



Certification Guide

Overview of Certification with RBA



Revent proudly sponsors the RBA Certification Program, supporting the growth and recognition of professional bakers nationwide.

We are pleased to recognize your commitment to professional growth and development. The Retail Bakers of America's (RBA) certification program is recognized throughout the industry as a standard for excellence in skills and knowledge. ***Please note that RBA certification is available exclusively to RBA members, and candidates must maintain their membership throughout the entire certification process.***

Bakers achieve certification based on education, experience, and successful completion of written and practical exams. The RBA offers three baking certification levels and two cake decorating certification levels, each with specific eligibility criteria based on education and work experience. All levels require a written exam, conducted online, and many necessitate a practical exam, scheduled periodically throughout the year at various locations nationwide.

By pursuing RBA certification, you are choosing to challenge yourself and strive for excellence, thereby enhancing your influence, credibility, and effectiveness within the baking industry.

RBA Overview

Established in 1918, the Retail Bakers of America (RBA) is a 501(c)(6) not-for-profit trade association dedicated to advancing the retail baking industry. RBA serves as a dynamic community for retail bakeries, offering a platform for the exchange of industry and business information, networking, educational opportunities, and mentorship for both aspiring and established bakers. The association sets industry standards through professional certification, research, and educational programs.

RBA members are committed to delivering high-quality bakery products across various settings, including supermarket bakery departments, independent bakeries, and food service establishments. The membership encompasses baking instructors, students, and suppliers of ingredients, equipment, and services. Collectively, these professionals are redefining the industry by sharing ideas, resources, and knowledge through networking and collaboration.

Benefits of Certification

The RBA Certification Program is designed to verify professional competency in the baking industry. Certification establishes a peer-evaluated standard of knowledge and expertise in professional baking. When a baker chooses to certify, they actively enhance their influence, credibility, and effectiveness within their organization. For these reasons, certification with the Retail Bakers of America offers a variety of important benefits:

- **Gain a Competitive Advantage**
 - RBA Certification provides professional bakers with a distinct edge in the marketplace by recognizing them as skilled and motivated individuals. Employers seek bakers and chefs who demonstrate a commitment to personal growth and lifelong learning. Certification reinforces this commitment, adding significant value to your résumé. By pursuing RBA certification, you demonstrate that you uphold the highest standards of excellence in the baking industry and are dedicated to continuous improvement.
- **Increase Earning Potential**
 - Employers value qualified professionals who can prove their expertise and competency. RBA Certification validates the level of skill, knowledge, and experience you bring to the marketplace, giving you the ability to market yourself confidently. This credential empowers you to negotiate for better opportunities, higher compensation, and greater professional recognition.
- **Update Knowledge and Skills**
 - RBA Certification helps you stay current in the ever-evolving baking industry. By completing the rigorous certification process, you master up-to-date, essential competencies that can be immediately applied to your work. Additionally, certification exposes you to new skills and ideas beyond your day-to-day experience, broadening your perspective and deepening your appreciation of your craft.
- **Build Professional Credibility**
 - RBA Certification is a testament to your dedication to excellence and your commitment to maintaining industry standards. Certified bakers are acknowledged by their peers as leaders in the field and are widely respected for their expertise and professionalism. Achieving certification at any level signals your dedication to continued learning and establishes you as a role model within the baking community.

Certification Levels

Certified Journey Baker (CJB)

The goal of the Certified Journey Baker credential is to recognize individuals beginning their professional baking career who demonstrate a foundational knowledge of baking principles, ingredients, production methods, sanitation, and workplace professionalism. The CJB certification validates a candidate's understanding of core baking concepts and reflects a commitment to growth, learning, and professionalism within the retail baking industry.

Qualifying Criteria

- Education: no mandatory requirement.
- Work Experience: a minimum of one year (2,000 hours) of verifiable commercial/retail baking experience, or a minimum of one year combination of education and commercial/retail baking work experience of which at least 1,000 hours must be work experience.
- Written Test: achieve a passing score of 75%.

Certified Journey Decorator (CJD)

A decorator at this level assists in the preparation and production of pies, cookies, cakes, breads, rolls, desserts or other baked goods for a commercial bakery. Duties may include stocking ingredients, preparing and cleaning equipment; measuring ingredients, mixing, scaling, forming, proofing, oven tending, and product finishing. He/she must demonstrate a basic knowledge about the principles of sanitation.

Qualifying Criteria

- Education: no mandatory requirement.
- Work Experience: a minimum of one year (2,000 hours) of verifiable commercial/retail baking experience, or a minimum of one year combination of education and commercial/retail baking work experience of which at least 1,000 hours must be work experience.
- Written Test & Video Submission: achieve a passing score of 75%.

Certified Baker (CB)

The goal of the Certified Baker credential is to recognize experienced production bakers who demonstrate strong technical skills, consistency, efficiency, and professionalism within a commercial bakery environment. A Certified Baker is expected to work cleanly, efficiently, and independently while following formulas, production timelines, sanitation standards, and established bakery procedures with accuracy and consistency.

CB-certified professionals demonstrate responsibility, organization, product quality, and the ability to contribute effectively to daily bakery operations while supporting teamwork, production flow, and overall bakeshop excellence.

Qualifying Criteria

- Education: must have a verification of the Serv-Safe certification or the completion of a 30-hour sanitation course offered by a school, government agency or association.

- Work Experience: a minimum of four years of verifiable full-time commercial/retail baking experience, or a CJB plus three years of verifiable full-time commercial/retail baking experience.
- Written Test: achieve a passing score of 75%.
- Practical Test: achieve a passing score of 75% for a one-day practical test administered by RBA.

Certified Master Baker (CMB)

The goal of the Certified Master Baker credential is to recognize baking professionals who demonstrate exceptional technical mastery, advanced problem-solving ability, leadership, and operational expertise within the retail baking industry. The CMB designation represents the highest standard of professionalism within the baking community and identifies individuals who lead by example through their skill, conduct, discipline, and commitment to excellence.

A Certified Master Baker consistently demonstrates precision, adaptability, sound judgment, and efficiency under pressure across complex production environments. Master-level professionalism should be evident in every aspect of their work, including product consistency and quality, organization, cleanliness, sanitation practices, professional attire, time management, communication, and overall execution within the bakeshop.

Qualifying Criteria

- Education: must have verification of the Serv-Safe certification or the completion of a sanitation course offered by a school, government agency or association. The CMB also requires a total of 30 contact hours of professional development courses/seminars or workshops in supervision (focused on human relations, team work, and supervision) or bakery management and production. Candidates must submit a portfolio of her/his work.
- Work Experience: all candidates must have achieved a Certified Baker (CB) designation plus have a minimum of an additional three years (36 months) of verifiable full-time commercial/retail baking experience, or over ten years of verifiable full-time commercial/retail baking experience without a Certified Baker designation.
- Written Test: achieve a passing score of 75%.
- Practical Test: achieve a passing score of 75% for a two-day practical test administered by RBA.

Professional Development and Continuing Education Requirement

Candidates may fulfill the professional development or continuing education requirement in many ways. RBA recognizes formal (educational institution based) and informal (seminars, workshops, distance learning) educational experiences as well as trade shows and affiliate programs.

1 Continuing Education Unit (CEU) would equal 10 contact hours for any program offering CEUs.

Affordability

A check, money order or credit card information must accompany an application. There is non-refundable application fee of \$25. Once an application has been approved, candidates are charged the exam fee, which covers one scheduled written test and one practical test. A final registration fee is due at the time a candidate registers for a practical exam at a specific test site.

	<u>Rate</u>	<u>Test Site Registration</u>
Certified Journey Baker	\$125	N/A
Certified Journey Decorator	\$125	N/A
Certified Baker	\$500	\$50
Certified Decorator	\$500	\$150
Certified Master Baker	\$1,250	\$150

**Group discounts may be available for qualified candidates.*

Certification Payment & Refund Policy

To maintain your accepted status in the Retail Bakers of America Certification Program, payment must be received within **30 days** of your application acceptance. If payment is not received within this timeframe, your acceptance may be withdrawn, and you may be required to reapply.

Once payment has been received, candidates will be granted access to certification materials, including but not limited to:

- Written study guide
- Required formulas and technical resources
- Online written examination access
- Candidate support materials

Because these materials and exam access are provided immediately upon payment, **all certification fees are non-refundable.**

The Retail Bakers of America understands that unforeseen circumstances can occur. Requests for exceptions due to significant extenuating circumstances, such as serious medical issues, military deployment, or other extraordinary situations, may be submitted for review. Any exception is considered on a **case-by-case basis** and is granted solely at the discretion of the Retail Bakers of America Certification Committee. Supporting documentation may be requested to assist in the review process.

If a candidate is unable to continue the certification process after payment, the Certification Committee may also consider options such as extending eligibility or deferring participation rather than issuing a refund, when appropriate.

By submitting payment for the certification program, candidates acknowledge that they have read and agree to this policy.

Exams

The Online/Written Tests

Approved candidates must take the online and performance tests within two years of RBA's acceptance of the application. If this is not done, the candidate loses his/ her "approved" status and must submit a new application. Previous filing fees are not refunded; they are forfeited.

Most exams will be given via an online link. The RBA staff will schedule your online exam and send you a link to the test. You will need to find a quiet space and give yourself the full time allotted. Once you click on the link for the exam, you are NOT able to stop and go back in, so it is very important to block out a time for you to test. *The written examination for Certified Baker, Certified Decorator and Certified Master Baker must be taken and passed prior to taking the practical examination.*

RBA study guides for written exams are provided for CB and CMB candidates. The information contained in study guides are a foundation and initial step to preparing for the online exam. Candidates are also expected to read and study baking references and texts, such as those on the suggested RBA reading list. CJB and CJD certifications contain common knowledge questions that you should be able to answer as an industry profession and there is no official study guide available.

The Practical Tests

Practical tests are typically conducted on Saturday and Sunday at a school or facility with adequate workstations and equipment. RBA uses 3 to 5 judges, and a test administrator or on-site test coordinator. Candidates must achieve the minimum passing grade (75%) for each test segment and a 75% for the test overall. CMBs take a two-day practical test; CB's and CDs take a one-day practical test.

A minimum of five (3) candidates is required to hold a practical exam. Examinations will be held at locations that can accommodate up to ten (10) candidates, has the proper equipment available and does not charge for the use of the facility. Test results will be provided to candidates at the test site, immediately following the exam. It is the objective of the RBA to provide a fair standard of scoring. Each product being graded has a detailed grading rubric that candidates will have access to prior to the exam.

Study guides and recipes are provided for practical exams. Candidates are provided with RBA recommended recipes but may choose to use their own recipes. If a candidate chooses to use his or her own recipes, the RBA Coordinator or an RBA judge must be notified at least 30 days prior to the practical. ***A candidate's practical study guide is unique to her or his exam test site, as the categories, products and formulas may change for each practical.***

Re-Testing Process

Retest Requirements

- Candidates who fail the written or practical exam **in full** must wait **one year** before reapplying.
- Candidates who fail the practical exam **in part (1–2 items)** must wait **three (3) months** before retesting.

- **All retests must take place during a regularly scheduled CMB/CB practical exam window.**
 - During the retest, **the candidate must complete and pass their failed product, plus two assigned additional products to a CMB standard**, within an assigned timeline.
 - Retesting outside of a scheduled exam window is no longer permitted.
- Prior to retesting, candidates must submit documentation of **three (3) full practice rounds** of each required product.
 - Documentation must include photos of the production process and final products.
 - Candidates must submit photos via email to an RBA staff member, as well as an assigned CMB advisor.

Judging Requirements

- Retests must occur during a regularly scheduled CMB/CB exam where **at least two CMB judges**

Fees

- **\$150 per failed item (CMB)**
- **\$50 per failed item (CB)**
- **For a complete retest, the full exam fee is required.**

Certification Checklist

Verify your membership status to the RBA

Upon acceptance of the application, submit the full certification fee to secure your

candidacy status.

Study for the written exam using the RBA written study guide, and recommended reading list.

Complete the online exam via Exambuilder.com using a provided exam link.

For CB & CMB:

Register for practical exam test site and submit registration fee. (Candidates must register for a practical exam within 2 years of the application being accepted).

Study for practical exam using the practical exam guidebook specific to your test site and provided RBA formulas

Connect with RBA judges assigned to your practical exam. Feel free to submit questions to the judges prior to the test.

30 days prior to the exam, submit any candidate's choice items and extra ingredient lists to the judges (Candidates will NOT have access to ingredients outside of the provided formulas unless specified prior to arrival at the test site).

RBA Recommended Reading List

These are suggested titles you may wish to read or acquire for your professional library.

Professional Baking, Wayne Gisslen.

Practical Baking, William J. Sultan

Professional Pastry Chef, Bo Friberg

The Baker's Manual, J. Amendola.

Professional Baker's Manual, George Rudolph.

Baking: The Art and Science, Claus Schunemann

Applied Foodservice Sanitation, NIFI (NRA)

Serving Safe Food (ServSafe), NRA

HACCP Food Safety Manual, Loken.

How Baking Works, Paula Figoni

On Food and Cooking, Harold McGee