

# Guide to Taking the Certified Balloon Artist<sup>SM</sup> (CBA<sup>®</sup>) Practical Exam (USA)

If you're taking the Practical Exam outside the USA, contact the appropriate Pioneer location for details. Visit "Contact Us" on [Qualatex.com](http://Qualatex.com) for more information.

Once you've completed and passed all of the tests from the Qualatex Balloon Network<sup>SM</sup> (QBN<sup>®</sup>) curriculum, you're eligible to take the CBA Practical Exam. This is a timed, 4-hour, hands-on exam designed to confirm your knowledge of the QBN curriculum.



## The following are requirements that must be completed at least 30 days prior to the exam.

1. Complete and pass (with a score of 80 or above) all of the tests from the QBN curriculum (either Vols. 1-5 or "QBN Balloon Basics," "QBN Balloon Deliveries & Bouquets," and "QBN Balloon Decor").
2. Sign up for the Practical Exam by completing and sending in the "CBA Practical Exam Sign-up Form" on [Qualatex.com](http://Qualatex.com).
3. Send in four Classic Balloon Decor photos with completed Job Cost Forms along with your "CBA Practical Exam Sign-up Form." Each photo should be from a different job and feature only Qualatex<sup>®</sup> brand balloons. Do not include any balloon sculpture, centerpiece, or delivery photos. (Only one of the photos may include a String-of-Pearl Arch.) Include your name and company name on the back of each photo. Photos will be returned after the completion of your exam. NOTE: If people from the same company are taking the Practical Exam, each person must supply different photos.
4. Pay the US\$40 exam fee if you haven't already prepaid.

Once you've completed the above four items, you're ready to take the Practical Exam. **We recommend arriving 20 minutes prior to the exam start time.** Please check in with the QBN representative upon your arrival. This person will be in or near the room throughout the testing period to assist you should you have any questions. You'll be assigned a work area with a table.

## The QBN will provide:

- Helium
- Electric air inflators
- Hand air pumps
- Heat sealers
- Balloons, line, and ribbon for the Garland, Duplicated Bouquet, and Duplicated Balloon Flower
- Slide-N-Size balloon sizer

## Materials you'll need to bring to the exam to complete your table centerpiece and social expression bouquet include but are not limited to:

- Balloons - Remember to use only Qualatex brand latex and Microfoil<sup>®</sup> balloons.
- Adhesives (glue gun, pan glue, Glue Dots<sup>®</sup>, etc.)
- Containers
- Accent pieces
- Scissors/knife
- Ribbon

## Requirements to be completed at the exam site:

1. One social expression bouquet of your own design.
2. One bouquet duplicated from a photo.
3. One table centerpiece of your own design.
4. One Balloon Flower duplicated from a photo (materials provided). Instructions for the Balloon Flower can be found at "Instructions Sheets" on [Qualatex.com](http://Qualatex.com) or in the "QBN Balloon Deliveries & Bouquets" Kit.
5. A 5', air-filled, 5-balloon cluster Garland, using 11" balloons inflated to 10"-11" (materials provided).

**6. A temporary knot and a permanent knot** per the QBN curriculum (rope provided).

**7. During an assigned, 15-minute panel interview, you'll be asked six questions from the curriculum** and to either demonstrate a **mock balloon delivery sales phone call** or make a **mock balloon delivery presentation**.

### Scoring

Tip: Review the actual "CBA Practical Exam Score Sheet" on Qualatex.com.

- Your four Classic Balloon Decor photos are graded as a group on five different criteria, for a total of 50 possible points.
- There is a maximum of 310 possible points on the exam; 248 points are required to pass.

### Tips for taking the Practical Exam

**1. Remember, only Qualatex latex and Microfoil balloons may be used. Any piece utilizing non-Qualatex balloon product will receive a score of zero.**

**2. Your table centerpiece and social expression bouquet do not have to be expensive or fancy; they should simply demonstrate your knowledge and application of the Elements and Principles of Design. Study your *Design Basics with Balloons* book. Scorers will be looking for such things as line, rhythm, and space. (Keep in mind that your best-selling item may not actually meet this criteria.)**

Also, review the color wheel. **Your designs should create color harmony** (i.e., analogous, monochromatic, or triadic). **Make sure your designs are composed of at least 50% balloons.** Score your own designs ahead of time to ensure you've met the criteria.

**3. Bouquets should demonstrate your knowledge of California Law. Ensure your bouquets have good mechanics, strong visual impact, and a coordinated theme.**

**4. Construction of all balloon designs must take place on site. However, normal prep items, such as individual fantasy flowers and tissue pics, can be made ahead of time.**

**5. In preparation for the panel interview, review your tests and make sure you know the Principles and Elements of Design.**

**6. When submitting your four photos with Job Cost Forms, remember to only include Classic Balloon Decor; no centerpiece or delivery photos will be accepted. Only one of the four may include a String-of-Pearl Arch. Be sure to send photos that show the breadth of your work.**

**7. Practice the knots.**

**8. Because we're trying to confirm your knowledge of the QBN curriculum, make sure you review the videos/DVDs, resource materials, and your tests in preparation for the Practical Exam.**

**We want to help you succeed and grow your balloon business. If you have any questions, please e-mail us at QBN@Qualatex.com, or call 1-800-803-5308 or 316-685-2266 outside the USA. Good Luck!**



**THE  
Very Best  
BALLOONS**