



CBFANC CHB Exam Prep Course Guide to Success

You are about to embark on the challenging and exciting path of preparing for the CHB Exam. The **CBFANC CHB Exam Prep Course was established to facilitate your goals.**

Studying for the CHB Exam can be **a fun experience** - It doesn't have to be grueling (although it often has been described this way).

It does require hard work on your part to ensure that you contribute sufficient time and a strong dedication for attending all the classes, completing all the reading assignments and partaking in multiple 4 hour practice exams. **We give you the tools to be successful.**

This little guide was created to aid your journey of preparing for the Federal Exam.

Like any test, the CHB Exam is just that – a test. **It is an open book exam** covering the Customs Regulations (19 CFR), The Harmonized Tariff Schedule of the United States (HTS), segments from the Customs and Trade Automated Interface Requirements (CATAIR) and several Directives. In short, Customs and Border Protection (CBP) identifies multiple publications which are required study. Be sure to obtain proper, current issue materials to begin your process.

The CHB Exam is designed to determine whether you understand the 19 CFR and the Tariff. **It is not about how much info you can memorize**, but rather, whether you are able to find the appropriate legal cite which supports an answer to a question. -- There is a minimal amount of memorization required but this is only to expedite your ability to locate appropriate legal cites. – Flash cards will be used to help you with this process; we even have an app for that!

Your job, should you accept it, will be to study hard, our job is to empower you to understand and properly apply the elements contained in 19 CFR and the HTS. You must review previous CHB Exams posted on the Customs website (www.cbp.gov). You will see how a legal cite is referenced for each answer. By doing so, you will become successful in passing the CHB Exam and most importantly, you will become successful in your career as a Licensed Customs Broker. The course is about becoming a qualified, knowledge person who truly deserves the honor of being awarded a CHB License. **We empower you to pass the test** and take the next step.

You will become a true professional in the industry.

Attached is a list of tips which have been compiled by a former student and updated by the CHB Exam instructor. **The tips will save you time, energy and frustration.**

Read on for more insight...

Best of Luck to you!

Renata Pearson, CHB Exam Instructor



Thoughts & Tips From a Former Student and The Instructor...

I've been in your shoes before. I prepared and sat for the CHB exam. I was extremely nervous about what I was embarking on when I signed up for the course. My lack of experience in the business compared to a room full of students who had been through practical and real aspects of the business made me hesitant. I was however, motivated and committed to advancing my career and learning more about the international trade industry. The structure of the course, the detailed schedule and the guidance of a very experienced instructor helped me succeed. Anyone has the ability to pass the exam if they are extremely motivated and dedicated to studying.

Tip #1 - Set aside a time and place to study

Good habits are a must and lead to success in the long term. Set aside a time and place during the day to study which is quiet and free of distractions. It might be a conference room at your office or a spare room in your home. On weekends, if your home has too many distractions, the library or going back to the office might work as long as you are actually studying. Each person will have a unique method for finding the optimal study location...you may find that a coffee shop can be a place of inspiration. Whatever place you choose, ensure that the time spent is productive.

Tip #2 - Write, Mark, Tab and Highlight!

Don't be shy about marking up your Regulations, HTS or any one of your study guides. These are your books – They will become amazing reference tools during your career. Highlight, underline, write and tab as you see fit. The instructor will provide many prepared tabs and teaches a helpful method of using different highlighters to accent important info. Highlighting and writing in the margins helps you to find specific Cites and will reinforce the material learned.

Color Coding Recommendations:

- Yellow for General Info
- Blue for Timelines
- Green for Money - Costs
- Pink for Penalties
- Purple for Who / Examples
- Orange for Forms / Footnotes

Circle Conditional Words:

- Except
- Unless
- But
- And
- Or
- Excludes
- Precludes

"N" Footnote Site

Tip #3 - Preparation is Key

Arriving to class without completing the reading, failing to highlight or failing to take practice quizzes is a waste of time for both you and the instructor. It is crucial to come to class prepared! Although you may not have time to complete your entire assignment, try to complete as much as you can so the class session is of value to you. You will feel great when you can answer questions when called upon during class.



Tip #4 - Create your own quick reference sheets and print references from CBP website

This is an open book exam. You are allowed to bring anything printed into the exam – this is to your advantage. Copies of Free Trade Agreements, Merchandise Processing Fee (MPF) Exemptions, Harbor Maintenance Fee (HMF) and CBP List of Forms with descriptions are helpful. Your instructor will provide a great deal of handouts and you can also locate additional reference material on the CBP website. The material is FREE. I recommend keeping additional material in a separate binder (1 1/2 to 2 inches thick) or use an extra catalog ring for those reference materials. CBP Informed Compliance Publications (ICP) are especially useful but however, don't forget to highlight. The ICP on Textile & Apparel is a wealth of information in explaining different fibers, yarn forward rule and preferential trade agreement qualifications.

Tip #5 - The index is your friend and practice, practice and practice past exams

Both the 19 CFR and Tariff index tools are useful when taking the exams (actual and practice). Index keywords will facilitate questions about a classification or facilitate finding the list of service ports. Don't be that person who forgets to use the index – every correct answer is critical.

It is imperative to schedule time to complete at least 6 to 10 previous exams before sitting for the Federal Exam. Previous exams and their answer keys can be found on the CBP website. I would highlight key words in those questions that I missed repeatedly, then mark the Regulatory or Tariff sections with big bold letters and highlight the segments after scoring each exam.

Tip #6 - Cross reference and mark your books

There is overlap in many of the Regulatory cites. See 19 CFR §141, §181 and §191. Be on the lookout for key words repeated in those and additional sections.

Tip #7 - Pair up to create a study buddy system with fellow students

The old adage “two heads are better than one,” is true. Consider pairing up with another classmate or arrange a group study session on non-class days to review previous material covered in class or located on old exams. Each person may have a different interpretation of the question and an exchange between students will enhance your learning process. Unique perspectives can help to better understand a particular classification, valuation or complicated Free Trade Agreement question. If meeting at a central location is not feasible, consider using Skype, Facetime, or Conference Calling tools. Note: There are several free calling services available if you check the web.

Tip #8 - Create flashcards

Buy a couple packages of index cards. Although I preferred colored cards, most people use the plain white type. They are a great study aid for memorizing the 19 CFR Table of Content. You should use them when you have a few minutes of downtime. The instructor recommends at least 5 minutes each day from the start of class until you take the exam....many people will memorize the table of contents within the first 3 weeks then forget half the info because they fail to use them each day...Don't let that happen to you....remember 5 minutes each day.

Examples:

Write “Part 111” on one side then “Customs Brokers” on the other side.

Write “Part 113” on one side then “Customs Bonds” on the other side.

The flashcards also useful to test knowledge of key dates such as how many days to make entry or how many years merchandise can be stored in a warehouse. They are easy to carry and use when you are taking mass transit or have spare time while waiting for an appointment.

*** If you have an Apple device, ask the instructor to share her set of electronic flashcards.



Tip #9 - Get regular exercise, eat healthy and get adequate rest

Developing and keeping good habits goes a long way in being successful with your study process. Regular exercise and avoidance of too much sugar or junk food is good for your body & your brain. Eliminate habits which can cause sudden spikes in your blood sugar. You don't want your body or your brain to feel tired or sluggish. If you do feel sluggish, study time suddenly becomes a need for sleep time. Regular cardiovascular exercise keeps the brain sharp and is a stress reliever tool. When I felt overwhelmed or stressed, I'd go for a run - both pre-study and post-study (remember to only run in safe areas whether day or night). My second run helped me to refocus and study another 2 hours. Everyone has their own system for keeping healthy and for stress relief so do whatever works best for you.

Tip #10 - Limit computer and Internet time unless taking online exams

Surfing the Internet and checking email when you should study can be huge time wasters. Give yourself mini breaks of 10-15 minutes during the study process. Catch up on email, call friends or family, read the news. When your break is over, it is time to get back to the study process.

Tip #11 - Make it a game, have fun and create rewards

Studying for the exam can be a very isolating time period with months of study. It can also be a stressful, tear-your-hair out experience (in my case particularly). The second time around I found at least two strands of white hair. I plucked them and cursed silently since I believed that stress from studying was causing me to age too early. To move forward, I treated the situation as a learning experience. Rather than re-reading a particular section and take more quizzes, I'd take a short break and re-study a section I enjoyed such as country of origin. After a break from the original source of my anxiety, the Regulatory and Tariff concepts made much more sense.

Everyone has a different type of reward system. Don't forget to treat yourself to a special meal or splurge on an interesting app after a lot of intense studying. Whatever your method of reward, it is all about acknowledging the time, energy and hard work that you've invested. Find a healthy balance between work and play. One size doesn't fit all.

Tip #12 - Keep it simple – read the exam question for what it is asking

There is always a certain amount of interpretation involved in answering each question. In general, read each question for what is being asked – do not read more into the question. For classification, try not to overanalyze. Follow the instructions. The Exam booklet states "choose the best possible answer". The best possible answer is one in which you are able to support with a tariff or regulatory cite. (Occasionally, logic may not prevail.)

Tip #13 - If for some reason you must repeat the exam....

The Exam is given twice a year – The 1st Monday of April & the 1st Monday of October –

In the event that you receive an Exam Results Letter which states "Congrats, you get to try this again".... Don't give up!

Take a break for a couple weeks then get back in the saddle and begin studying again. Be sure to speak with your instructor to determine where to re-focus your efforts.

Aim to be a winner - hard work & dedication will allow you to triumph!