

PTCB (CPhT) Cheat Sheet 2026

The night-before summary, built like the exam.

90 Scored questions	1h 50m Time limit	1400 (scaled, 1000-1600) Passing score
\$129 Exam fee	PTCB Governing body	

PTCE at a Glance

- 90 multiple-choice questions (80 scored + 10 unscored pretest items, delivered on-screen)
- Passing scaled score: 1,400 (scale runs 1,000–1,600)
- Exam fee: \$129
- Format: computer-based, taken at a testing center or via online proctoring

The 4 Knowledge Domains

Budget your study time by weight — the largest domain is worth memorizing cold.

- Medications — largest domain: brand->generic names, drug classes, indications, common doses, side effects, look-alike/sound-alike (LASA) pairs, storage requirements
- Federal Requirements — controlled-substance schedules, FDA/DEA rules, recalls, restricted programs (REMS)
- Patient Safety & Quality Assurance — high-alert meds, error prevention, hygiene/cleaning, hazardous drug handling
- Order Entry & Processing — the pharmacy math domain: dosing, compounding, days' supply, inventory

Must-Know Pharmacy Math Formulas

- $\text{Desired} \div \text{Have} \times \text{Quantity} = \text{dose to dispense}$
- $\text{Percent strength} \% = (\text{grams of solute} \div 100 \text{ mL}) \times 100 \rightarrow \text{e.g., a 5\% solution} = 5 \text{ g per } 100 \text{ mL}$
- Alligation for mixing two concentrations to a target strength
- $\text{Days' supply} = \text{total quantity dispensed} \div \text{quantity used per day}$
- $\text{Flow rate: mL/hr} = \text{total volume} \div \text{total time}; \text{gtt/min} = (\text{volume} \times \text{drop factor}) \div \text{time in minutes}$
- Body-surface-area (BSA) dosing for pediatric/oncology calculations

Conversions to Memorize

- 1 kg = 2.2 lb
- 1 g = 1,000 mg; 1 mg = 1,000 mcg
- 1 L = 1,000 mL
- 1 tsp = 5 mL; 1 tbsp = 15 mL; 1 fl oz ~ 30 mL
- 1 gr (grain) ~ 65 mg
- Temp: $^{\circ}\text{C} = (^{\circ}\text{F} - 32) \times 5/9$

Controlled-Substance Schedules (C-I to C-V)

- C-I — no accepted medical use, highest abuse potential (e.g., heroin, LSD)
- C-II — high abuse potential, no refills; written/e-Rx required (e.g., oxycodone, morphine, amphetamine)
- C-III–C-IV — moderate/low abuse; up to 5 refills within 6 months
- C-V — lowest abuse potential (e.g., low-dose codeine cough preparations)

Key Federal Rules & Forms

- DEA Form 222 — ordering C-II substances (or CSOS electronic equivalent)
- DEA Form 41 — destruction of controlled substances
- DEA Form 106 — reporting theft/significant loss
- Prescriber DEA number check: sum of 1st, 3rd, 5th digits + 2×(2nd, 4th, 6th digits); last digit of the total must match the last digit of the DEA number

Safety Must-Remembers

- Use TALL man lettering to distinguish LASA drugs (e.g., predniSONE vs. prednisoLONE)
- Know the ISMP list of high-alert medications (insulin, heparin, opioids, anticoagulants, chemo)
- Do the "five rights": right patient, drug, dose, route, time
- Hazardous drugs follow USP <800>; sterile compounding follows USP <797>; non-sterile follows USP <795>

Test-Day Strategy

- With a 1,400 scaled cut score, you don't need perfection — pace yourself and answer every question (no penalty for guessing on a scaled-score exam).
- Flag calculation-heavy items and return to them; verify unit conversions before finalizing.
- Drill brand/generic pairs daily — the Medications domain rewards raw recall more than any other section.

Official sources

- U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics — Occupational Employment and Wage Statistics, May 2025 — Pharmacy Technicians (SOC 29-2052): <https://www.bls.gov/oes/current/oes292052.htm>
- PTCB — PTCB Renewal Requirements: <https://ptcb.org/renewal-requirements/>
- PTCB — Certified Pharmacy Technician (CPhT) Credential Page: <https://ptcb.org/credentials/certification/certified-pharmacy-technician/>

Free practice questions for this exam: www.everyexamprep.com/practice/exams/healthcare/ptcb-cpht