

IFDA National Championship Transportation Exam Study Guide

Overview

This study guide is designed to prepare professional drivers for the IFDA National Championship transportation exam, utilizing key resources including the ATA Facts for Drivers book, JJ Keller pocket guide, and FMCSA Regulations. The guide is organized by competency areas with specific learning outcomes for each section.

1. Hours of Service (HOS) Regulations

Core Competencies:

- Understanding legal driving time limitations
- Maintaining accurate logs and electronic logging devices (ELDs)
- Applying exceptions and special cases
- Calculating available driving hours

Learning Outcomes:

- Correctly calculate available driving and on-duty time based on 11-hour, 14-hour, and 60/70-hour rules
- Properly identify and document required rest periods and breaks
- Accurately maintain records of duty status in compliance with regulations
- Apply appropriate exemptions (short-haul, adverse driving conditions, etc.)
- Demonstrate understanding of ELD mandate requirements and proper use

2. Vehicle Inspection and Maintenance

Core Competencies:

- Conducting pre-trip and post-trip inspections
- Identifying critical vehicle components
- Understanding inspection documentation requirements
- Recognizing out-of-service criteria

Learning Outcomes:

- Execute a compliant seven-step pre-trip inspection process

- Correctly identify and document vehicle defects requiring immediate attention
- Complete required vehicle inspection reports with proper documentation
- Recognize conditions that would render a vehicle out of service
- Demonstrate understanding of periodic inspection requirements

3. Cargo Securement and Weight Regulations

Core Competencies:

- Applying proper cargo securement techniques
- Understanding weight distribution principles
- Knowledge of bridge laws and weight restrictions
- Familiarity with specialized cargo requirements

Learning Outcomes:

- Calculate proper weight distribution across axles
- Select appropriate tie-down methods based on cargo type and weight
- Apply working load limit calculations for securement devices
- Demonstrate understanding of state-specific weight regulations
- Identify special requirements for hazardous materials, refrigerated goods, and other specialized cargo

4. Traffic Laws and Safe Driving Practices

Core Competencies:

- Understanding state and federal traffic regulations
- Applying defensive driving techniques
- Managing adverse weather and road conditions
- Preventing common accident scenarios

Learning Outcomes:

- Demonstrate knowledge of speed limits, right-of-way rules, and traffic signals
- Apply proper following distance calculations for various conditions

- Execute correct procedures for highway driving, lane changes, and turns
- Identify and respond appropriately to hazardous road conditions
- Apply proper accident prevention techniques for the most common crash scenarios

5. Hazardous Materials Transportation

Core Competencies:

- Understanding hazmat classifications
- Properly documenting hazardous shipments
- Handling emergency situations
- Knowledge of placarding requirements

Learning Outcomes:

- Correctly identify the nine hazard classes and their divisions
- Properly complete shipping papers for hazardous materials
- Demonstrate understanding of required placards and labels
- Apply appropriate emergency response procedures for hazmat incidents
- Identify segregation requirements for incompatible materials

6. Driver Health and Wellness

Core Competencies:

- Managing fatigue and alertness
- Maintaining physical qualifications
- Understanding substance testing requirements
- Applying proper ergonomics and injury prevention

Learning Outcomes:

- Identify signs of fatigue and apply appropriate countermeasures
- Demonstrate understanding of medical certification requirements
- Apply proper techniques for entering/exiting the vehicle and lifting
- Understand requirements for drug and alcohol testing programs

- Recognize and mitigate common health risks associated with professional driving

7. CSA (Compliance, Safety, Accountability) Program and Compliance

Core Competencies:

- Understanding BASIC categories and violation severity
- Knowledge of roadside inspection procedures
- Impact of violations on driver and carrier scores
- Prevention of common violations

Learning Outcomes:

- Identify the seven BASIC categories and their components
- Demonstrate proper conduct during roadside inspections
- Understand how specific violations impact CSA scores
- Apply prevention strategies for the most common violations
- Recognize the consequences of out-of-service orders and serious violations

8. Emergency Preparedness and Response

Core Competencies:

- Handling breakdowns and roadside emergencies
- Accident scene management
- Communication procedures during emergencies
- Weather-related emergency protocols

Learning Outcomes:

- Execute proper procedures for vehicle breakdowns on various roadways
- Demonstrate understanding of accident reporting requirements
- Apply appropriate first aid and emergency assistance techniques
- Properly use emergency warning devices and notifications
- Recognize and respond to severe weather situations appropriately

9. First Aid

Core Competencies:

- Assessing emergency medical situations
- Providing basic life support and first aid
- Managing common injury scenarios for commercial drivers
- Maintaining first aid supplies and equipment

Learning Outcomes:

- Demonstrate proper assessment of accident scenes for safety and injury severity
- Correctly perform CPR and basic life support techniques according to current guidelines
- Apply appropriate first aid for common injuries including bleeding, fractures, burns, and shock
- Execute proper response procedures for medical emergencies such as heart attack, stroke, and diabetic emergencies
- Demonstrate knowledge of when and how to move injured persons safely
- Properly use and maintain required first aid kit components
- Demonstrate understanding of driver responsibilities and legal protections when providing emergency assistance
- Correctly use communication protocols to relay vital medical information to emergency responders
- Apply appropriate techniques for managing common driver-specific injuries (back strains, falls, etc.)
- Demonstrate understanding of preventing and responding to heat/cold exposure injuries

10. Documentation and Recordkeeping

Core Competencies:

- Maintaining required documentation
- Understanding document retention requirements
- Completing bills of lading and shipping documents

- Managing electronic records

Learning Outcomes:

- Properly complete and maintain driver qualification files
- Accurately prepare and process shipping documents and bills of lading
- Demonstrate understanding of record retention periods for various documents
- Apply proper procedures for correcting errors in logbooks and other records
- Identify required permits and documentation for interstate and specialized operations

Exam References

- 2025 ATA Facts for Drivers
- JJ Keller pocket guide (latest edition)
- FMCSA Regulations (49 CFR Parts 380-399)