



NATIONAL NAIL TECHNOLOGY (MANICURING)  
WRITTEN EXAMINATION

CANDIDATE INFORMATION BULLETIN

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

**SCIENTIFIC  
CONCEPTS  
45%**

**Understand infection control procedures as it relates to:**

- ◇ Bacteria and how they are spread
- ◇ Viruses and how they are spread
- ◇ Fungi and how they are spread
- ◇ Methods of sanitation
- ◇ Methods of disinfection
- ◇ Methods of sterilization
- ◇ Nail services
- ◇ Sanitizing and disinfecting circulating and noncirculating pedicure tubs
- ◇ Dispensing products (e.g., using a spatula)

**Understand safety procedures as related to:**

- ◇ Disposal of soiled materials
- ◇ Storage of supplies
- ◇ OSHA requirements for Material Safety and Data Sheets (MSDS)
- ◇ OSHA requirements for product labeling
- ◇ OSHA requirements for product storage
- ◇ OSHA requirements for ventilation
- ◇ OSHA requirements for product disposal
- ◇ OSHA requirements for blood borne pathogens
- ◇ OSHA requirements for Universal Precautions
- ◇ Preventing work injuries

**Understand basic human anatomy/physiology as it relates to:**

- ◇ The function of the skin
- ◇ The structure of the skin
- ◇ Disorders and diseases of the skin (e.g., abnormal pigmentation, infections, inflammations, lesions)
- ◇ The skeletal system and its function
- ◇ The muscular system and its function
- ◇ The vascular/circulatory system and its function
- ◇ The nervous system and its function

**Understand nail anatomy/physiology as it relates to:**

- ◇ The parts of the nail (e.g., root, mantle, matrix)
- ◇ The structure and composition of the nail (e.g., keratin, layers of the nail, blood supply to the nail)
- ◇ Nail conditions and disorders
- ◇ Nail diseases
- ◇ Signs of infections

**Understand basic chemistry as it relates to:**

- ◇ Adhesion
- ◇ Chemical reactions
- ◇ Physical reaction
- ◇ Product ingredients

**Understand product function as it relates to:**

- ◇ Acetone and non-acetone products
- ◇ Alum
- ◇ Antiseptic
- ◇ Brush cleaners
- ◇ Catalyst/Activator
- ◇ Cuticle cream/oil
- ◇ Exfoliants
- ◇ Gel

- ◇ Moisturizers
- ◇ Monomer
- ◇ Nail polish
- ◇ Polymer
- ◇ Primer
- ◇ Resin/Adhesive
- ◇ Solvent

**NAIL TECHNOLOGY  
PROCEDURES  
55%**

**Perform general procedures as it relates to:**

- ◇ Client consultation
- ◇ Nail assessment
- ◇ Conditions that would prohibit service (contraindications)
- ◇ Service recommendations
- ◇ Service documentation (e.g., client card)

**Understand the function of:**

- ◇ Nail equipment (e.g., table, lamp, pedicure basin)
- ◇ Nail implements (e.g., nail clippers, cuticle pusher, nippers)
- ◇ Nail supplies, products, and materials (e.g., cotton, lotion, towels)

**Perform nail service preparation as it relates to:**

- ◇ Sanitation and disinfection of work station/service area (e.g., pedicure basin, table)
- ◇ Station set-up
- ◇ Sanitizing technician's hands and client's hands and/or feet

**Perform manicure services as it relates to:**

- ◇ Removing nail polish
- ◇ Clipping and shaping nails safely
- ◇ Softening cuticles in warm soak
- ◇ Using cuticle remover/solvent
- ◇ Pushing back cuticles safely
- ◇ Removing excess cuticle safely
- ◇ Cleaning nails safely
- ◇ Applying cuticle oil/cuticle cream
- ◇ Applying lotion for massage
- ◇ Removing traces of oil or lotion on/under nails safely
- ◇ Buffing nails safely
- ◇ Applying nail polish
- ◇ Paraffin service
- ◇ Hot oil/lotion service

**Perform pedicure services as it relates to:**

- ◇ Removing nail polish
- ◇ Clipping and shaping nails safely
- ◇ Softening cuticles in warm soak
- ◇ Using cuticle remover/solvent
- ◇ Pushing back cuticles safely
- ◇ Removing excess cuticle safely
- ◇ Exfoliating safely
- ◇ Reducing calluses safely
- ◇ Cleaning nails safely
- ◇ Applying cuticle oil/cuticle cream
- ◇ Applying lotion for massage
- ◇ Removing traces of oil or lotion on/under nails safely
- ◇ Buffing nails safely
- ◇ Applying nail polish
- ◇ Paraffin service

**Perform basic massage movements as it relates to:**

- ◇ Effleurage
- ◇ Friction
- ◇ Petrissage
- ◇ Tapotement

**Perform nail enhancement services as it relates to:**

- ◇ Tip application
- ◇ Tip trimming
- ◇ Tip blending
- ◇ Removing tip safely
- ◇ Acrylic overlays
- ◇ Acrylic sculptured nails
- ◇ Acrylic maintenance (fill-ins, refills, rebalance)
- ◇ Acrylic backfill (e.g., pink and white maintenance)
- ◇ Removing acrylic safely
- ◇ Wrap overlays
- ◇ Wrap maintenance (fill-ins, refills, rebalance)
- ◇ Removing wrap safely
- ◇ Light-cured gel overlays
- ◇ Light-cured gel sculptured nail
- ◇ Light-cured gel maintenance (fill-ins, refills, rebalance)
- ◇ Light-cured gel backfill (e.g., pink and white maintenance)
- ◇ Removing light-cured gel safely
- ◇ Contouring and shaping nails
- ◇ Using a file/buffer safely
- ◇ Using an electric file safely

**SAMPLE OUESTIONS**

The following sample questions are similar to those on the NIC Nail Technology (Manicuring) Written Examination. Each question is followed by four answer choices. Only one choice is correct. Correct answers are listed following the sample questions.

1. Pumice stone is used in pedicuring as
  - a. an abrasive.
  - b. a bleach.
  - c. a lubricant.
  - d. an astringent.
2. What is the **FIRST** step in performing a manicure?
  - a. Shape the nails
  - b. Soften the cuticles
  - c. Clean under free edge
  - d. Remove old polish
3. Where should all manicuring cosmetic supplies be kept when not being used?
  - a. On a clean shelf
  - b. On the manicuring table
  - c. In a clean manicuring kit
  - d. In clean, closed containers
4. Which one of the following is a condition in which the cuticle splits around the nail?
  - a. Hangnails
  - b. Pterygium
  - c. Onychophagy
  - d. Onychorrhexis
5. Nerves and blood vessels are found in the nail
  - a. bed.
  - b. wall.
  - c. plate.
  - d. grooves.
6. An antiseptic is used in manicuring to
  - a. bleach the nails.
  - b. treat minor cuts.
  - c. smooth corrugated nails.
  - d. give the nails a high sheen.
7. After each use, manicuring implements should be
  - a. wiped with a towel.
  - b. wiped with a tissue.
  - c. cleansed and disinfected.
  - d. placed in dry storage.
8. For which one of the following are oil manicures recommended?
  - a. Leuconychia
  - b. Split nails
  - c. Brittle nails
  - d. Prevention of infection
9. What is the actively growing part of the nail?
  - a. Lunula
  - b. Matrix
  - c. Mantle
  - d. Free edge
10. What should be applied to a split in the nail before wrapping it?
  - a. Top coat
  - b. Base coat
  - c. Adhesive glue
  - d. Nail hardener

**Answers**

- |      |      |      |       |
|------|------|------|-------|
| 1. a | 4. a | 7. c | 10. c |
| 2. d | 5. a | 8. c |       |
| 3. d | 6. b | 9. b |       |

**PLEASE CALL PSI at 1-800-211-2754 to take the NAIL TECHNOLOGY ONLINE PRACTICE TEST (\$30.00 fee applies)**

**NAIL TECHNOLOGY (MANICURING) REFERENCES**

*Milady's Standard Nail Technology, 2007 (Revised)*

Milady  
5 Maxwell Drive  
Clifton Park, NY 12065  
(800) 347-7707  
[www.Milady.com](http://www.Milady.com)

*Salon Fundamentals Nails 2007*

Pivot Point International, Inc.  
Evanston, IL 60201  
(800) 886-4247  
[www.pivot-point.com](http://www.pivot-point.com)

NIC Cleaning and Disinfecting of Circulating and Non Circulating Tubs and Spa's for All Industry Modalities  
NIC, Inc., August 2007  
[www.nictesting.org](http://www.nictesting.org)

**OPTIONAL REFERENCES**

*Milady's Standard Textbook of Cosmetology, 2008*

Milady  
5 Maxwell Drive  
Clifton Park, NY 12065  
(800) 730-2214  
[www.Milady.com](http://www.Milady.com)

*Salon Fundamentals, Cosmetology, 2007*

Pivot Point International, Inc.  
Evanston, IL 60201  
(800) 886-4247  
[www.pivot-point.com](http://www.pivot-point.com)

NIC Health and Safety Standards

NIC, Inc., October 2002  
[www.nictesting.org](http://www.nictesting.org)