

ASE A3 Cheat Sheet 2026

The night-before summary, built like the exam.

40 Questions	1h Time limit	— Passing score
\$62 Exam fee	National Institute for Aut... Governing body	

The numbers to remember

- 50 total questions / 40 scored — the other 10 are unscored research questions and you can't tell which is which during the test.
- 60 minutes to complete the full test.
- Certification is valid for 5 years before you must retest.
- \$62 test fee plus a separate \$34 registration fee charged once per order.
- 90 days from the date you purchase the test to schedule and actually sit for it.
- Recertification is only 20 questions in 30 minutes, and multi-test recert orders are capped at \$186 total.
- Certification also requires 1, 2, or 3 years of documented hands-on experience — a passing score alone isn't enough for the credential.

Blueprint areas and weights

- Clutch Diagnosis and Repair — 6 questions (~16%)
- Transmission Diagnosis and Repair — 7 questions (~17%)
- Transaxle Diagnosis and Repair — 7 questions (~17%)
- Drive Shaft/Half-Shaft & U-Joint/CV Joint — 5 questions (~13%)
- Drive Axle Diagnosis and Repair — 7 questions (~17%)
- Four-Wheel/All-Wheel Drive Components — 8 questions (~20%), the single heaviest area on the test

Diagnostic quick rules

- Verify the complaint first — don't jump straight to an internal-repair answer without confirming the symptom.
- Move simple to complex: check fluid level, linkage adjustment, and visible wear before assuming a teardown is needed.
- Grinding on shift -> synchronizer/bearing wear. Chatter under load -> clutch/driveline issues. Clunk on direction change -> worn U-joints or excess driveline slack.
- Rule out any answer choice that a scan tool or a basic visual/physical inspection would immediately disprove.
- Think about what a real shop diagnostic step would actually confirm before picking the answer that just sounds most technical.

Top traps

- Technician A/B questions: evaluate each statement independently — one is often partially true (right symptom, wrong cause, or vice versa).
- Absolute words like "always," "never," or "only" in a technician's statement are a common sign that statement is wrong.
- Don't confuse passing the test with being ASE certified — certification also needs the hands-on experience requirement on file.
- Pacing: ~40 scored questions in 60 minutes is roughly 90 seconds per question — don't let one confusing Technician A/B scenario eat your buffer time.

- Study time should roughly track blueprint weight: don't over-prepare on the lighter clutch or driveshaft/CV-joint content at the expense of the heavier transmission, transaxle, drive axle, and 4WD/AWD areas, which together make up most of the scored questions.
- Remember the fee structure going in: a \$62 test fee plus a \$34 order-level registration fee, and only a 90-day window to actually schedule once purchased.

Official sources

- National Institute for Automotive Service Excellence (ASE) — The Official ASE Study Guide - Automobile & Light Truck Tests (A1-A9): https://ase.com/wp-content/uploads/ASE_Automobile_Study_Guide.pdf
- National Institute for Automotive Service Excellence (ASE) — Dates, Fees & Test Times - Automotive Service Excellence: <https://www.ase.com/dates-fees-test-times>
- National Institute for Automotive Service Excellence (ASE) — Automobile & Light Truck Certification Tests, A Series: A1-A9 | ASE: <https://ase.com/tests/a1-a9/>

Free practice questions for this exam: www.everyexamprep.com/exams/ase-a3/practice-test