ANSWER KEY WITH EXPLANATIONS

Advanced Grammar MCQ Test With Answers + PDF Exercise 05

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Explanations

1. **(Please note: The following questions are part of a cloze test. They are interrelated, meaning that the information provided in each question is connected to the others.)**

"Darling! There's hardly any petrol left in the tank. I _____ it up before we left home.
✓ **B) should have filled**
Should have + past participle criticises a past action that was needed but did not happen. The speaker is blaming themselves: the tank is nearly empty, so they did not fill it up but needed to. Not **must have filled**: that is a logical deduction that something did happen, and the empty tank shows it didn't.

2. _____ a garage quite near but I _____ drive carefully until we _____ there.
✓ **A) There may be**
To say that something exists, English uses the dummy subject **there**: **There is a garage**. Adding **may** makes it a guess about this particular situation: **There may be a garage quite near**. Not **There can be**: **can** describes general or theoretical possibility, not a guess about one specific place. **It may be** needs **it** to refer to something already mentioned.

3. _____ a garage quite near but I _____ drive carefully until we _____ there.
✓ **C) had better**
Had better + bare infinitive gives strong advice or shows what is sensible now: **I had better drive carefully**. The form is always **had**, never **would better**. **Like better** and **prefer** express preference, not advice, and **prefer** would need **to drive**.

4. _____ a garage quite near but I _____ drive carefully until we _____ there.
✓ **D) get**
After time conjunctions such as **until**, **when**, **before** and **as soon as**, English uses the present simple to talk about the future: **until we get there**. Not **will get** or **shall get**: we don't normally use **will/shall** in a time clause, even when it refers to the future.

5. If only I _____ the petrol before we started out! Damn!
✓ **C) had checked**
If only + past perfect expresses regret about the past: **If only I had checked the petrol before we started out!** The checking should have happened before the journey began, so the past perfect is needed. Not **checked**: **If only** + past simple expresses a wish about the present, e.g. **If only I had more money**.

6. I _____ this to happen for the last ten minutes.
✓ **C) have been expecting**
The present perfect continuous describes a situation that started in the past and continues up to now. The clue is **for the last ten minutes**: **I have been expecting this to happen for the last ten minutes**. Not **was expecting**: the past continuous would cut the situation off from the present, but the speaker is still in it.

7. I'll have to push the car to the side of the road because we _____ if we leave it here.
✓ **A) will be fined**
The speakers receive the fine; they don't give it. So a passive is needed: **will be** + past participle, as in **we will be fined**. **Will fine** and **will be fining** are active, which would mean the speakers fine someone else. **Will be being fined** is a future continuous passive, which is extremely rare and wrong here.

8. But I can't imagine what _____ to let this happen.
✓ **B) I was thinking about**
What I was thinking about is an indirect question inside **I can't imagine…**, so it uses statement word order (subject before verb) with no inversion. The past continuous echoes the idiomatic self-criticism **What was I thinking?**, which refers to the speaker's state of mind at that moment. Not **was I thinking about**: that is direct-question word order, which is wrong after **I can't imagine**. **I was thought about** is a passive form, which makes no sense here.

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