

ACE CPT Cheat Sheet 2026

The night-before summary, built like the exam.

125 Questions	3h Time limit	500 (scaled score on a 200-800 scale) Passing score
\$499 Exam fee	American Council on Exercise Governing body	

The Numbers to Remember

- 150 total multiple-choice questions
- 125 scored questions; 25 unscored experimental questions (indistinguishable from each other)
- 3 hours total time limit
- Scaled score range: 200 to 800
- Passing score: 500 or higher
- Video-based questions: about 10% of the exam
- Standalone exam fee: \$499 (or \$99 as a study-program add-on)
- Reschedule fee: \$149 | Retest fee: \$249 (valid 1 year)
- Certification period: 2 years, renewed with 20 hours of continuing education
- Eligibility: 18+ years old, high school diploma or equivalent, current adult CPR/AED certificate with hands-on skills check
- Register at least 10 days before your chosen exam date

Content Domains and Weights

- Domain II — Program Design and Implementation: 31% (largest domain)
- Domain III — Program Modification and Progression: 27%
- Domain I — Client Onboarding and Assessments: 23%
- Domain IV — Risk Management, Professional Conduct, and Ethical Business Practices: 19%

Four domains, 14 tasks total, published in ACE's official exam content outline.

High-Yield Review Areas

- Programming variables and exercise selection logic (Domain II is nearly a third of the exam)
- Adjusting programs for special populations, injuries, and plateaus (Domain III)
- Intake screening, health-history review, and baseline assessment protocols (Domain I)
- Scope of practice, liability boundaries, and professional conduct scenarios (Domain IV)
- Video-based question format — recognize movement patterns and technique cues on sight
- General exercise-science fundamentals — anatomy basics, energy systems, and periodization concepts that support all four domains conceptually

Top Traps

- Assuming the scaled 500/800 passing score maps to a simple percent-correct target — the scale is not linear, so just answer every question as accurately as possible
- Skimming the smallest domain (Risk Management, 19%) — it is still nearly one in five questions
- Trying to guess which questions are the 25 unscored experimental ones — you cannot tell, so treat every question equally

- Waiting until late in the 2-year cycle to complete the 20 required continuing-education hours
- Forgetting CPR/AED documentation before the registration deadline, which can delay or block your exam appointment
- Treating the exam like a flat percentage test rather than reading each question carefully — pacing across all 3 hours matters more than rushing to finish early

Official sources

- American Council on Exercise (ACE) — ACE Certification and Recertification Handbook (PDF):
<https://contentcdn.eacefitness.com/assets/certification/pdfs/Certification-Exam-Candidate-Handbook.pdf>
- American Council on Exercise (ACE) — Schedule Your ACE Certification Exam | ACE Fitness:
<https://www.acefitness.org/fitness-certifications/schedule-your-exam/>
- American Council on Exercise (ACE) — Personal Trainer Certification | ACE Fitness:
<https://www.acefitness.org/fitness-certifications/personal-trainer-certification/>

Free practice questions for this exam: www.everyexamprep.com/exams/ace-cpt/practice-test