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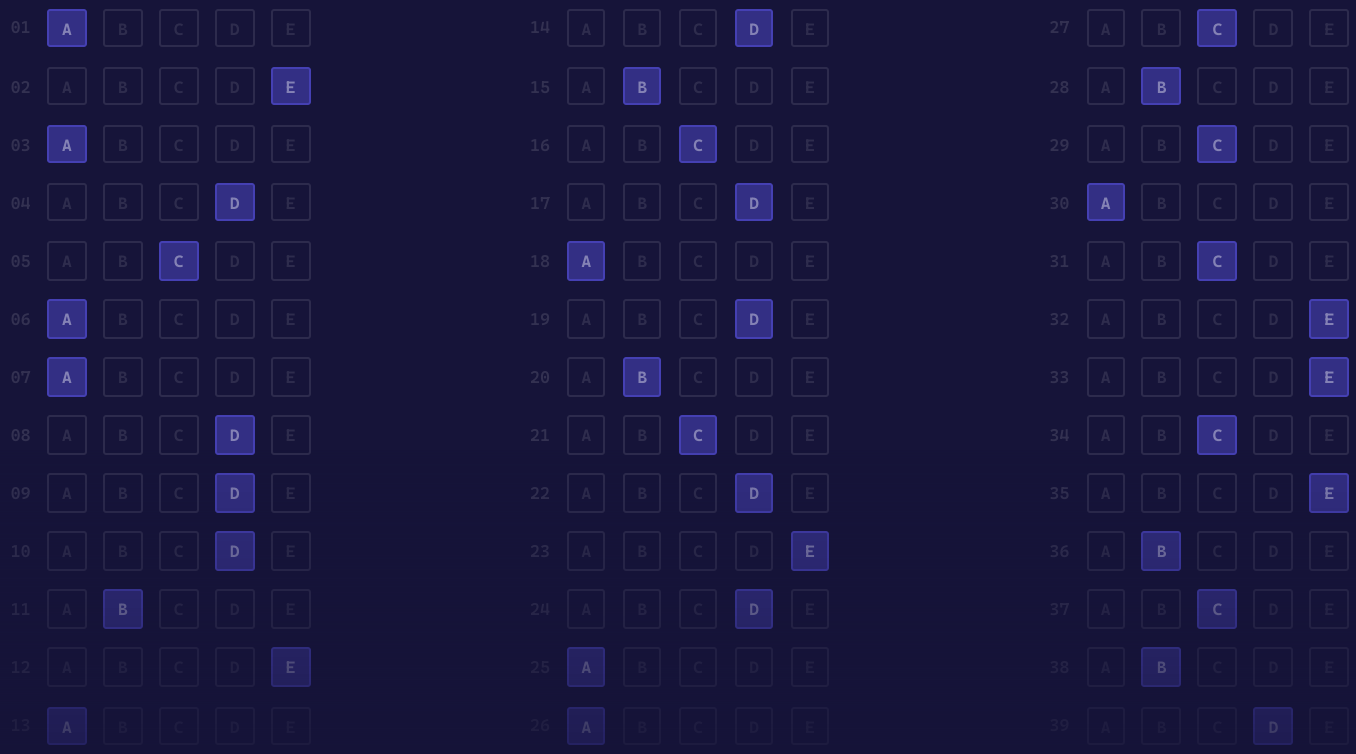

PRACTICE QUESTIONS

Design-Build Institute of America (DBIA)

DDBP

Designated Design-Build Professional Exam

EDITION	QUESTIONS	ISSUED
Demo	9	September 3, 2026

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Before you begin

What this is

9 practice questions for Design-Build Institute of America (DBIA) `DDBP`, each with its answer key and an explanation. Answer a question before you read its key — the explanation is worth more once you have committed.

If something looks wrong

Send us three things and we will check it:

- the exam code, `DDBP`
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QUESTION 1 SINGLE CHOICE

In the design-build project delivery method, what is the fundamental contractual and accountability relationship that distinguishes it from design-bid-build?

A The owner holds separate contracts with the designer and the constructor, who are responsible only for their respective scopes

B The owner holds a single contract with the design-builder, who is accountable for both design and construction

C The designer holds the master contract and hires the constructor as a subcontractor for the construction phase

D The constructor holds the master contract and subcontracts the design services to a licensed design firm

ANSWER B

WHY The defining characteristic of design-build is a single point of responsibility: the owner contracts with one entity (the design-builder) for both design and construction services. In design-bid-build, the owner holds separate contracts with the designer and the constructor, which is precisely what design-build is intended to consolidate.

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QUESTION 2 SINGLE CHOICE

Under DBIA's Code of Conduct, a designated design-build professional is evaluating whether to participate in a procurement where the owner's RFP requires the design-builder to also perform owner's representative services during construction. Which action best reflects DBIA ethical standards?

A Decline to compete because the scope is non-traditional and likely outside the design-builder's expertise

B Compete and disclose the dual-role conflict in the proposal so the owner can make an informed decision

C Compete without comment, since owners routinely expand scope and the conflict is the owner's problem

D Compete only if the design-builder agrees to waive liability for any construction defects

ANSWER B

WHY DBIA's Code of Conduct emphasizes transparency and disclosure of potential conflicts of interest. A design-builder that identifies a role conflict must bring it to the owner's attention during procurement so the owner can evaluate and decide knowingly. Silence or unilateral scope waivers do not satisfy the disclosure obligation.

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QUESTION 3 SINGLE CHOICE

Which procurement approach is characteristic of best-practice design-build and is generally preferred for complex projects?

A Sealed, price-only bids evaluated strictly on lowest cost

B Best-value selection combining qualifications, approach, and price

C Direct negotiation with a single pre-selected firm and no competing proposals

D Award based solely on the highest technical score regardless of price

ANSWER B

WHY DBIA best practices promote best-value selection for design-build, particularly on complex projects, because it allows owners to weigh technical qualifications, proposed approach, schedule, and price together. Pure low-bid selection defeats the collaborative advantages of design-build, while purely technical or purely negotiated approaches lack appropriate competition.

QUESTION 4 MULTIPLE CHOICE

Which of the following provisions are characteristic of a DBIA-family design-build contract document? (Choose two.)

A A single point of responsibility for both design and construction performance

B A hold-harmless clause shifting all design error liability to the owner's consultants

C A allocation matrix that assigns permitting, utility coordination, and differing site condition risk

D A requirement that the owner pay for any design changes requested by the design-builder

ANSWER A · C

WHY DBIA's contract documents establish a single point of responsibility (Option A) and include explicit risk-allocation language — often organized as a matrix — covering permitting, differing site conditions, utility coordination, and similar issues (Option C). Shifting design error liability to the owner's consultants contradicts the single-point-of-responsibility principle, and owners are not required to pay for design changes the design-builder initiates on its own.

QUESTION 5 SINGLE CHOICE

During which design-build phase does the integrated project team typically begin formalization, including co-location of key team members, joint development of the project plan, and early alignment on design intent, schedule, and budget?

A Procurement phase only, before any design work begins

B Post-construction warranty review phase

C **Design-build team integration phase, beginning immediately after award and continuing into preliminary design**

D Closeout and turnover phase

ANSWER **C**

WHY DBIA describes a distinct team integration phase that begins right after award and continues into preliminary design. The purpose is to align the owner, designer, and builder around a common plan — schedule, budget, design intent, and decision protocols — before detailed design advances. Co-location and joint planning are hallmarks of this phase.

QUESTION 6 SINGLE CHOICE

In design-build, the use of open-book cost estimating with the owner during progressive design development is intended primarily to:

A Allow the owner to redesign the project unilaterally between the design-builder and subcontractors

B **Provide transparency on cost drivers so the owner can make informed scope, quality, and budget trade-offs**

C Eliminate the need for a guaranteed maximum price

D Shift design liability for cost overruns to the owner

ANSWER **B**

WHY Open-book estimating gives the owner visibility into the design-builder's pricing so that trade-offs among scope, quality, schedule, and budget can be made collaboratively while the design is still developing. It does not eliminate a GMP, give the owner redesign authority, or shift design liability to the owner.

QUESTION 7 MULTIPLE CHOICE

In a DBIA design-build arrangement, which of the following are appropriately retained as owner responsibilities rather than transferred to the design-builder? (Choose two.)

A **Programming the project's functional and operational requirements**

B **Final acceptance of the completed facility**

C Detailed structural design calculations for the building

D Day-to-day means and methods of construction

ANSWER **A** · **B**

WHY Under DBIA best practices, the owner retains responsibility for defining the project program/requirements (Option A) and for final acceptance of the work (Option B). Detailed structural design and means and methods are the design-builder's responsibility and should not be assigned to the owner.

QUESTION 8 SINGLE CHOICE

Which statement correctly distinguishes Progressive Design-Build (PDB) from traditional fixed-price design-build?

A **In PDB, the owner typically selects the design-builder on qualifications and then negotiates a guaranteed maximum price after schematic design is sufficiently developed**

B In PDB, the design-builder must submit a fixed lump-sum price in the proposal before any design is performed

C In PDB, the owner hires the designer separately and the builder joins only after design is complete

D In PDB, the contract price is set by competitive low bid before procurement concludes

ANSWER **A**

WHY Progressive Design-Build is a two-stage process. The owner usually selects the design-builder based on qualifications and approach (sometimes with a price factor), then the design-builder collaborates with the owner to develop the design to a point — typically schematic design — at which a price (often a GMP) can be negotiated. This contrasts with traditional fixed-price design-build, in which a price is committed earlier in procurement.

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QUESTION 9 SINGLE CHOICE

In DBIA's risk allocation framework, which party typically bears the risk for unknown differing site conditions discovered after contract award on a typical design-build project?

A Always the design-builder, with no exceptions

B Always the owner, with no exceptions

C Typically the owner, because the owner generally retains the site as it exists at award

D Typically the design-builder's subcontractors, by flow-down from the design-builder

ANSWER C

WHY DBIA contract documents generally allocate unknown differing site conditions to the owner, since the owner effectively controls the site as it exists at the time of award. The design-builder assumes the risks it can manage and price — its design, its means and methods, and the work it performs — not unknown subsurface or site conditions.

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