

10 Steps to NICET Success

Is NICET Certification Important To You?

The most common reason for wanting NICET Certification is to meet a state or local licensing requirement. Many states and municipalities now require NICET Certification for designers and technicians involved in fire alarm. Additionally, every year more states and cities/counties adopt NICET as a requirement as well.

Even if you do not do work in an area that requires NICET Certification, you may still encounter NICET Certification as a condition to bid or install a project. Many organizations, both private and governmental, require NICET Certification as a contract condition to do work at their facilities. Not having NICET Certified people on your staff could prevent you from bidding a project or cause you to lose a project that you won.

NICET is a professional certification that is awarded to individuals, not companies. NICET has stringent testing and experience requirements to become certified. NICET Certification is the mostly broadly recognized certification for technicians in the fire alarm industry. Due to all of these factors, NICET Certification is a highly regarded certification in our industry. A company that has NICET Certified individuals on staff has a definite edge in the marketplace!

Becoming NICET Certified

NICET Certification requires passing exams and documenting experience. The exams are based on fire alarm codes appropriate to the certification, and skills that NICET expects a technician seeking certification in that area to have. The experience part of the process requires documenting your work history in the area you wish to be certified. Higher levels of certification require more years of experience.

The exam part of the process is by far the most challenging. The exam is open book with specific books allowed into each exam. The exam is entirely pass/fail (if you fail you have to take the whole test over again), and the questions are pulled from a revolving pool (different questions each time you test). The questions will come from the books permitted in the exam, and from real world experience that NICET expects that a technician have at the level you are testing for.

Step #1 – Start Studying Early

Students often ask our instructors “when should I start studying for the NICET exam?” Our answer is “today!” The hardest part of the NICET exam is not what you know but rather what you think you know. We all become very familiar with the codes during our daily work in fire alarm, and we become “experts” in the parts of the code that we use every day. The problem is that NICET tests on the ENTIRE code, not just the parts that we are familiar with. Studying early gives you an opportunity to get familiar with the parts that you don’t use regularly.

Step #2 – Get The Right References

Although NICET has recently relaxed their rules regarding references, they still base their questions on specific editions of the exam. NICET will allow you to bring any EDITION (year) of the approved references, but they do make it very clear what editions the exam itself is based on. Having a code book that is too old or too new may cause you to select incorrect answers during the test.

Step #3 - Study One Bite At A Time

The NICET exam is an open code book exam, and a large majority of the answers can be found in the code books. Unfortunately, the codes themselves contain large volumes of information and can sometimes be difficult to understand and navigate. For these reasons, studying for the exam is better done in small bites rather than all at once before the exam. Learn to navigate the code, not just memorize it.

Step #4 – Highlighting

NICET permits references brought into the exam to be highlighted. When highlighting a reference, it is important to keep in mind the purpose of highlighting: to draw your attention to important information. We recommend to our students to read their code books with highlighter in hand. When they come across an important word or concept, hit it the highlighter. On subsequent readings of the code, the highlighting will jump out at you, including during the exam itself.

Step #5 – Tabs

NICET permits tabbing of references brought into the exam. NICET permits printed and handwritten tabs, with the only requirement being that they are permanently affixed to the page (no post-it notes or post-it flags). NTC offers tabs on our website, and tabs are included with our live classes.

Step #6 – Have a Strategy

“If you fail to plan, you plan to fail.” Having a plan of attack going into the exam increases your chances of passing significantly. Know the types of questions to expect, be on the lookout for common exam pitfalls, and know what you need to do to pass the exam.

Step #7 – Answer ALL The Questions

It is important to answer ALL the questions on your NICET exam, even if they are a guess. Questions that are guesses have a chance at being right, questions that are blank are automatically failed. Since the NICET exam is entirely pass/fail, there is no advantage to failing any part of the exam.

Step #8 – Use The Flag Button

The NICET exam interface includes a FLAG FOR REVIEW button that allows the test taker to put an electronic flag on a question. The test taker will get a reminder that he has flagged questions before the exam ends, or he can manually check them using the Navigator button. We recommend using the Flag button and guessing on the tougher questions. This works hand in hand with Step #7 because it allows you the time to answer all the questions.

Step #9 - Avoid Research Intensive Questions

Some questions on your NICET exam are going to require serious research and thought to come up with an answer. These questions take a lot of time, a luxury that the NICET test taker does not have. If you encounter a research intensive question, consider guessing and flagging to save it for later review after you've answered the easy questions.

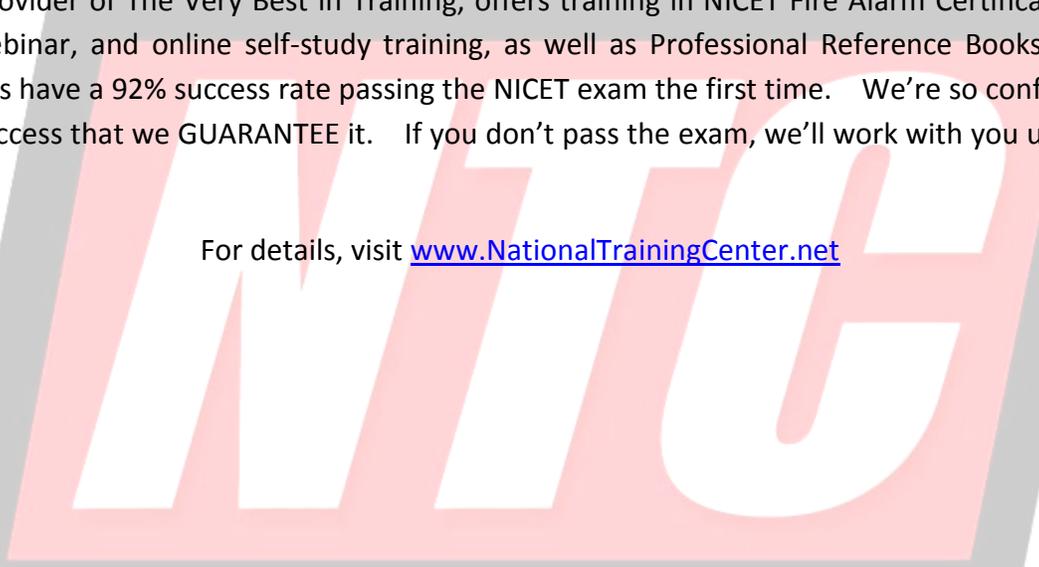
Step #10 – Study Guide and Training

The NICET exam can be a very difficult and frustrating experience. Because NICET only supplies a score for the exam, with no actual feedback of questions passed or failed, many NICET test takers are repeat test takers. Investing in study guides and training will reduce your investment in NICET exams and help you become certified faster.

Why NTC?

NTC, provider of The Very Best in Training, offers training in NICET Fire Alarm Certification via live, webinar, and online self-study training, as well as Professional Reference Books. NTC students have a 92% success rate passing the NICET exam the first time. We're so confident in your success that we GUARANTEE it. If you don't pass the exam, we'll work with you until you do!

For details, visit www.NationalTrainingCenter.net



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