



Nail Technician State Board Cheat Sheet

1. Sanitation and Safety

Disinfection Steps:

1. Wash hands with soap and warm water.
2. Clean tools with soap and water to remove debris.
3. Immerse tools in EPA-registered disinfectant for required contact time.
4. Rinse, dry, and store in a clean, covered container.

Single-Use Items:

- Orange wood sticks
- Nail files/emery boards
- Buffers (unless labeled reusable)
- Cotton balls, gauze, and paper towels

Hand Hygiene:

- Wash hands before and after each client.
- Use hand sanitizer if soap and water are unavailable.

Workstation Setup:

- Clean and disinfect table, chair, and implements before each client.
- Keep disinfectant labeled and covered.
- Maintain a clean, organized workspace.

2. Client Preparation

1. Greet client and perform consultation.
2. Wash and sanitize hands (both technician and client).
3. Inspect hands and nails for signs of infection or disease.
4. Record any findings and refuse service if necessary.

3. Manicure Procedure

1. Sanitize hands.
2. Remove old polish.
3. File nails to desired shape.
4. Soak hands in warm, soapy water.

5. Push back and trim cuticles.
6. Buff nails lightly.
7. Apply base coat, polish, and top coat.
8. Clean up edges and apply cuticle oil.

Nail Shapes:

- Round
- Square
- Oval
- Squoval
- Pointed

4. Pedicure Procedure

1. Sanitize hands and client's feet.
2. Remove polish.
3. Soak feet in warm, disinfected foot bath.
4. Trim and file toenails straight across.
5. Push back and trim cuticles.
6. Exfoliate and smooth calluses.
7. Massage feet and lower legs.
8. Apply base coat, polish, and top coat.

Foot Spa Disinfection:

- Drain and clean after each client.
- Disinfect with EPA-registered solution for 10 minutes.
- Rinse and dry thoroughly.

5. Acrylic Nail Application

1. Sanitize hands and client's nails.
2. Remove polish and push back cuticles.
3. Buff nail surface lightly.
4. Apply nail dehydrator and primer.
5. Apply nail tip (if needed) and blend.
6. Dip brush into monomer, then polymer powder.
7. Apply acrylic bead to nail and sculpt.
8. Allow to dry, then file and shape.
9. Buff and apply top coat.

Acrylic Removal:

- Soak in acetone for 20–30 minutes.
- Gently remove softened product with orange wood stick.

6. Gel Nail Application

1. Sanitize hands and nails.
2. Shape nails and push back cuticles.
3. Buff surface lightly.
4. Apply base gel and cure under UV/LED lamp.
5. Apply color gel in thin layers, curing each layer.
6. Apply top gel and cure.
7. Wipe with alcohol to remove tacky layer.

7. Nail Disorders and Diseases

Condition	Description	Service Allowed?
Onychomycosis	Fungal infection of nail	No
Paronychia	Inflammation around nail	No
Onycholysis	Nail separates from bed	No
Leukonychia	White spots on nail	Yes
Hangnail	Torn skin near nail	Yes (with care)

8. Anatomy of the Nail

- **Nail Plate:** Visible part of the nail.
- **Nail Bed:** Skin beneath the nail plate.
- **Matrix:** Produces nail cells.
- **Cuticle:** Protects matrix from infection.
- **Lunula:** White half-moon at nail base.
- **Free Edge:** Extends beyond fingertip.

9. State Board Practical Exam Tips

- Label all containers clearly.
- Keep implements in closed, clean containers.
- Follow all infection control procedures.
- Dispose of waste properly.
- Maintain professional demeanor and hygiene.
- Perform each step methodically and confidently.

10. Common Supplies Checklist

- Manicure bowl
- Nail files and buffers
- Cuticle pusher and nipper
- Orangewood sticks
- Cotton, gauze, and towels
- Disinfectant and sanitizer
- Base coat, polish, top coat
- Acrylic and gel supplies
- Gloves and mask
- Trash bag and labeled containers

Study Tip: Practice each procedure step-by-step while timing each section to simulate the state board exam environment.