



NATIONAL TATTOOING  
WRITTEN EXAMINATION

CANDIDATE INFORMATION BULLETIN

Please visit [www.nictesting.org](http://www.nictesting.org) for the most current bulletin prior to testing.

The National Tattooing examination is the national licensure examination for Tattooing, which is developed and administered by the National-Interstate Council of State Boards of Cosmetology (NIC). This Candidate Information Bulletin includes the content outline covered by the NIC National Tattooing examination, sample questions and answers. The time allowed for the Tattooing written examination is 90 minutes.

**SCIENTIFIC  
CONCEPTS  
50%**

**Knowledge of the Structure of the Skin**

- ◇ Epidermis
- ◇ Dermis
- ◇ Hair
- ◇ Subcutaneous layer

**Knowledge and Recognition of Disorders, Anomalies, & Diseases of the Skin**

- ◇ Burns, scars, or grafted skin
- ◇ Lesions and moles

**Knowledge of Infection Control**

- ◇ Pathology
  - Microbiology
- ◇ Disease transmission & cross contamination prevention
  - Sterilization
  - Disinfection & cleaning
  - Sanitation
  - Personal immunization
  - Single-use supplies
  - Waste disposal (OSHA)
  - Universal precautions

**Knowledge of Equipment & Supply Storage**

- ◇ OSHA
- ◇ MSDS
- ◇ Manufacturer's instructions
- ◇ Work area setup
  - Equipment
  - Supplies

**TATTOOING  
PROCEDURES  
50%**

**Knowledge of Conducting Client Consultations**

- ◇ Recordkeeping & documentation
  - Client record/ release form
  - Mental state
- ◇ Client communications
- ◇ Address client contraindications
  - Inform client about procedure & expectations

- Address concerns & answer questions
- Verify design/spelling & location

◇ After care

- Verbal instructions
- Written instructions

**Knowledge of Drawing for Tattoos**

- ◇ Outlining instruction
- ◇ Appropriate references
- ◇ Incorporating perspective/light source/shading aspects
- ◇ Common pattern practice
- ◇ Flash availability
- ◇ Stencil making
- ◇ Individual portfolio of artist work

**Knowledge of Needle Grouping & Assembly**

- ◇ Louping instruction
- ◇ Needle grouping types
- ◇ Needle properties
- ◇ Liner groupings
- ◇ Shader groupings
- ◇ Soldering needle groupings on bars
  - Stainless needles & needle bars
  - Proper flux
  - Lead-free solder/silver bearing solder
  - Alkaline neutralizing agent
  - Initial cleaning of needles prior to sterilization

**Knowledge of Machine Setup**

- ◇ Selecting appropriate needle & tube for type of job
- ◇ Louping at setup
- ◇ Machine position

**Knowledge of Skin Preparation**

- ◇ Hair removal
- ◇ Sanitation
- ◇ Stencil placement

**Knowledge of Tattoo Application Process**

- ◇ Outline
- ◇ Color
- ◇ Liner groupings
- ◇ Shader groupings

- ◇ Soldering needle groupings on bars

**SAMPLE QUESTIONS**

The following sample questions are similar to those on the NiC Tattooing Written Examination. Each question is followed by four answer choices. Only one choice is correct. Correct answers are listed following the sample questions.

1. Newly made needles should be placed in which of the following solutions before sterilization?
  - a. Soapy water
  - b. Alkaline neutralizing agent
  - c. Alcohol
  - d. Hospital-grade disinfectant
2. What is occurring when the autoclave is venting?
  - a. The release of pressure
  - b. Pressure is building
  - c. The machine is warming up
  - d. The machine is operating at full capacity
3. If the lines on a new tattoo are fuzzy and blown out, the ink was pushed deep into the
  - a. dermis.
  - b. epidermis.
  - c. subcutaneous layer.
  - d. hair follicle.
4. When considering the mental state of a customer, you should
  - a. look at their clothes.
  - b. look at their cleanliness.
  - c. use your own discretion.
  - d. choose their design.
5. The purpose of a capacitor is to
  - a. hold a continuous charge of current.
  - b. boost power to the coils.
  - c. cool the coil cores and shims.
  - d. muffle all the noise.

6. Stencils should be placed with the client
  - a. sitting.
  - b. standing and relaxed.
  - c. lying down.
  - d. bent over.
7. Thermoiax paper should always be stored in
  - a. a dry space.
  - b. a moist space.
  - c. a lit space.
  - d. the open air.
8. Why would you use a needle jig?
  - a. To transport contaminated needles
  - b. To check needles
  - c. To align needles to be soldered
  - d. To store needles

**Answers**

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

**RECOMMENDED  
REFERENCES**

- [www.cdc.gov](http://www.cdc.gov)
- [www.osha.gov](http://www.osha.gov)
- [www.infectioncontroltoday.com](http://www.infectioncontroltoday.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)