

## How to Become a Breath Alcohol Technician (BAT)



This article will teach you how to become a professional [Breath Alcohol Technician](#) (BAT)—one who is fully qualified to perform the entire Department of Transportation (DOT) alcohol testing process. There are specific steps that must be followed, and the DOT regulations outline detailed training requirements for anyone seeking to enter this field.

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### What sort of background do I need?

The Department of Transportation (DOT) does not require any specific background or prior education to become a BAT who is qualified to use an evidential breath testing device (EBT). That said, individuals with a healthcare background—such as nurses, X-ray technicians, phlebotomists, or medical assistants—may have an advantage when seeking employment. This is because employers (often clinics or occupational health facilities) can utilize those additional skills when alcohol testing is not being performed.

On the other hand, many individuals choose to **start their own drug and alcohol testing business** or contract their services to employers after completing training. Certified Training Solutions offers an affordable online course that walks you through exactly how to do this—from set-up to marketing and operations. If you are thinking of starting your own drug and/or alcohol testing business, take a look at our short, online training course here:

<http://www.certifiedtrainingsolutions.com/how-to-start-a-drug-and-alcohol-testing-business.html>

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### What should I know before becoming a BAT?

DOT alcohol testing rules are found in **49 CFR Part 40**, which governs all aspects of the testing process, including training requirements. Understanding these rules is essential, as compliance is the foundation of your role as a BAT.

The DOT has also published helpful guidance documents for technicians, including:

[“How Can I Become a Technician for DOT Alcohol Testing?”](#)

### What are the training requirements?

While the DOT does not technically use the term “certification,” most training providers issue a certificate upon completion. The DOT refers to this as **“qualification training,”** though the terms are often used interchangeably in this industry.

### BAT training consists of two required components:

#### 1. Procedures Training

This is in-depth instruction on the rules and regulations—covering exactly how to perform each step of the alcohol testing process, the alcohol testing form (ATF), how to properly complete documentation in various situations, and handle real-world testing scenarios. Certified Training Solutions offers a fully-online [BAT procedures training course](#) that is accessible 24/7.

#### 2. Device Proficiency Training

This is hands-on training conducted with a qualified instructor on your specific evidential breath testing device (EBT).

BAT students must complete Component 1 before Component 2, and both should be completed within **30 days**. Training programs should follow both *Best Practices* and the DOT’s *BAT Model Course* requirements. Certified Training Solutions’ courses follow both.

## What does breath alcohol technician (BAT) training cover?

DOT-required qualification training prepares you to:

- Follow all Part 40 alcohol testing procedures
  - Properly complete the Federal Alcohol Testing Form (ATF)
  - Handle testing problems and unusual situations
  - Identify and correct errors (“flaws”) in the testing process
  - Understand your responsibilities under federal regulations
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## Device-specific training (very important)

BAT training is instrument-specific by federal regulation.

Unlike other DOT roles, there is **no one-size-fits-all qualification training** (or “certification”, as it is commonly called in the industry). You must be trained on the exact make and model of the evidential breath testing device (EBT) you will use in practice.

- Component 1 (procedures) is the same for everyone.
- Component 2 (hands-on) must be completed using your actual device make and model.

Certified Training Solutions offers full BAT training on several popular approved devices, with qualified instructors who guide you through the process.

## Hands-on training requirements

Device proficiency training on your approved EBT must include:

- **Seven (7) consecutive, error-free mock tests**
- Fully simulated testing scenarios (including paperwork and results)
- Direct observation by a qualified instructor on your specific evidential breath testing device to attest that your mock tests were error free.

Training should also include:

- Handling device errors and malfunctions
  - Performing and recording accuracy checks
  - Understanding and following the device’s Quality Assurance Plan (QAP)
  - Calibration procedures (when authorized by the manufacturer)
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## How long does certification last?

Once qualified, BATs must repeat training every **5 years**. It’s also important to stay current with any regulatory updates that may affect testing procedures. Every person engaged in services within this industry should register for [List-Service Notices](#).

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## Can anyone make a good BAT?

While there are no formal prerequisites, certain traits will help you succeed:

**Integrity:** You are responsible for ensuring the safety of others. Mistakes or shortcuts can have serious consequences.

**Attention to detail:** The DOT testing process must be followed step-by-step, in order, every time.

**Respect for rules and structure:** This is not a field for improvisation—compliance is everything.

**People skills with authority:** You will interact with individuals in stressful situations and must be able to manage difficult or uncooperative behavior professionally.

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## Are there risks?

Like any profession, there are risks associated with being a BAT. These may include:

- Legal action from individuals who test positive.
- Enforcement action from regulators if procedures are not followed properly.

Proper, thorough training is essential to minimizing these risks and operating confidently and compliantly.

## How long does training take?

Getting started is relatively straightforward. At Certified Training Solutions:

- **Procedures training (Component 1):**  
Self-paced online course (~7–8 hours)
- **Hands-on training (Component 2):**  
Live instruction (~5–8 hours depending on device)

Most individuals complete the full process in **about two days** (not necessarily consecutive, but the entire process should be completed within a period of 30 days or less).

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## What if I don't have a device yet?

While it is possible to complete training using a borrowed or training unit and supplies, this is **not recommended** unless it is the exact device you will use in practice. Because BAT training is device-specific, qualification training on one instrument does not transfer to another.

**Example:** You complete training on one device, but later purchase a different model. Your original training will not apply—you will need to retrain on the new device.

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## Choosing the right device (and avoiding costly mistakes)

If you are entering the industry, selecting the right device from the beginning is critical.

You must purchase a device listed on the **NHTSA Conforming Products List (CPL)** for evidential breath testing devices, and ensure that the device meets all additional requirements listed in the [49 CFR Part 40 rules](#).

Be cautious of inexpensive devices marketed online as “DOT-approved.” Many of these are actually **alcohol screening devices (ASDs)**, not EBTs.

- Most devices under \$1,500 are typically screening devices only.
  - ASDs cannot be used for confirmation testing; therefore, you will not be able to conduct the full testing process for employees or clients.
  - You cannot become a BAT using an ASD, but you may only be trained as [a screening test technician \(STT\)](#).
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## Why we exclusively offer LifeLoc devices

At Certified Training Solutions LLC, we are proud to offer [LifeLoc® evidential breath testing devices](#), including the Phoenix® 6.0BT and EV30™ systems—and for good reason.

LifeLoc devices are widely regarded as some of the most:

- Trusted
- Reliable
- Accurate
- Field-proven instruments in the industry

These Lifeloc® devices are fully compliant with DOT requirements and built for real-world use in professional testing environments.

### **Why this matters to you:**

Choosing a LifeLoc device means:

- You're training on equipment with a strong industry reputation
- You reduce the risk of needing retraining later
- You gain confidence using a dependable, compliant EBT
- You align your business with equipment recognized by professionals nationwide

One of the most popular options is the [LifeLoc Phoenix® 6.0 Bluetooth](#), known for its ease of use, portability, and advanced functionality—making it an excellent choice for both new and experienced BATs. If a budget device is more important to you the [Lifeloc EV30](#) is also an excellent choice.

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### **Final thoughts**

Becoming a [Breath Alcohol Technician](#) can be a rewarding and flexible career path, whether you are seeking employment or looking to [start your own business](#). Success in this field ultimately depends on receiving proper training, using the right equipment, and maintaining strict adherence to Department of Transportation regulations at all times. [Note that related operating agency regulations also apply. This includes: FMCSA, FRA, FTA, PHMSA, and FAA. You may find more information and training [here for the DOT and specific operating agencies](#).]

At Certified Training Solutions LLC, we are committed to setting you up for success by providing DOT-compliant devices and training, expert instruction, and industry-leading evidential breath testers (EBTs) you can rely on in real-world testing situations.

Certified Training Solutions also offers a variety of other online training courses, such as urine specimen collector training, oral fluid specimen collector training, alcohol screening test technician (STT) training, drug-free workplace training, designated employer representative (DER) training, post-accident determination training (for FRA, FTA, and FMCSA), and much more.

For a full listing of all training courses, visit us at: <https://www.certifiedtrainingsolutions.com/>

You may reach us by email at: [Admin@CertifiedTrainingSolutions.com](mailto:Admin@CertifiedTrainingSolutions.com)

Or by telephone at: 307-640-5859 or (888) 684-1658

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