Coronal Polishing (CP)

Exam Outline and References

The CP exam is a component of the Certified Preventive Functions Dental Assistant (CPFDA®) certification program and tests knowledge-based competence.

There are no eligibility requirements to take the CP exam.

The purpose of the CP exam is to ensure that individuals meet the minimum national standard for knowledge-based competence in coronal polishing critical to the health and safety of patients and oral healthcare workers.

CPFDA component exams

Coronal Polishing (CP)

Sealants (SE)

Topical Fluoride (TF)

Effective 03/12/2025

CP Exam

Exam Weighting by Domain

I. Evaluation (15%)

II. Instruments and Materials (20%)

III. Procedures (39%)

IV. Administration (26%)

Exam Administration

Number of Multiple-Choice Questions	75
Time for Exam (minutes)	60

The exam is administered in-person and through remote online proctoring. The candidate may choose the method they prefer. Remote proctoring allows candidates to take exams using their own computer while being remotely monitored by webcam and microphone.

How DANB exams are administered

DANB uses computer adaptive testing (CAT). Exams are scored based on the difficulty of the questions answered correctly. This method can more accurately pinpoint a candidate's ability level. Each candidate is presented with the same percentage of questions from each domain. The average candidate will answer around 50% of the questions correctly.

CP Exam Outline

I. Evaluation (15%)

A. Health and dental histories

B. Anatomy and pathologies of the oral cavity, including but not limited to:

1. Arches, quadrants and sextants
2. Primary, mixed and permanent dentitions
3. Universal tooth numbering system

C. Characteristics of plaque, calculus and materia alba

D. Tooth stains

E. Restorations

F. Differences between coronal polishing and oral prophylaxis

II. Equipment and Supplies (20%)

A. Select instruments and materials

B. Characteristics of abrasives and polishing agents

C. Select personal protective equipment (PPE)

III. Procedures (39%)

A. Position equipment, operator and patient

B. Operate low-speed handpieces

C. Identify fulcrum position

D. Describe polishing stroke pattern and sequence

E. Apply infection prevention and control procedures

F. Maintain equipment

IV. Administration (26%)

A. Legal record maintenance and legal responsibilities, including but not limited to:

1. clinical/treatment notes.
2. Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA).

B. Patient education, including but not limited to:

1. purpose of coronal polishing.
2. oral disease prevention and progression.
3. pre- and post-operative instructions.

C. Safety data sheets (SDS) for coronal polishing materials

CP Exam Suggested References

DANB exam committees use the following textbooks and reference materials to develop this exam. This list does not include all available study materials; these are the resources that exam committees have determined provide the most up-to-date information needed to meet a determined level of competence on this exam. Any one reference will likely not include all the study material required to pass the exam. **Please note that previous editions of the resources below may be used for study purposes if the previous version was published within the past 5 years.**

This list is intended to help prepare for this exam. It is not an endorsement of the publications. You should prepare for the exam using as many different study materials as possible.

Suggested Exam Preparation References

1. Bird, Doni L. and Debbie S. Robinson. *Essentials of Dental Assisting*. 7th ed., 2023.
2. Bird, Doni L. and Debbie S. Robinson. *Modern Dental Assisting*. 14th ed., 2024.
3. Eakle, Stephan W. and Kimberly G. Bastin. *Dental Materials: Clinical Applications for Dental Assistants and Dental Hygienists*. 4th ed., 2021.
4. Singhal, Vaishali, Susan Kantz, Melissa Damatta, Donna Phinney, and Judy Halstead. *Dental Assisting: A Comprehensive Approach*. 6th ed., 2023.

Additional/Optional Study Resources

1. Miller, C. *Infection Control and Management of Hazardous Materials for the Dental Team*. 7th ed., 2023.
2. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC). cdc.gov.
   - *Guidelines for Infection Control in Dental Health-Care Settings — 2003* (MMWR, Vol. 52, RR 17). cdc.gov/mmwr/preview/mmwrhtml/rr5217a1.htm
   - *Summary of Infection Prevention Practices in Dental Settings: Basic Expectations for Safe Care. Atlanta, GA: Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, US Department of Health and Human Services; October 2016*
3. U.S. Department of Labor, Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA). osha.gov.
   - *Bloodborne Pathogens (1910.1030).* osha.gov/laws-regs/regulations/standardnumber/1910/1910.1030
   - *Hazard Communication (1910.1200).* osha.gov/laws-regs/regulations/standardnumber/1910/1910.1200
4. The DALE Foundation. dalefoundation.org.
   - *DANB CP Practice Test*

Acronyms

The following table lists acronyms that you may find on this exam. When you take the exam, this list of acronyms will be available to you.

Acronym/Abbreviation	What it stands for
°	degree symbol
°C	degrees Celsius
°F	degrees Fahrenheit
µm	micrometer
AAPD	American Academy of Pediatric Dentistry
ADA	American Dental Association
ADS	Association for Dental Safety Formerly the Organization for Safety, Asepsis and Prevention (OSAP)
AED	automated external defibrillator
BBP	bloodborne pathogens
BI	biologic indicator
b.i.d.	two times a day
C/kg	coulombs per kilogram
CAD/CAM	computer-aided design / computer-aided manufacturing
CBCT	cone beam computed tomography
CCD	charge-coupled device
CDA	Certified Dental Assistant
CDC	Centers for Disease Control and Prevention
CEJ	cementoenamel junction
CFU/mL	colony forming unit / milliliter
CMOS	complementary metal oxide semiconductor
COPD	chronic obstructive pulmonary disease
CPR	cardiopulmonary resuscitation
CT	computed tomography
DEJ	dentinoenamel junction
DO	disto-occlusal
DUWL	dental unit waterline
EPA	Environmental Protection Agency
FDA	Food and Drug Administration
FMS	full mouth series
Gy	gray
H1N1	hemagglutinin type 1 and neuraminidase type 1
HAV	hepatitis A virus
HBIG	hepatitis B immune globulin
HBsAg	hepatitis B surface antigen
HBV	hepatitis B virus
HCS	Hazard Communication Standard
HCV	hepatitis C virus
HDV	hepatitis D virus
HEPA	high-efficiency particulate air
HEV	hepatitis E virus

Acronym/Abbreviation	What it stands for
HIPAA	Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act
HIV	human immunodeficiency virus
HPV	human papillomavirus
h.s.	at bedtime
HSV	herpes simplex virus
HSV-1	herpes simplex virus - 1 (oral herpes)
HSV-2	herpes simplex virus - 1 (genital herpes)
HVE	high-volume evacuation
ID	identification
IFU	instructions for use
IRM	intermediate restorative material
IV	intravenous
kVp	kilovoltage peak
LED	light-emitting diode
mA	milliamperage
mL	milliliter
mm	millimeter
MMR	measles, mumps and rubella
MOD	mesial, occlusal, distal
MPD	maximum permissible dose
MRI	magnetic resonance imaging
MRSA	methicillin-resistant *Staphylococcus aureus*
mSv	millisievert
mW/cm^2	milliwatts per square centimeter
N_2O	nitrous oxide
NIOSH	National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health
NiTi	nickel-titanium
O_2	oxygen
OFD	object-film distance
OHCP	oral healthcare personnel
OPIM	other potentially infectious materials
OSHA	Occupational Safety and Health Administration
OTC	over-the-counter
PA	posteroanterior
pH	potential of hydrogen
PID	position indicating device
PPE	personal protective equipment
ppm	parts per million
PSP	phosphor storage plate
PVS	polyvinyl siloxane
q.i.d.	four times a day
rads	radiation absorbed dose
rem	roentgen equivalent man
RPD	removable partial denture
rpm	revolutions per minute

Acronym/Abbreviation	What it stands for
SDS	safety data sheet
SLOB	same lingual, opposite buccal
SLR	single-lens reflex
Sv	sievert
TB	tuberculosis
Tdap	tetanus, diphtheria, and pertussis
t.i.d.	three times a day
TLD	thermoluminescent dosimeter
TMD	temporomandibular disorder
TMJ	temporomandibular joint
UV	ultraviolet
XCP	extension cone paralleling
ZOE	zinc oxide-eugenol

Exam Development and Maintenance

How exams are developed

DANB exams are developed using this exam outline, which is annually reviewed by subject matter experts. The outline is developed using a content validation study, which includes a job analysis survey where practicing DANB certificants and certificate holders are asked how often tasks are performed and how critical competent performance of the tasks is to the health and safety of the public and oral healthcare personnel. This study is conducted every five to seven years to ensure the outline is consistent with current clinical practices. DANB's Board of Directors approves all updates to DANB exam outlines.

How the passing standard is determined

The exam passing standard is evaluated and a Standard Setting Study is conducted the year following a Content Validation Study. DANB uses a modified Angoff standard setting method and convenes a panel of subject matter experts to evaluate and make judgements about the difficulty of the exam items and the criticality of the content of the exam items. Modified Angoff standard setting methods are commonly used to set the passing standards for certification exams. DANB's Board of Directors approves all changes to DANB exam passing standards.

How exams are scored

In a criterion-referenced examination, performance on the exam is not compared to the performance of others taking the exam. A candidate must obtain a score equal to, or higher than, the passing score to pass the test. Exam results are reported as a "scaled score" which is neither a "number correct" nor a "percent correct" score. Scaled scores range from 100 to 900. A scaled score of 400 must be obtained to pass the exam.

Receiving your exam results

You will be notified by email within 1-3 business days after your exam that your exam results are available in your online DANB account.

State Regulations

Each state's dental board implements regulations and establishes rules for delegating legally allowable duties to dental assistants. Passing one or more of the DANB component exams or earning DANB certification only conveys authority to perform these duties in those states that recognize these exams or this certification as meeting state dental assisting requirements. This information is available at danb.org.