PT Level II General exam study checklist

Built from the ASNT NDT Level II, Liquid Penetrant Testing (PT) General exam topic list, the current list, with an update in development and no date set (read 19 Oct 2026 on ASNT's exam page).
General exam: 50 multiple-choice items in 2 hours, computer-based at Pearson VUE or an ASNT Authorized Exam Center. The Specific exam (40 items, 2 hours) is separate.

One line per thing to be able to do, grouped under the four topics ASNT lists for the PT General exam. ASNT publishes no topic weights, so give every topic a pass. Tick a line when you can do it without notes.

Review PT Principles

- ☐ Explain capillary action: why penetrant enters a surface-open discontinuity and comes back out under developer.
- ☐ Name the penetrant properties that matter and how they trade off against each other.
- ☐ Say what PT can and cannot find: the opening must reach the surface.
- ☐ Put the process in order, precleaning to postcleaning, and say what goes wrong if each step is skipped or rushed.
- ☐ Explain dwell time and what changes it.

Selection of the Appropriate PT Method

- ☐ Tell visible, fluorescent and dual-mode penetrants apart, and say when each is used.
- ☐ Compare the removal methods: water-washable, solvent-removable, and lipophilic and hydrophilic post-emulsifiable.
- ☐ Explain over-removal and under-removal, and the controls that prevent each.
- ☐ Match a sensitivity level and a developer form to the job.
- ☐ Choose type, removal method and remover for a part from its surface, its size and the setting.
- ☐ Say why materials from different families are not mixed.

Inspection and Evaluation of Indications

- ☐ Set up viewing: white light for visible, UV-A in a darkened area for fluorescent, and how each is measured.
- ☐ Sort indications into relevant, nonrelevant and false, and confirm a doubtful one.
- ☐ Describe how casting, wrought, weld and service discontinuities usually look.
- ☐ Tell linear, rounded and aligned indications apart, and measure one.
- ☐ Apply the acceptance criteria your procedure names, and record the result.
- ☐ Say when a part must be reprocessed, and how.

Inspection Procedures and Standards

- ☐ Follow the document chain from the code or contract down to the written procedure.
- ☐ Say what a written procedure fixes and who is responsible for it.
- ☐ Run process control checks on materials and instruments, and say how often each is done.
- ☐ Check materials against the alloy being tested, and handle fire, vapor and pressure hazards safely.

Practice with the free tools

Penetrant testing quiz: anglebeam.com/tools/penetrant-testing-quiz
NDT study plan (UT, MT, PT): anglebeam.com/tools/ndt-study-plan

Read next

PT Level II exam guide: anglebeam.com/guides/pt-level-2-exam
PT process control and indications: anglebeam.com/guides/pt-process-control-and-indications
Penetrant removal methods: anglebeam.com/guides/penetrant-removal-methods
Penetrant developer types: anglebeam.com/guides/penetrant-developer-types
ASNT Level II exam day: anglebeam.com/guides/asnt-level-2-exam-day

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How to use this checklist

- Take the free 10-question check first and start with the topic it shows as weakest.
- Write the process steps from memory, then say for each one what goes wrong if it is skipped.
- ASNT shows a 30-day wait before a failed exam can be retaken, so leave room before any deadline.

Ready to test yourself? 10 free PT Level II questions

Find your weakest topic in minutes. Every answer is explained as you go, and there is no signup.

Take the free check: anglebeam.com/ndt-pt-2

NDT PT Level II General course: $129. Lessons, practice exams and a study plan.

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