workers should wear gloves when cleaning a soap dish.

**Choice D is the correct answer to this sample question.** Wearing gloves will protect the worker from coming into direct contact with harmful germs and chemicals while cleaning the soap dish.

## **TEST SECURITY**

The test you will be taking is the property of the New York State Department of Civil Service. Candidates may not remove test material from the test site and may not reproduce, reconstruct, or discuss the test content with others. Unauthorized possession or disclosure of the test material is prohibited by law and punishable by imprisonment and/or a fine. Additionally, candidates may be disqualified from appointment to the positions for which the examination is being held and from being a candidate for any civil service examination for five years. After you take the test, other individuals may want to talk with you about the test. You should not discuss the questions and answers, even in general terms. You should be careful that you do not inadvertently violate test security and put yourself at risk.

## **CONCLUSION**

Your attitude and approach to the test will influence how well you perform. A positive attitude will help you do your best.

### **Before the test ...**

- Study and review this guide to familiarize yourself with what the test will cover.
- Study and review the subject areas to be covered on the test.

### **On the day of the test ...**

- Arrive at the test site on time.
- Bring your Admission Notice, two No. 2 pencils, a photo ID containing your signature, a quiet lunch or snack, and any other **allowed** materials.
- Do **NOT** bring this test guide to the test site.

### **At the test site ...**

- Do **NOT** bring cell phones, beepers, headphones, or any electronic or other communication devices to the test site.
- The use of such devices anywhere on the grounds of the test site (this includes the test room, hallways, restrooms, building, grounds, and parking lots) could result in your disqualification.

### **During the test ...**

- Read and follow all directions on your Admission Notice, test booklets, answer sheets, and Candidate Directions.
- Follow the Monitor's instructions.
- Keep track of the time.

### **After the test ...**

- Do **NOT** remove any test materials from the test room.
- Do **NOT** paraphrase, reconstruct, or reproduce the test material in any way.
- Do **NOT** discuss the test material with others.

It is the policy of the New York State Department of Civil Service to provide reasonable accommodation to ensure effective communication of information to individuals with disabilities. If you need an auxiliary aid or service to make this information available to you, please contact the New York State Department of Civil Service Public Information Office at (518) 457-9375.

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Department of Civil Service  
Albany, NY 12239

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