



**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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George E. Pataki  
*Governor*

Daniel E. Wall  
*Commissioner*

## ***INTRODUCTION***

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

The Entry-Level Custodians and Janitors Series written test has an overall time allowance of 2 hours. The test is divided into three separate subject areas and the questions are designed to evaluate knowledge of the following:

- 1. CLEANING TOOLS AND THEIR USES:** These questions test your knowledge of various cleaning tools and equipment commonly used by janitors and custodians on the job. You are shown drawings of various tools and equipment. You will be required to recognize the tools and know their proper uses in order to answer the questions correctly.
- 2. TOOLS USED FOR MINOR MAINTENANCE AND REPAIR:** These questions test your knowledge of various tools and equipment. You are shown drawings of tools and equipment used in minor mechanical, electrical, plumbing and carpentry repair. You will be required to recognize the tools and know their proper uses in order to answer the questions correctly.
- 3. HEALTH AND SAFETY ISSUES IN CUSTODIAL WORK:** These questions test your knowledge of basic proper safety and health practices in areas of cleaning, building operation and maintenance and other areas relevant to custodians and janitors at the entrance level. You are presented with drawings showing situations of health and safety which can be found in the work area. You are required to recognize any unhealthy, unsafe, or otherwise hazardous conditions and know how to correct them in order to answer the questions.

The remainder of this guide explains how you are tested in each of these subject areas. A **TEST TASK** is provided for each subject. This is an explanation of how a question is presented and how to correctly answer it. Be sure to read each one carefully.

You will also be given at least one **SAMPLE QUESTION** for each subject area. It will be of the type that you will see on the actual test. The **SOLUTION** and correct answer are provided after each question. You should study the question and its solution until you understand how it works.

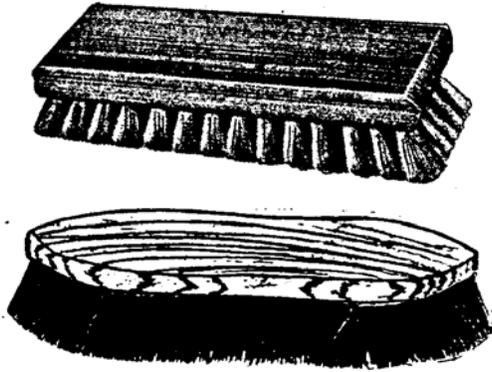
**NOTE:** The tools pictured in this booklet are not necessarily drawn to scale. You are expected to recognize the tools and know their proper uses in order to answer the questions.

## SUBJECT AREA 1

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

**TEST TASK:** You are shown drawings of various tools and equipment. You will be required to recognize the tools and know their proper uses in order to answer the questions correctly.

**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

*Answer is C.*

**SOLUTION:** To answer this question you must be able to recognize the tools shown and know their uses. The brushes shown are scrub brushes. They are generally used to wash flat surfaces, such as floors (choice C). They could not properly scour curved surfaces, such as toilet bowls (choice B). They are not meant for dusting furniture (choice A), nor are they meant for cleaning windows (choice D). Choice C is therefore the correct answer.

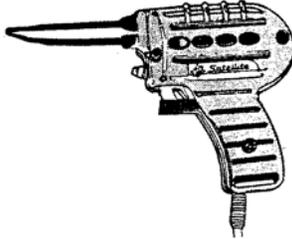
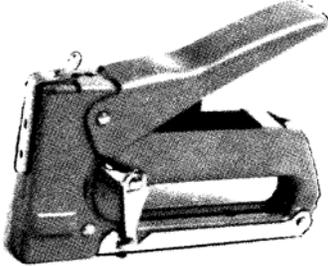
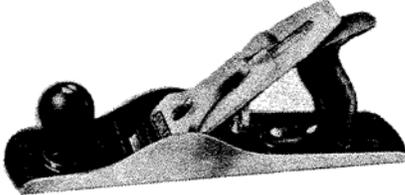
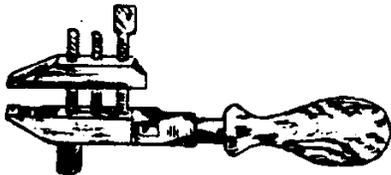
## SUBJECT AREA 2

**TOOLS USED FOR MINOR MAINTENANCE AND REPAIR:** These questions test your knowledge of various tools and equipment.

**TEST TASK:** You are shown drawings of tools and equipment used in minor mechanical, electrical, plumbing and carpentry repair. You will be required to recognize the tools and know their proper uses in order to answer the questions correctly.

### **SAMPLE QUESTION:**

Which one of the following would be best used to attach fiberglass insulation to wooden boards?

- A. 
- B. 
- C. 
- D. 

*Answer is B.*

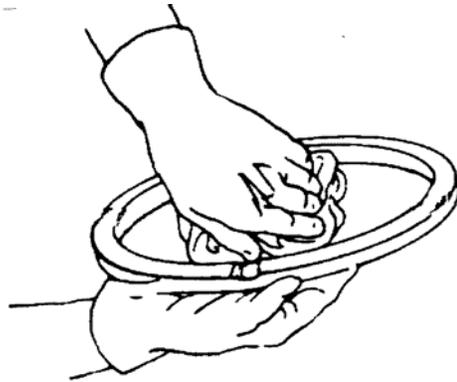
**SOLUTION:** To answer the question, look at each choice. Choice A is a picture of a soldering gun, which is generally used in electrical work, therefore choice A is incorrect. Choice C is a picture of a plane, a tool generally used to shave wood, therefore choice C is not the correct answer. Choice D is a picture of a clamp, a tool generally used to hold objects when cutting them, therefore choice D is an incorrect answer. Choice B is a picture of a staple gun, a tool generally used to attach materials, such as fiberglass insulation to wooden boards. Choice B is the correct answer.

## SUBJECT AREA 3

**HEALTH AND SAFETY ISSUES IN CUSTODIAL WORK:** These questions test your knowledge of basic proper safety and health practices in the areas of cleaning, building operation and maintenance, and other areas relevant to custodians and janitors at the entrance level.

**TEST TASK:** You are presented with drawings showing situations of health and safety which can be found in the work area. You will be required to recognize any unhealthy, unsafe or otherwise hazardous conditions and know how to correct them in order to answer the questions.

**SAMPLE QUESTION:**



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

- A. to avoid leaving fingerprints on surfaces
- B. to keep hands from smelling like soap
- C. to be able to get a better grip on things
- D. to give protection from germs and chemicals

*Answer is D.*

**SOLUTION:** To answer this question, you must know that issues of health and safety are more important than cosmetic features (choice A and B) and even than ease in doing a job (choice C). The question asks why a worker should wear gloves when cleaning the above (a picture of a soap dish).

Choices A,B,C and D are all reasons why it is good practice to wear gloves while cleaning soap dishes. The most important reason, however, is to give the worker protection from possible infection or harmful chemicals. Choice D is therefore the best answer.

## **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 need to 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. There are also practical things you should do.

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

- ∞ Study and review this Guide to become familiar with the sample questions.
- ∞ Study and review the subject areas that will be covered on the test.

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

- ∞ Arrive at the test site on time.
- ∞ Come to the test prepared; bring your admission notice, two No. 2 pencils, your photo ID containing your signature, a quiet lunch or snack and any other necessary materials. Do **NOT** bring this test guide to the test site.

### **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 and 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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