



NSCA-CPT® Paper/Pencil Exam Candidate Handbook

NSCA-Certified Personal Trainer®

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Introduction

About the NSCA

The National Strength and Conditioning Association (NSCA) is an international, nonprofit, educational association representing strength training and conditioning professionals, sports science researchers, athletic trainers, sports medicine therapists and physicians, personal trainers, students and others interested in fitness and strength and conditioning activities and their relationship to overall sport and fitness performance.

The NSCA publishes two of the world's premier strength and conditioning journals – *Strength and Conditioning Journal* and the *Journal of Strength and Conditioning Research*. They link what is being learned in the sport science research laboratories to what is being taught by fitness professionals, thereby bridging the gap between theory and practice.

About NSCA Certification

In 1985, the certification arm of the NSCA was established in order to administer a certification program for those in the field of strength training and conditioning. NSCA's original certification program, the Certified Strength and Conditioning Specialist® (CSCS®) continues to be the only nationally-accredited certification that is specifically designed to assess competencies of those who strength train and condition athletes.

As the fitness industry continued to grow, the NSCA saw a need for a personal training certification that would earn the same prestige and credibility as the CSCS. Thus, in 1993, the NSCA-Certified Personal Trainer® (NSCA-CPT®) credential was established. In 1996, the NSCA-CPT certification became the first personal training credential to be nationally accredited. Today, more than 36,000 CSCS and NSCA-CPT credentials are held by professionals across the world.

Testing Agency

The NSCA Certification Executive Council has the overall responsibility for exam development and policies governing eligibility and administration of the exam. It is also responsible for contracting with a professional testing agency that administers and provides psychometric expertise.

Applied Measurement Professionals, Inc. (AMP) is the professional testing agency contracted by the NSCA to assist in the development, administration, scoring and analysis of the NSCA-CPT exam based on the exam specifications developed by the Certification Executive Council. The testing agency is also responsible for the establishment of test centers and exam security.

In 1996, the NSCA-CPT certification became the first personal training credential to be nationally accredited.

Administrative Policies

Personal trainers will find this to be one of the most challenging of all personal training certification exams.

NSCA-Certified Personal Trainer Exam

The NSCA-Certified Personal Trainer (NSCA-CPT) exam is designed for professionals who train clients in one-on-one situations in clients' homes and health/fitness clubs. Clients typically include active and sedentary physically healthy individuals as well as the elderly and obese. Personal trainers with specialized expertise may also be involved in training clients with orthopedic, cardiovascular and other chronic conditions. Personal trainers will find this to be one of the most challenging of all personal training certification exams. The credential earned upon passing will identify them as truly competent personal trainers among their peers, clients and professional groups.

The NSCA-CPT exam includes 140 multiple-choice questions, 35 of which correspond with 35 video segments. The video segments assess knowledge primarily in the areas of fitness testing protocols and exercise techniques. The exam format also includes scenarios in which candidates are provided with a variety of information (similar to case studies) about a client and are prompted to answer several questions relative to the scenario. The time required to sit for the exam is approximately three hours. Candidates achieving a passing score will be awarded the NSCA-CPT credential.

The NSCA-CPT exam is constantly monitored for content validity and updated for timeliness. It is designed to ensure a minimum level of competence among practitioners and to create a better awareness among the public of the nature and purpose of the profession. One focal point of the exam is to ensure candidates possess appropriate knowledge of industry guidelines for the safe and effective strength training and conditioning of athletes.

Explanation of Nonscored Exam Questions

The NSCA-CPT exam contains nonscored questions that are being "pretested" or evaluated for future use. Including this type of question allows the NSCA-CPT Exam Development Committee to collect meaningful information about new questions that may appear as real scored questions on future exams.

Pretesting is accomplished by interspersing new ("untried") questions throughout the exam (10 nonscored questions appear in the NSCA-CPT exam). Only this small number is included so that additional testing time will not be needed by exam candidates. These questions are not scored as part of a candidate's certification exam, and they do not affect an individual's pass/fail status. The nonscored questions are scattered throughout the exam so candidates will answer them with the same effort that they give to the actual scored questions.

To keep the NSCA-CPT exam reflective of current job-related duties, new questions must continuously be introduced and evaluated. Pretesting is an accepted testing practice that creates a statistically sound standardized exam and allows candidates to receive scores that are based only on previously used ("tried") questions. Nonscored pretest questions also appear on the computer-based exam format to provide the same testing experience to all candidates, regardless of which exam format a candidate chooses.

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To qualify for the NSCA-CPT exam, you must be at least 18 years old and have a high school diploma or equivalent.

Registration and Admission Policies

To qualify for the NSCA-CPT exam, you must be at least 18 years old and have a high school diploma or equivalent.

Current CPR/AED certification is also a requirement. If candidates do not have current CPR/AED certification, they can still register for and take the NSCA-CPT exam. The NSCA will not release a candidate's exam scores until we have received documentation of a valid CPR/AED certification.

The NSCA will accept any adult CPR/AED certification obtained by attending a CPR/AED course that meets the following criteria:

- Must have a hands-on training component (certification through a course completed entirely online will not be accepted)
- Must include a skills performance evaluation

Examples of approved CPR/AED providers include:

- American Heart Association
- American Red Cross
- National Safety Council
- St. John Ambulance

Candidates will receive an official confirmation notice approximately three weeks after the registration deadline. The confirmation notice will include the exam site and date for which they are registered. One week prior to the exam date, candidates will receive a test center admission letter identifying the exact time and address where candidates should report for the exam. It is very important to review the confirmation notice and admission letter information and notify the NSCA immediately if there are any errors.

The admission letter serves as authorization to sit for the exam and, if incorrect, could preclude admission to the exam center.

At the testing site, candidates are required to present proof of identity that includes a photograph (valid driver's license, state or military ID card or passport) and a second form of identification with name and signature.

Candidate Ineligibility

A candidate may be determined ineligible for either of the following reasons:

- 1) insufficient documentation to assess eligibility
- 2) documentation provided or fees submitted do not meet eligibility requirements for the exam

The Certification Executive Council reserves the right to cancel exam scores if an individual is deemed ineligible to take the exam. If a candidate is determined to be ineligible, a refund of his/her registration fee will not be

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provided. If a candidate has any questions regarding eligibility, contact the NSCA at 800-815-6286 or exams@nsca-lift.org BEFORE registering for an exam.

Refund of Fees

Cancellation Policy: Notice of cancellation must be in writing. The NSCA provides a 50 percent refund when we receive the written notice of cancellation at least seven business days before the scheduled exam date. No refunds will be made after that date.

Should fewer than 15 candidates register for a site, the NSCA Certification Executive Council retains the right to cancel the exam site. Those affected will be notified no later than four weeks after the registration cutoff date and offered the opportunity to transfer to a different date/site at no additional cost. The NSCA is not responsible for expenses incurred by a candidate due to a cancelled exam (e.g., airfare, hotel).

No-shows: Candidates who do not arrive to take the exam and who do not cancel or transfer their registration will forfeit the registration fee. Should they wish to take the exam at a later date, they would need to register again and provide the full registration fee.

Transfer Policy

If you are unable to take the exam on the date or at the location for which you are registered, you may transfer your registration by contacting the Exam Department. Exam registrations cannot be transferred to another person, and the exam transfer form must be completed at least seven days before the exam date. Candidates can provide payment of the appropriate transfer fee via check, money order or credit card. Payment is required to process the transfer.

Call 800-815-6826 and specify the date and site to which you wish to transfer

- ☐ Candidates cannot transfer into an exam after the registration deadline has passed.
- ☐ Candidates wishing to transfer an exam date and/or location OR from one certification exam to the other certification exam for the same date and site = \$100 transfer fee.
- ☐ Candidates wishing to transfer an exam date and/or location AND from one certification exam to another = \$125 transfer fee.
- ☐ Candidates wishing to transfer from a paper/pencil exam to a computer-based exam = \$150 transfer fee.
- ☐ Candidates wishing to transfer from a paper/pencil exam to a computer-based exam AND from one certification exam to another = \$175 transfer fee.
- ☐ There is no limit on the number of paper/pencil transfers.

Candidates who do not arrive to take the exam and who do not cancel or transfer their registration will forfeit the registration fee.

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The address provided on a candidate's registration will be used for mailing the exam confirmation notice, admission letter(s) and exam results.

Special Accommodations

The NSCA Certification Executive Council is committed to ensuring that no individual with a disability is deprived of the opportunity to take the exam solely by reason of that disability. Candidates may request special accommodations if they have a medical condition that will prevent them from taking the exam as it is typically administered. A request for special accommodations must be made at the time of registration and must be made using the Special Accommodations form (see pages 19-20) available at www.nasca-cc.org/downloads/special_accom_request.pdf or by contacting The NSCA office directly.

Prior to the exam, candidates will receive notification from the NSCA of the accommodations that they will receive.

If no information is provided or if the NSCA Certification Executive Council determines that the provided information is inadequate to assess special needs requirements, candidates will be asked to provide additional information/documentation and given a deadline by which they need to respond. If the required information is not received by the specified deadline, the request for accommodations will be denied.

(Special language accommodations will not be made for those whose primary language is not English.)

Address Changes

The address provided on a candidate's registration will be used for mailing the exam confirmation notice, admission letter(s) and exam results. If candidates have a change of address, they should notify the NSCA no later than four weeks prior to the exam date. If a candidate moves after this time, he or she should leave a forwarding address at the post office so that the admission letter(s) and exam results will be sent to the new address. Candidates can update their address with the NSCA in one of the following ways:

1. Visit www.nasca-cc.org and submit the Change of Address form online
2. Call 800-815-6826
3. E-mail exams@nsca-cc.org
4. Send a fax to 719-632-6367
5. Mail the information to the NSCA:
1885 Bob Johnson Drive, Colorado Springs, CO 80906

Test Center Locations

The exact location of the testing center in each city may change from exam to exam, depending on the space availability and/or conditions of the facility. Each exam candidate will be notified of the exact exam location with a mailed admission letter (sent by the independent testing agency one week before the exam).

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Candidates must provide two forms of identification, one of which must be photo-bearing.

Exam Schedule

1. Candidates registered for the NSCA-CPT exam will receive an admission letter for the exam; candidates will be required to show the appropriate admission letter to the proctor.
2. Candidates must provide two forms of identification to gain admission to the test center, one of which must be photo-bearing. The photo-bearing identification must be one of the following: a valid driver's license, state or military ID card or passport. Candidates must have proper identification to gain entry to the test center. Candidates are required to sign the registration list prior to entry to the test center.

Customary Exam Reporting Times*

NSCA-CPT Exam

8:30 a.m. Check-In

9:00 a.m. Distribution of test materials and instructions for taking the exam

Noon. NSCA-CPT exam concludes
(total time allowed: 3 hours)

*Please note the following:

- Anyone arriving after testing begins will not be admitted.
- Reporting times may vary somewhat from site to site (i.e., NSCA National Conference and certain alternative sites); please check the admission letter(s).
- If candidates complete the exam early, they may request permission to leave.
- Additional time, beyond that stated above, for completion of the exam will not be allowed.

Rules for Exam

1. Our testing service provides pencils at the testing site.
2. Candidates may wish to bring a watch to help pace themselves on the exam; however, NO stopwatches, cell phones or other timing devices may be used.
The test center supervisor will keep the official time and ensure that candidates are given the allotted amount of time for the exam.
3. No cell phones, recording devices, books, slide rules, calculators, papers, dictionaries or other reference materials may be taken into the exam room.
4. Backpacks and/or purses may be placed at the front or back of the exam room, away from candidates.
5. No test materials, documents or memoranda of any kind are to be taken from the exam room.
6. No questions concerning the content of the exam may be asked during the exam. Listen carefully to the instructions given by the proctor and read all directions in the test booklet thoroughly.
7. Candidates may comment on any question if they believe it is misleading or deficient in accuracy or content. A form for this purpose is included on

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Candidates may comment on any question if they believe it is misleading or deficient in accuracy or content.

the back of the answer sheet. Be specific when commenting on any item. Each comment is reviewed by the exam committee before test scoring. Individual responses to question comments, however, are not provided and such comments do not affect exam scores.

8. Candidates must have the test center supervisor's permission to leave the room during the exam. Candidates will not be allowed additional time to make up for time lost.
9. The test center supervisor may dismiss a candidate from the exam for any of the following reasons: if the candidate's admission to the exam is unauthorized; if a candidate creates a disturbance, is abusive or is otherwise uncooperative; if a candidate gives or receives help or is suspected of doing so; if a candidate attempts to remove exam materials or notes from the test center or if a candidate attempts to take the exam for someone else.

Release of Information

Both The NSCA and its testing agency are committed to protecting the confidentiality of candidate records. For this reason, exam scores are never released by telephone, fax or e-mail, even to candidates. Also, information regarding candidate scores is never released to any third party. Verification of the certified status of an individual, however, is provided upon receipt of a written request.

Neither the NSCA nor the NSCA Certification Executive Council members or their respective staff are involved in any way with the handling or scoring of any exam. This is the testing agency's responsibility.

Privacy Policy

The NSCA is committed to the right of privacy for certificate holders (Certified Strength and Conditioning Specialist and NSCA-Certified Personal Trainer) and exam candidates. The NSCA will exercise care with customer property and personal information while it is under our control or used by the NSCA. The NSCA will handle and protect exam candidate property/information as is done with all NSCA property. Only authorized employees will have access to exam candidate files. The designated employees are responsible for maintaining the confidentiality of the information in those files.

The NSCA staff will not discuss, disclose or release any information submitted for certification purposes to any third party without the certificate holder's or candidate's written consent.

- The official exam candidate needs to make all inquiries pertaining to material submitted for certification exams and/or information related to the exam administration.
- With the exception of verification of certification, written consent from the certificate holder or exam candidate is required prior to the release of any information from the individual's record.

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The testing agency will mail score reports to the candidates three to five weeks following the exam.

To complete and submit the “Authorization to Release Information Form,” please visit our Web site at www.nsca-cc.org/downloads/Release-Info.pdf. Or contact The NSCA at exams@nsca-lift.org to receive a faxed or mailed copy of this release form.

The NSCA reserves the right to modify its Privacy Policy without prior notification. In the event that we make a material change to our policy, we will post a notice of the change at www.nsca-cc.org.

Reporting of Results

The testing agency will mail score reports to the candidate three to five weeks following the exam. The total scaled score will determine whether the candidate passed. This scaled score is statistically derived from the raw score and can range from 1 through 99. The passing scaled score is 70 for the exam. The passing score reflects the amount of knowledge that a committee of experts has determined to be appropriate for credentialing. A criterion-referenced standard-setting procedure and expert judgment were used to evaluate each item on the exam in order to identify the passing point.

A candidate’s ability to pass the exam depends on the amount of knowledge displayed and is not based upon the performance of others taking the exam (i.e., the exam is not based on a “curve”).

The reason for calculating scaled scores is that different forms (or versions) of the exam may vary in difficulty. As new forms of the exam are introduced, a certain number of questions in each content area are replaced by new questions. These changes may cause one form of the exam to be slightly easier or more difficult than another form. To adjust for these differences in difficulty, a procedure called “equating” is used. The goal of equating is to ensure fairness to all candidates.

In the equating process, the minimum raw score (number of correctly answered questions) required to equal the passing scaled score of 70 is statistically adjusted (or equated). Nonscored questions will not affect the candidate's overall scaled score or pass/fail status.

For instance, if the exam is determined to be more difficult than the base form of the exam, then the minimum raw score required to pass will be slightly lower than the original passing raw score. If the exam is easier, the passing raw score will be higher. Equating helps to ensure that the passing scaled score of 70 represents the same level of knowledge, regardless of which form of the exam a candidate takes.

If a candidate has a “hold” placed on his/her registration, he/she will NOT receive the results; instead he/she will receive a notice that indicates additional documentation is needed and information on how to contact The NSCA.

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Score reports will be held for one calendar year from the date of the exam.

Scores will be sent out within 10 business days after The NSCA receives the required documentation. If a candidate indicates that he/she is an NSCA member but his/her membership status cannot be verified, he/she will receive a notice that indicates additional documentation is needed and information on how to contact The NSCA. The exam results will not be sent until proof of membership is provided.

Score reports will be held for one calendar year from the date of the exam. If the hold has NOT been cleared in that time (i.e., the candidate has NOT provided the required documentation), the exam results become void. If a candidate wants to become certified after that point, he/she is required to submit a registration with the appropriate fee and retake the exam.

Scores Cancelled by the Certification Executive Council

The testing agency is obligated to The NSCA Certification Executive Council to report scores that accurately reflect the performance of each candidate. For this reason, the testing agency maintains exam administration and exam security standards that are designed to ensure that all candidates are provided the same opportunity to demonstrate their abilities and to prevent some candidates from gaining an unfair advantage over others due to testing irregularities or misconduct. The testing agency routinely reviews irregularities and exam scores suspected of resulting from unusual or nonstandard circumstances and reports such to the Certification Executive Council.

The NSCA Certification Executive Council reserves the right to withhold or cancel exam scores if, in its opinion, there is reason to question their validity. Scores considered for cancellation by the Certification Executive Council may be grouped into two categories:

1. *Suspected candidate misconduct:* In such cases, The NSCA may initially withhold exam scores and notify the candidates so that they have the opportunity to provide additional information as requested by the Certification Executive Council. The Certification Executive Council may also undertake a confidential review of the circumstances giving rise to questionable score validity. If it is determined that there is sufficient cause to question score validity, the Certification Executive Council may cancel the score(s) and inform the involved parties.
2. *Irregularities:* Scores may be withheld and/or cancelled because of circumstances beyond the candidates' control, such as defective exam materials or mistiming of the exam. In such cases, candidates will be informed and offered an opportunity to retake the exam if the Certification Executive Council determines that scores must be cancelled.

In addition to the reasons listed, the Certification Executive Council may withhold or cancel exam results if, upon investigation, a violation of policies as outlined in this publication is found to have been committed.

Administrative Policies

Exam Scoring Appeals - Hand Scoring

Candidates receiving failing scores may request their answer sheet be scored by hand. A request for hand scoring should be submitted in writing with a \$25 hand scoring fee to The NSCA. Upon receipt of a written request and hand scoring fee, the candidate's answer sheet will be inspected and hand scored by the testing agency. This process ensures that no stray pencil marks, multiple responses or other conditions interfered with computer scoring. Requests for hand scoring answer sheets must be received no later than 60 days following the release of exam results. Requests received after that date will not be honored.

To ensure correct reporting of results, the testing agency selects a random sampling of answer sheets of candidates who score within one unit of passing. These answer sheets are manually rescored before results are mailed as a quality control measure.

Therefore, the Certification Executive Council does not encourage candidates to request verification of their scores as it is extremely doubtful that any exam results will be changed from "fail" to "pass."

Receiving the Certificate

When candidates pass the NSCA-CPT exam, they will receive a certificate acknowledging their achievement approximately two weeks after receiving the exam results. Exception: If candidates take and pass the NSCA-CPT exam as a college senior, they will not be awarded the NSCA-CPT credential until after they graduate and The NSCA receives an original, official transcript verifying graduation and degree earned.

Recertification Requirements

Candidates who pass the exam will receive information concerning requirements associated with The NSCA's Recertification program. It is important that this information be thoroughly read and understood. Certified Strength and Conditioning Specialists are required to earn 6.0 Continuing Education Units (CEUs) (typically 1 contact hour equals 0.1 CEU) over specific three-year periods (2006-2008, 2009-2011, etc.) to maintain their certification. *Those certified within an existing three-year period will have their initial CEU requirement prorated to the end of the reporting period.*

A recertification fee for each certification is assessed for each three-year period. Those holding both certifications (CSCS and NSCA-CPT) may not need to acquire separate CEUs for each certification, as CEUs acquired will apply to both certifications in most cases. No CEUs will be awarded for activities completed prior to becoming certified. If you earn certification, be sure to review the *Recertification Policies and Procedures*.

When candidates pass the NSCA-CPT exam, they will receive a certificate acknowledging their achievement approximately two weeks after receiving the exam results.

Administrative Policies

Any action taken by The NSCA Executive Council affecting the status of a certified individual may be appealed.

Certification Verification

To request verification of a CSCS or NSCA-CPT certification, the Certification Verification form located at www.nasca-cc.org/contact/certification_verification.html must be submitted to The NSCA.

Reasons for Disciplinary Action

The NSCA Certification Executive Council has approved the following items as reasons why candidates for the NSCA-CPT exam may be refused or for which exam candidates or credentialed individuals may be disciplined, up to and including the revocation of their certified status:

1. Obtaining or attempting to obtain certification by fraud, deception or artifice.
2. Knowingly assisting another person or other persons in obtaining or attempting to obtain certification by fraud, deception or artifice.
3. Illegal use or falsification of certification certificates, credentials or any other NSCA-CPT documents.
4. Unauthorized possession and/or distribution of any official NSCA-CPT testing materials to include copying and/or reproduction of any part of the NSCA-CPT exam questions or scenarios.
5. Unauthorized use of any of the registered trademarks owned by the NSCA. These include the association and certification logos.
6. Not accumulating and/or reporting the required number of CEUs or not paying the recertification fee within the applicable time period.

Appeals

Any action taken by The NSCA Certification Executive Council affecting the status of a certified individual may be appealed. Appeals must be in writing and received within 90 days after receipt of such notice.

Statement of Nondiscrimination

The NSCA Certification Executive Council does not discriminate among exam candidates on the basis of age, gender, race, religion, national origin, disability or marital status.

Exam Content

To begin preparing in an informed and organized manner, candidates should be aware of what they are expected to know for the exam.

The following exam outline describes the content covered on the exam. The outline provides a general impression of the exam and, with closer inspection, gives candidates specific direction for studying. By comparing the number of items in each category, candidates can determine the relative importance given to each category on the exam.

Administrative Policies

Code of Ethics

With the credibility possessed by the CSCS and NSCA-CPT exams comes the responsibility to ensure the integrity of the credentials awarded. The Code of Ethics of The NSCA was established to make our certified individuals aware of the standards of ethical behavior that should be followed in the practice of their profession (strength training and conditioning and personal training). The Code presents fundamental standards of behavior that all certified individuals should strive to achieve. It serves to increase ethical sensitivity and judgement, strengthen support for certified individuals' moral courage and sharpen their sense of identity as an integral part of The NSCA and its continued success. Visit www.nsca-cc.org/downloads to review the entire Code of Ethics for Certified Individuals.

NSCA-CPT Exam Content

NSCA-CPT EXAM CONTENT OUTLINE

Domain	Percent of Exam	Number of Scored Questions
Client Consultation and Assessment	23%	32
Program Planning	32%	45
Techniques of Exercise	32%	45
Safety, Emergency Procedures and Legal Issues	13%	18
Total	100%	140

1. Client Consultation and Assessment (32 scored questions)

- A. Initial Interview
 - 1. Determine compatibility between a client and a personal trainer
 - 2. Complete a client-personal trainer and/or a client-personal trainer-fitness facility agreement
 - 3. Administer an informed consent and liability waiver form
- B. Medical History and Health Appraisal
 - 1. Administer a detailed medical history/health appraisal form and a lifestyle questionnaire (including exercise history) and, if necessary, obtain a medical release from the client's primary physician
 - 2. Evaluate and interpret medical history/health appraisal form and lifestyle questionnaire
 - 3. Recognize when to refer a client to and/or seek input from an appropriate health care professional
- C. Fitness Evaluation
 - 1. Conduct fitness evaluation:
 - a. Vital signs (heart rate, blood pressure)
 - b. Height
 - c. Weight
 - d. Body composition
 - e. Girth measurements
 - f. Muscular strength
 - g. Muscular endurance
 - h. Speed/agility/power
 - i. Cardiovascular endurance
 - j. Flexibility
 - k. Postural alignment/muscle balance
 - 2. Evaluate and interpret the results of a health/fitness evaluation
 - 3. Recognize when to refer a client to and/or seek input from an appropriate health care professional
- D. Basic Nutrition Review
 - 1. Identify the personal trainer's scope of practice regarding nutritional recommendations
 - 2. Conduct a review of a client's dietary habits (e.g., recall, history, or food records)
 - 3. Communicate basic information regarding nutritional aids, supplements and daily caloric needs
 - 4. Recognize the signs and symptoms of an eating disorder
 - 5. Recognize when to refer a client to and/or seek input from an appropriate health care professional

NSCA-CPT Exam Content

2. Program Planning (45 scored questions)

- A. Goal Setting
 - 1. Discuss the results of a fitness evaluation with a client to determine needs and goals
 - 2. Discuss results of dietary habit review with a client to determine needs and goals
 - 3. Discuss health-related lifestyle habits (smoking, alcohol use, etc.) with a client to determine needs and goals
 - 4. Determine the motivational/coaching techniques (reward system, reinforcement strategies, mental imagery techniques, visualization, etc.) that will be effective for a client
- B. Program Design
 - 1. Select the exercise modality or type
 - 2. Select the warm-up/cool down exercises
 - 3. Determine the order of exercises or exercise components
 - 4. Determine the exercise intensity or workload
 - 5. Determine exercise duration
 - 6. Determine exercise frequency
 - 7. Determine the rate of exercise progression
- C. Training Adaptations
 - 1. Understand exercise-induced changes to body structures:
 - a. Muscle
 - b. Tendons and ligaments
 - c. Bone and cartilage
 - d. Adipose tissue (fat stores)
 - 2. Understand exercise-induced changes to body systems:
 - a. Neuromuscular
 - b. Cardiorespiratory
 - c. Metabolic
 - d. Endocrine
 - e. Psychological
- D. Special Populations
 - 1. Determine capacities and limitations of a client with a specialized need or condition:
 - a. Older adults/elderly
 - b. Pre-pubescents and adolescents
 - c. Females who are prenatal or postpartum
 - d. Females who are postmenopausal
 - e. Individuals who are overweight or obese
 - f. Individuals with eating disorders
 - g. Individuals with orthopedic disorders/conditions
 - h. Individuals with arthritic disorders
 - i. Individuals with hypertension
 - j. Individuals with hyperlipidemia
 - k. Individuals who are in post-cardiac rehabilitation
 - l. Individuals with Type 1 diabetes
 - m. Individuals with Type 2 diabetes
 - n. Individuals with respiratory disorders/conditions (asthma, chronic obstructive pulmonary disease, etc.)
 - o. Individuals with osteoporosis/osteopenia
 - p. Individuals with peripheral vascular disease
 - q. Individuals training for a certain sport/ competition (athletes)
 - r. Individuals with back pain

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- s. Individuals with fibromyalgia
- t. Individuals with cancer
- u. Individuals with neurological disorders (epilepsy, multiple sclerosis, cerebral palsy, spinal cord injuries, paralysis, Parkinson's disease, Down's syndrome, etc.)
- v. Individuals with metabolic syndrome
- w. Individuals who have had a stroke
- 2. Modify the exercise program to coincide with the limitations and capacities of a client with a specialized need or condition
- 3. Recognize when to refer a client and/or seek input from an appropriate health care professional

3. Techniques of Exercise (45 scored questions)

- A. Machine Resistance Exercises (plate-loaded, selectorized, hydraulic, air, friction, tubing, etc.)
- B. Free Weight Exercises
- C. Flexibility Exercises (static, ballistic, dynamic, PNF)
- D. Functional Training Exercises (stability ball, medicine ball, elastic tubing, balance, etc.)
- E. Calisthenic and Body Weight Exercises (yoga, pull-up, push-up, torso exercises, etc.)
- F. Sport-specific/Performance-related Activities (plyometrics, sprinting, agility drills, reaction, etc.)
- G. Cardiovascular Machines (treadmill, stationary bike, rowing machine, stair-stepper, elliptical trainer, etc.)
- H. Non-machine Cardiovascular Activities (running, walking, swimming, aerobic dancing, etc.)

4. Safety, Emergency Procedures and Legal Issues (18 scored questions)

- A. Safety Procedures
 - 1. Properly monitor and maintain exercise equipment
 - 2. Create a safe exercise environment according to industry standards
 - 3. Recognize symptoms relating to overtraining, overuse injuries, and temperature-induced illness
- B. Emergency Response
 - 1. Understand how to perform basic first aid
 - 2. Understand how to perform CPR
 - 3. Understand how to use an Automated External Defibrillator (AED)
 - 4. Implement a plan to respond to an emergency in an exercise facility (fire, tornado, medical situation, etc.)
- C. Professional, Legal and Ethical Responsibility
 - 1. Recognize litigation issues and circumstances
 - 2. Maintain a professional client-personal trainer relationship
 - 3. Maintain client-personal trainer confidentiality

Special Accommodations Request Form

Candidate Information

You may request special accommodations if you have a medical condition that will prevent you from taking the exam as it is typically administered. A request for special accommodations must be submitted at the time of registration. Please complete the candidate information, requested accommodations sections of this form, and have your healthcare provider complete the professional documentation section. All sections of this form must be completed and submitted for your request to be considered by our testing service. The NSCA must receive your completed form at least 45 days prior to your scheduled exam appointment.

Assigned ID Number: _____

Last Name: _____ First Name: _____ MI: _____

Address: _____

City: _____ State/Province/Country: _____ ZIP/Postal Code: _____

Work Phone: _____ Home Phone: _____

E-mail Address: _____

Requested Accommodations

I request special accommodations for the exam listed below:

_____ CSCS

_____ NSCA-CPT

Please check all that apply:

_____ Extended exam time (maximum time allowed: time and a half)

_____ Reader

_____ Replay

_____ Separate exam room

_____ Other special accommodations (please specify)

Comments: _____

Signed: _____ Date: _____

Return this form to: NSCA Certification, 1885 Bob Johnson Dr., Colorado Springs, CO 80906
or fax to 719-632-6367. If you have questions, please contact the NSCA at 800-815-6826 or 719-632-6722 or
exams@nsca-cc.org

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Sample Exam Questions

1. Which of the following describes when the personal trainer should administer a medical history questionnaire to a client?
 - A. before the fitness evaluation
 - B. immediately after the first exercise session
 - C. during the physician's medical examination
 - D. immediately after discussing the fitness evaluation results
2. A moderate intensity (8-12RM loads) resistance training program involving one minute rest periods between sets and exercises is designed PRIMARILY to improve a client's
 - A. strength.
 - B. hypertrophy.
 - C. explosive power.
 - D. aerobic endurance.
3. A personal trainer offers free sessions to clients who achieve their goals within a predetermined amount of time. Which of the following describes this motivational technique?
 - A. intrinsic motivation
 - B. achievement motivation
 - C. positive reinforcement
 - D. positive punishment
4. What is the day's caloric intake of a client who consumed 100 grams of protein, 450 grams of carbohydrates, and 40 grams of fat in one day?
 - A. 5310 kcals
 - B. 4180 kcals
 - C. 2700 kcals
 - D. 2560 kcals
5. A client's 10RM in the bench press exercise is 150 pounds (68 kg). Which of the following is this client's estimated 1RM?
 - A. 175 pounds (80 kg)
 - B. 200 pounds (91 kg)
 - C. 230 pounds (105 kg)
 - D. 250 pounds (114 kg)

Answers: (1) A (2) B (3) C (4) D (5) B

Helpful Tips

Helpful Pre-Exam Information

Visit www.nsca-cc.org: Many exam candidates find the “NSCA-CPT Exam Preparation Suggestions” located in the “Downloads” section of the “Resource Center” on the Web site to be helpful in their preparation for the exam.

Exam Hours: The customary exam hours are 8:30 a.m. to noon (except for the exam held in conjunction with the NSCA National Conference and at certain alternative sites).

Hotel Information: The best source for hotel information is a travel agency in candidate's area or the Internet.

Admission Letter: Candidates will receive the admission letter(s) one week prior to the exam. If a map of the area is available, it will be provided.

Bring with You: Bring two forms of ID, one of which is photo-bearing and the admission letter(s) to the exam.

Questions? Contact The NSCA toll-free at 800-815-6826 or e-mail exams@nsca-cc.org. We're here to help!

Helpful Post-Exam Information

Exam Scores: Candidates will receive their exam scores three to five weeks after the exam administration.

Certificates: Individuals who pass the NSCA-CPT exam will receive their NSCA-CPT certificate two weeks after receiving the exam scores. Additional certificates are available for a nominal fee.

Certified Merchandise: NSCA-CPT credential holders may purchase a variety of materials, including posters, business cards and clipboards that communicate their certified status. Visit www.nsca-cc.org to order.

Retakes: There is no limit to the amount of times a candidate may retake the exam.

Recertification Requirements: Each NSCA-CPT certified professional must fulfill all recertification requirements to retain CSCS certification through the next reporting period. Important recertification materials will be included with the NSCA-CPT certificate that is mailed to each newly certified individual.

Continuing Education Opportunities: Individuals who become NSCA-CPT certified have many opportunities to earn continuing education units. Some of the opportunities include online CEU quizzes, online practice exams and pre-approved courses/events listed on the CEU Activity Calendar. All of these CEU options are available at www.nsca-cc.org.

