Mariner Advancement Exam Prep

User Manual

Table of Contents

Table of Contents / Copyright 2
Installation / Single Page Instruction 3
Main Menu (test of randomly generated questions) 4
Average Scores 5
Tag Menu (test of questions previously tagged by user) 6
Text Search Menu (exact match text search) 7
Illustration Search Menu (test of selected illustration) 8
Subtopic Menu (test by subtopic selection) 9
Test Window 10
Speech Synthesizer 11
Illustration Window 12
Explanation Window 13
System Requirements 14

Mariner Advancement® Exam Prep 10.0 License

"Author" herein refers to Advancement Software, LLC (the creator of Mariner Advancement® Exam Preparation software). "Software" refers to all files included with Mariner Advancement® Exam Prep v 10.0 (typically installed by the installer or pre-installed on a flash drive).

Except where otherwise noted, all of the documentation and software is copyrighted by Advancement Software, LLC (the Author).

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License and Costs

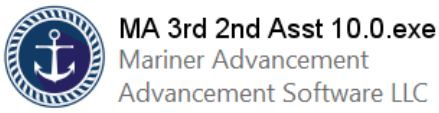
This Software is being distributed as licensed for one user for one year. License for use is granted from the purchase date. See license and User agreement at startup, or Click on the ABOUT menu at the top of the Main Menu or Test Menu in the Mariner Advancement® Exam preparation application.

Installation

Single License Installation - Open the Mariner Advancement flash drive to view files and folders. Double click the "Install" file to install a copy of Mariner Advancement on your desktop. You can move this folder to any location on your hard drive or leave it on the desktop.

Multiple License Installation - If you have more than one flash drive and want to install several applications on one PC, change the name of the current MA folder on the desktop so the next install won't install over top of the first, you can call or email for assistance.

Running the Application - To run Mariner Advancement, plug your flash drive into any USB port. The flash drive is simply a key, you will run the application from the folder you installed on your desktop. You will see an application file with an icon similar to the one here. Double click the application file to run Mariner Advancement.



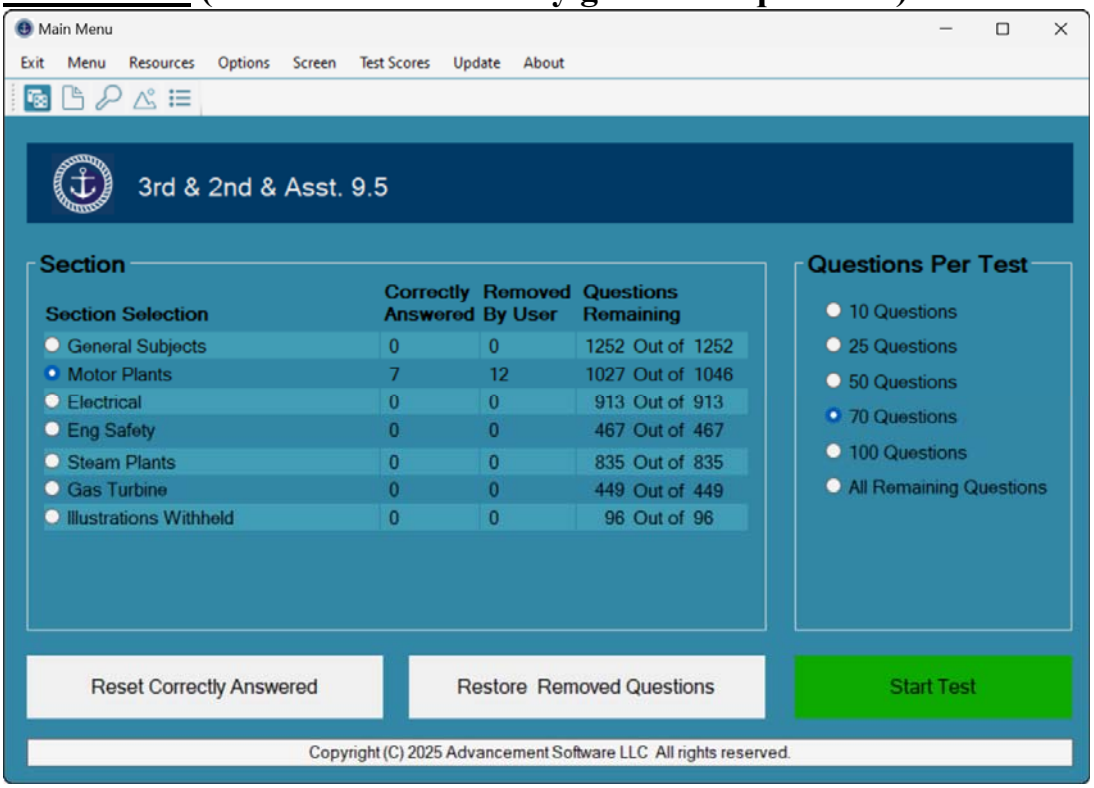
This instruction sheet is intended for startup information only. Please also see:
installTroubleshooter.pdf - links to resolve any MA application errors on startup.
manual.pdf – application manual with instructions and explanations of features and menus.
readMeFirst.pdf - file for guidance on navigating the content on the drive for your specific USCG license along with additional insight into the exams.

If you have any questions or concerns, please contact me at joe@MarinerAdvancement.com.

System Requirements:
Mariner Advancement Exam Prep version 10.0 will run on any Microsoft Windows PC compatible computer that has a USB port and that meets the system requirements below:

- Microsoft Windows Version 8, 8.1, 10, or 11
- Apple Mac with Microsoft Windows via Parallels or VMware Fusion (free option)
- Not compatible with Chromebook, Android or IPAD.
- 1.0 Ghz CPU, 4 GB Ram
- 1024 X 768 Screen Resolution
- USB-A port or USB-C port with adaptor
- Mouse, or touch screen

Main Menu (test made of randomly generated questions)



Navigating the Main Menu

The Main menu creates a randomly generated test. When you create a test from this menu and answer a test question correctly, the application temporarily removes that question from the question bank. This feature concentrates the remaining questions to the questions you find most difficult, reducing study times. You also have the option in the test screen to remove a question manually (garbage can icon). At the end of a test, Retake All Questions and Retry Missed Questions buttons will reset the question status of either/both correctly answered and user removed so the questions are again available to recreate the test. The question status on the last test taken after using either of these two buttons will be the question status recorded.

The Main Menu is the only menu that will remove correctly answered questions or user removed questions from the test it creates. Tests created using all other menus, such as text search, illustration search, tag menu, and subtopics menu will ignore these two features and display all questions regardless of question status. These other menus ignore the question status so the user can still look up a question they removed if they need to find it without resetting the entire section.

RESET CORRECTLY ANSWERED - Resets the question bank so all correctly answered questions in the selected section are again available for testing, click the radio button corresponding to the section you wish to reset, and then click the reset button.

Main Menu (continued)

RESTORE REMOVED QUESTIONS – Restores the question bank so all questions removed by the user are available for testing, click the radio button corresponding to the section you wish to restore, and then click the restore removed questions button.

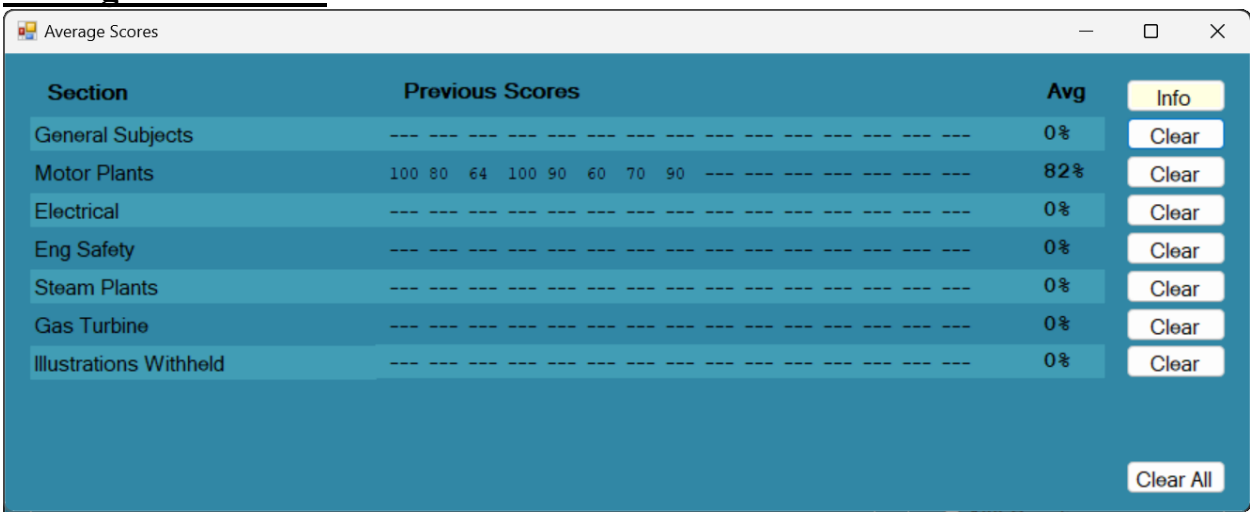
START TEST - Creates a test based on selected section and number of questions per test.

The icons at the top left allow you to navigate to and from the available menus, or you can use the Menu drop down at the top Menu bar to select from the list of menus.

Options – Allows you to select how the questions are displayed in the test screen. See Test Window on page 10 of this manual for explanation of each option.

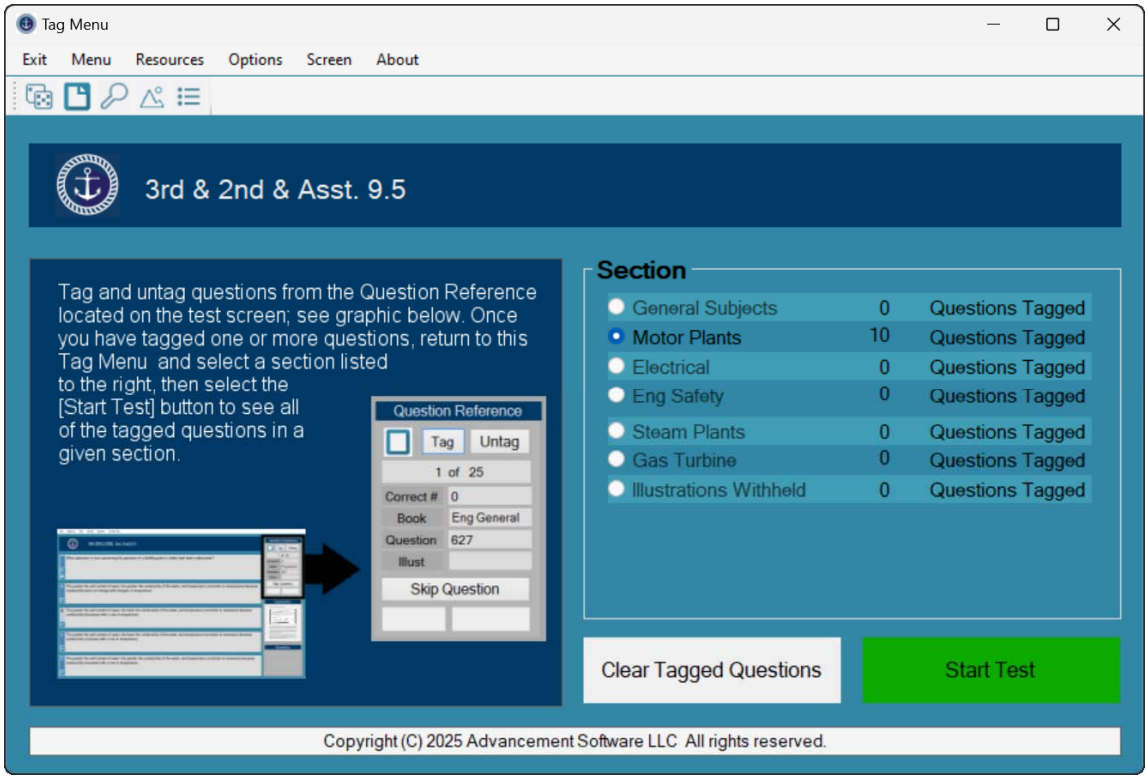
Resources – Quick links to all other information available on the flash drive, such as the illustration folder, videos or pdfs.

Average Test Scores



Test Scores – When creating a test from the main menu, choose the number of questions that will be on your actual USCG exam, seventy questions for most exams. Go through the entire question bank for each section at least once before giving any weight to these recorded average scores. The average score is the average of the last 15 random question tests created from the Main Menu. Search, Tag, and Subtopic Menu tests will not count toward these scores and will not be recorded. Most students will need to go through the entire question bank several times. Study until you are averaging 90% scores, close to 100% for exams that require 90% score to pass, like Rules of the Road. Most engineering exams require a 70% score to pass.

Tag Menu (test of questions tagged by user)



Navigating the Tag Question Menu

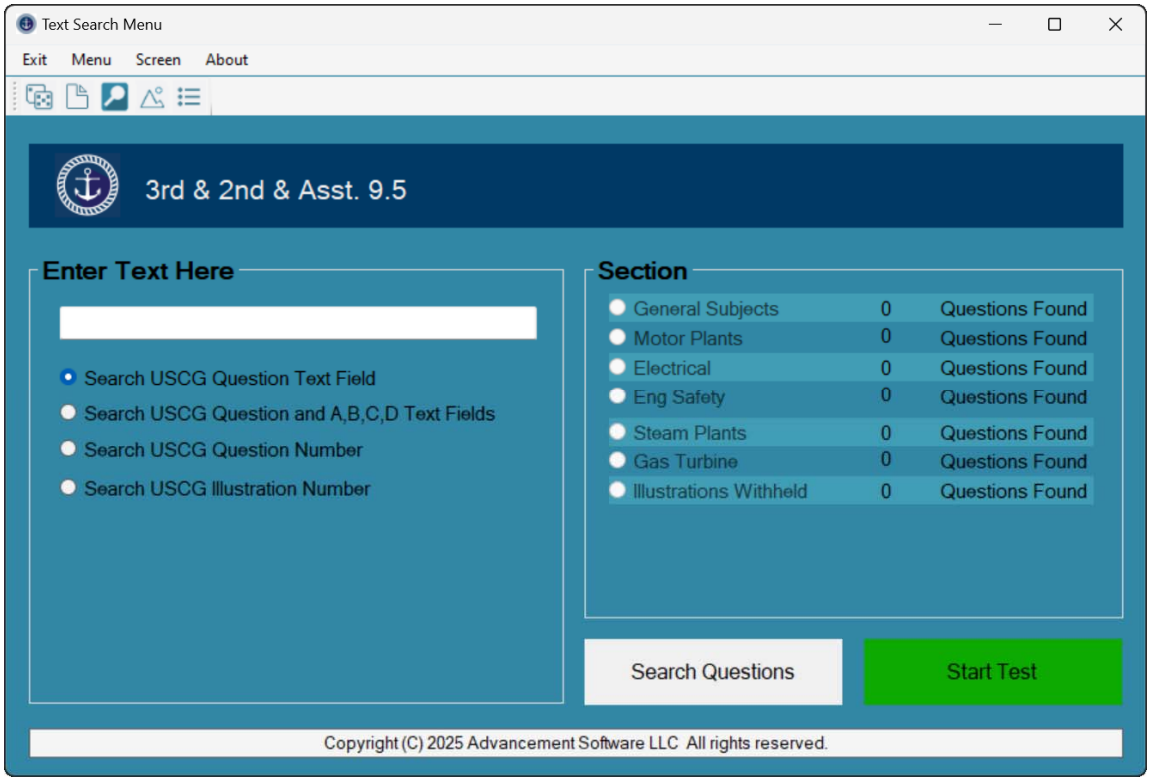
Mariner Advancement® provides a tag icon button on the test screen in the question reference. The tag button records the test question for later retrieval. To view the tagged questions, navigate to the tag question menu above. The menu will display the number of questions that have been tagged in each section. Choose a section and click the START TEST button. A test will be created of all of the questions you have previously tagged in that section.

CLEAR TAGGED QUESTIONS - In the tagged questions menu above, select a section's radio button and click the CLEAR TAGGED QUESTIONS button to clear all tagged questions in that section. You can also clear individual questions by clicking the tag icon button in the question reference menu on the test screen.

START TEST - Creates a test based on the section selected of all tagged questions in that section. If you have not tagged any questions from the test screen the START TEST button will not function.

We recommend you back up your tagged questions by copy and pasting the two folders on your flash drive named STAT and TAG to another location, such as your desktop. Simply paste them back to the flash drive to restore the status to the date you backed up the folders. These files can be accidentally erased if Windows shuts down or if the flash drive is removed unexpectedly.

Text Search (exact match text search)



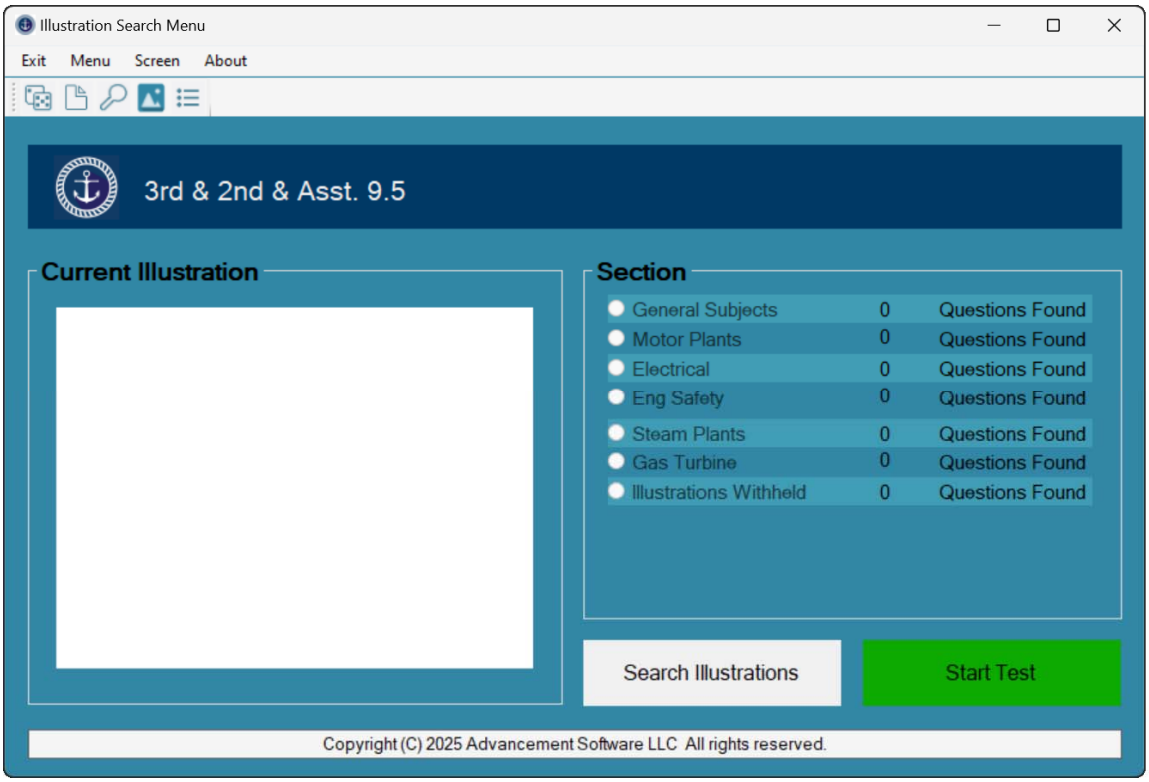
Navigating the Text Search Menu

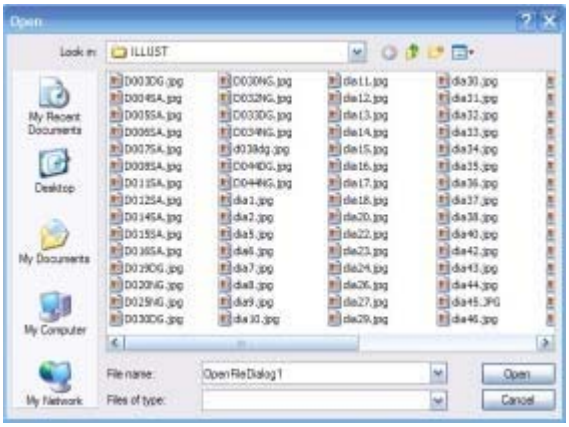
Mariner Advancement® text search allows you to search all questions, answer choices, and illustration names. Simply type the search term in the white text box in the upper left, and click the SEARCH QUESTIONS button. The application will search each test section listed for the text you entered. Text search only searches the field selected. Text search will only return direct matches, but it is not case sensitive.

First, select a field to search. Second, type the text you wish to search in the white box at the upper left side of the window. Then, click the SEARCH QUESTIONS button. Mariner Advancement will search for the text you entered in the field you selected in all test sections. If any matches were found, you may create a test by clicking on the radio button next to the test section of interest. Then, click the START TEST button to begin testing. If no matches were found, you will be unable to select a radio button and the START TEST button will not function.

The application may appear to hang up as some of the question banks are large, give it a minute and when it is finished searching you will see the number of questions found displayed.

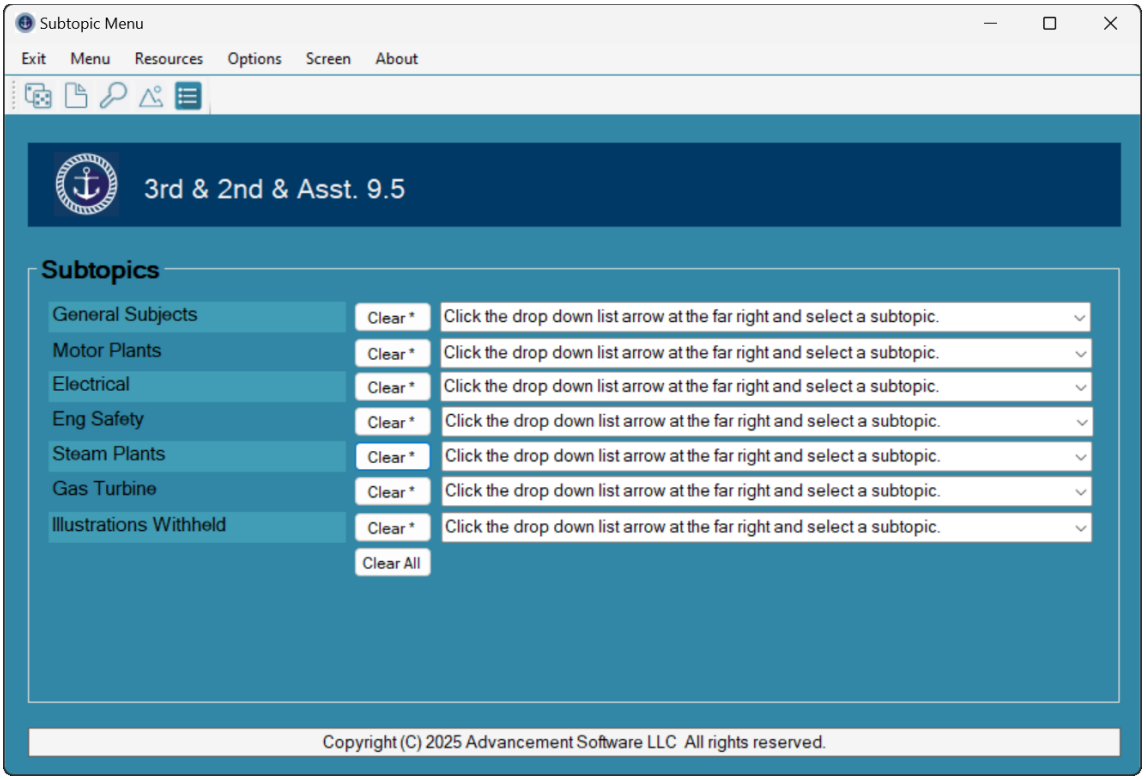
Illustration Search Menu





Mariner Advancement® illustration search allows you to search or browse illustrations. Click the SEARCH ILLUSTRATIONS button and the application will open a Microsoft Windows file menu screen like this one shown here to the right. All illustrations are located on the flash drive in the folder named, "ILLUST". If the file menu does not point to the "ILLUST" folder, navigate to this folder. Select a file to open and the application will search all sections for the selected illustration. You can also click on this icon: This icon can be found at the top right of the file menu. After clicking this icon select thumbnails from the dropdown box. You will then see thumbnail images of all illustrations. You can now visually search for the illustration without the need of the USCG illustration number. Once you select an illustration click the OPEN button. Next, select the radio button for the section you would like to test and then click the START TEST button.

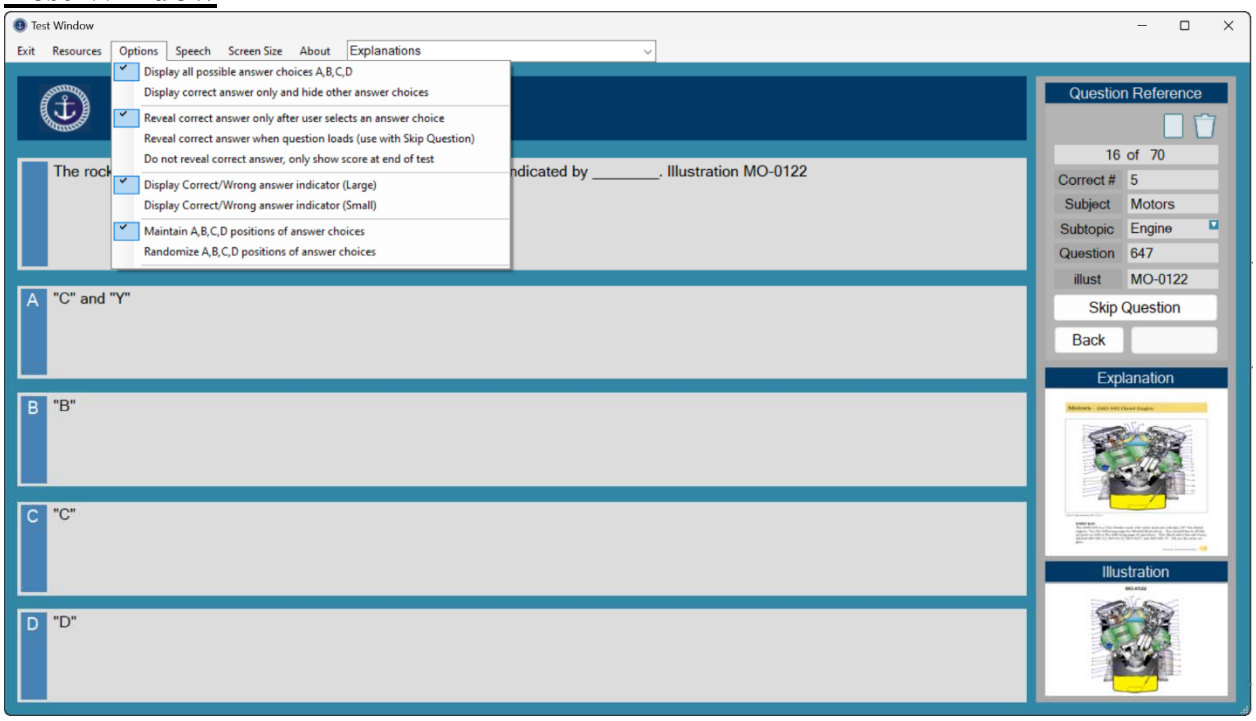
Subtopic Menu (test of a specific subtopic)



Mariner Advancement® subtopic menu allows you to generate an exam by subtopic. Select one of the dropdown menus and select any subtopic from the list. A test will be generated containing any question that falls under the selected subtopic.

Once a test has been generated from a selected subtopic, the application will mark the subtopic name with an asterisk so you can recall which subtopic tests they have already taken. You can clear the asterisks in an individual section with the Clear* button, or you can clear all of the asterisks in all sections with the Clear All button.

Test Window



Under OPTIONS at the top menu bar you are able to select the following options:

Display all possible answer choices A, B, C, D – shows all four answer choices so you can select an answer while testing and score your progress.

Display correct answer only and hide other answer choices – this option only shows the correct answer and leaves the other answer choices blank. You can use the skip button to rapidly read through and study the questions and answer since you are not testing for a score.

Reveal correct answer only after user selects an answer choice - this option does not show the correct answer until you have made your answer selection, use while testing to receive a score.

Reveal correct answer when question loads (use with Skip Question) - this option shows the correct answer in green as soon as the question is loaded along with the other answer choices. Use this option to study. You can use the skip question button to read through the entire bank of questions without having to select an answer to see the correct answer.

Do not reveal correct answer, only show score at end of test – this option never shows the correct answer, similar to an actual exam. You can see the questions you missed by clicking the "retry missed questions" button in the menu at the end of the test.

Display Correct/Wrong answer indicator (Large) or **(Small)**

Maintain A,B,C,D positions of answer choices or **Randomize A,B,C,D positions**

After you select your answer choice (by clicking on the white space of the answer text box) the correct answer will be highlighted in green and all incorrect answers will be highlighted in red. After you are finished reviewing your selection, click in the white space a second time and the next question will load. You can also use a touch screen to select the answer selection or use the A,B,C,D keys on your keyboard and the space bar to continue to the next question.

If you wish to skip a question, click the SKIP QUESTION button; your score at the end of the test will reflect a skipped question as an incorrectly answered question.

You may use the FORWARD and BACK buttons to navigate back and forth through the test questions to review previously answered questions. To return to the current question, simply continue to click the FORWARD button until the FORWARD button is no longer enabled.

The TAG button is located at the top right of the test screen. The TAG button allows you to tag the current test question for later retrieval in the tagged question menu. When you tag a question, the icon will display with the upper right corner bent over. When you untag a question, the icon's corner will be straight and square.

The Remove Question button (garbage can icon) is located at the top right of the test screen. This button removes the current question from the question bank. You can click this button again to toggle between restore and remove. You can reset the removed questions for the entire section from the main menu. The question will only be removed from tests made from the main menu. Tag, Search, and Subtopic menus will still show the question, so you can restore an individual question from one of those menu's exams by clicking the remove question button.

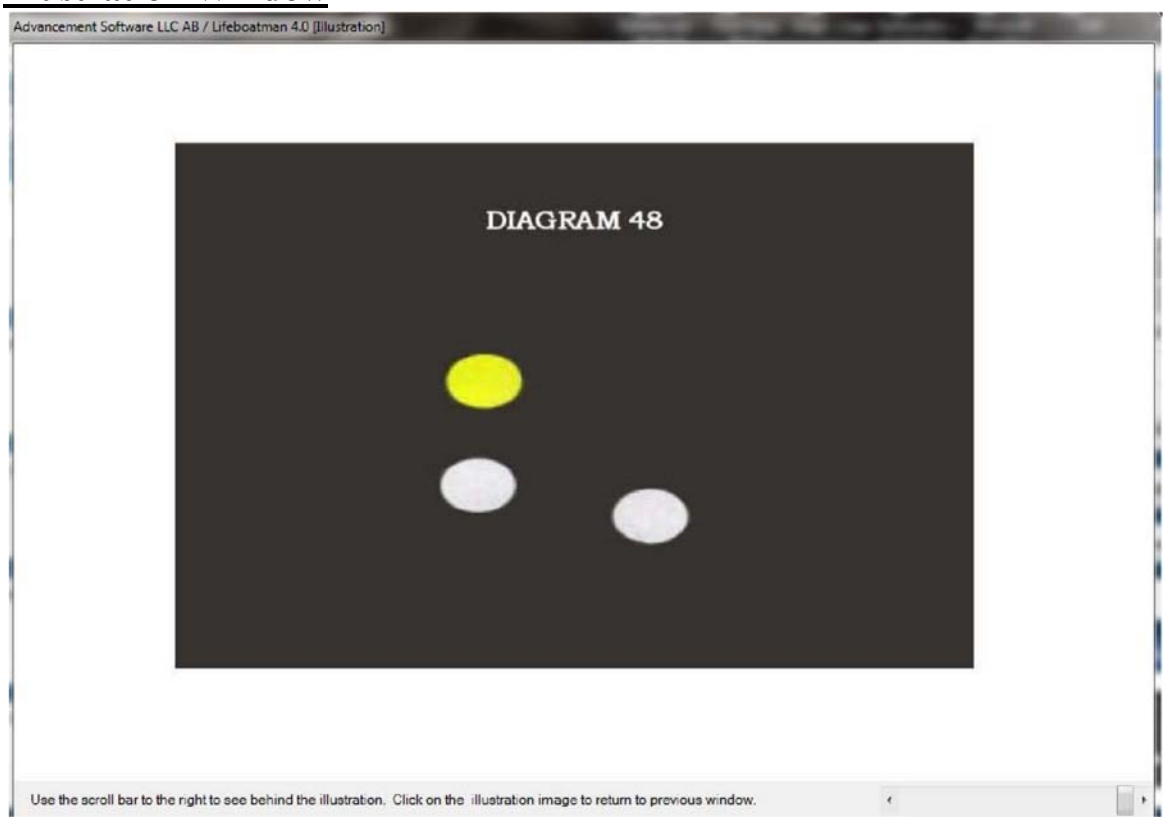
Hover the mouse over the subtopic name to see the entire subtopic name for those name that do not fit in the label or click the dropdown arrow to enlarge.

Mariner Advancement® provides explanations for some questions. You can access all available explanations, at any time, by clicking on the explanation dropdown box or thumbnail. If a specific explanation is available for the current question, you will see a thumbnail of the explanation under the EXPLANATION label. Hover over the explanation thumbnail to preview the explanation midsize. Click on the explanation thumbnail to load the explanation window. See more about the explanation window later in this manual.

Speech Synthesizer

Mariner advancement can utilize your PC's speech synthesizer. The speech quality depends on what voice is currently loaded into your system. To start the speech synthesizer, click on the speaker icon at the left of a question or answer or you may select READ ENTIRE TEST from the speech menu at the top of the test window. Click the square shaped stop button to stop the speech or click the animated speaker to pause the speech. You may also select SHOW CORRECT ANSWERS ONLY from the OPTIONS menu at the top of the test window and then select READ ENTIRE TEST if you want the speech synthesizer to read the question and the correct answer only.

Illustration Window



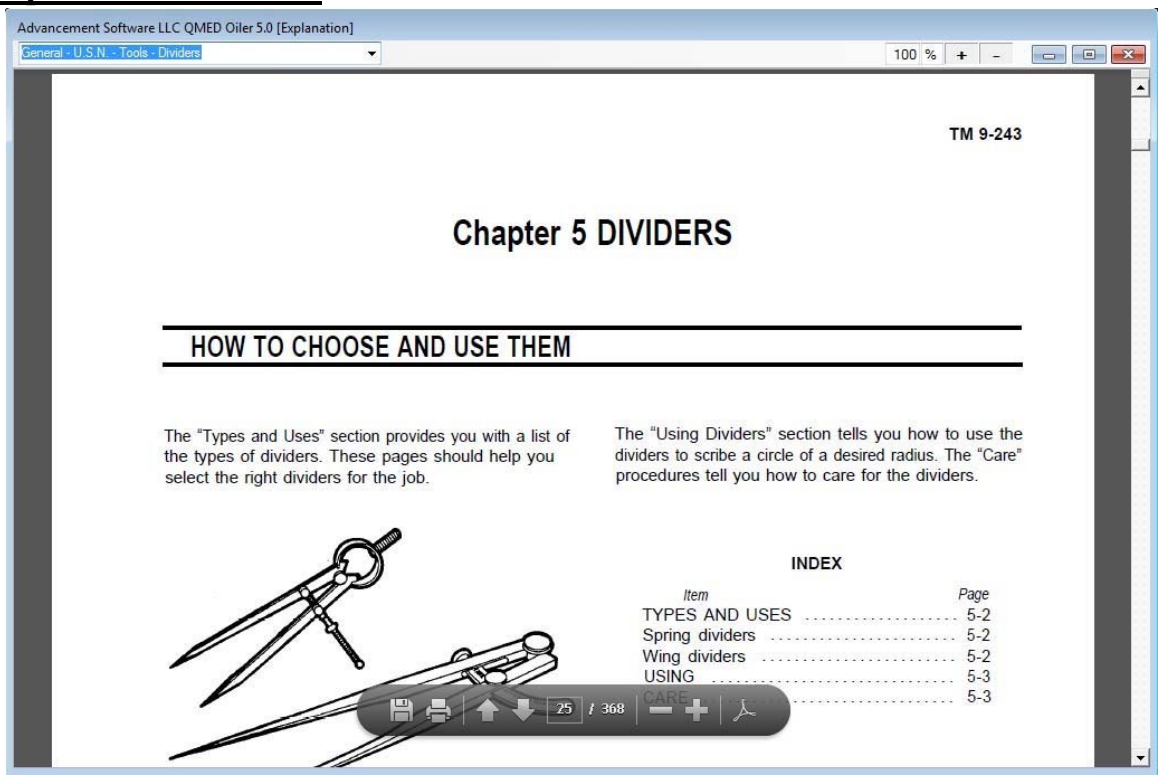
Navigating the Illustration Window

Once you click the illustration thumbnail on the test screen a large window will open to view the full size version of the illustration.

At the lower right hand side of the full size illustration window you will find a slider. The slider varies the opacity of the illustration window. Slide the slider so you can see through the illustration to the question and answers. Slide the slider back and forth to alternately see the question and illustration or place it in the middle to see both at the same time.

You may leave the full size illustration window open as you navigate from one test question to the next. If you leave the illustration window open and proceed to the next question the test window will become the active window and will be on top of the illustration window. Keep this in mind if you have a small screen as it may appear that the illustration window is not open when it is actually behind the test screen. To make the illustration window the active window with focus, simply click on the illustration thumbnail on the test screen. Click anywhere on the full size illustration to shrink it back to thumbnail size.

Explanation Window



Navigating the Explanation Window

The explanation window uses Adobe PDF Reader. Newer versions of Windows ship with a PDF reader that is not Adobe Reader and will not work. Ensure that you have Adobe reader installed on your PC. The application is free and can be downloaded and installed from Adobe's website. See the install file on the flash drive for more information.

The explanation window allows you to load any explanation at any time. The drop down menu at the upper left side of the window contains a list of all the current referenced explanations. Simply select an explanation and the explanation will load. At the top of the list in the drop down box is a selection to load the current explanation referenced by the current question.

The explanation window can be resized by dragging the handles on the side of the window to increase the width or length. The images in the window can be magnified by using the + and - buttons at the top of the explanation window. There may be additional controls available through Adobe such as the control box pictured at the bottom of the screenshot above.

Mariner Advancement® 10.0

The Mariner Advancement testing application provides...

- USCG questions and illustrations
- reference for the USCG book, question, and illustration number.
- ability to revisit previously answered test questions during the test.
- option to display all answer choices or only display the correct answer only.
- ability to tag questions while testing and the ability to revisit the tagged questions through the tag question menu.
- choice of the number of questions per test.
- search utility of all questions and illustrations.
- subtopic menu for generating exams made up of one subtopic.
- feature that temporarily removes correctly answered questions from the question bank, allowing the user to focus on the more difficult questions rather than wasting time reviewing questions they already know. The user may reset the question bank at any time, restoring the removed questions.
- speech synthesizer that is capable of reading the current question or the entire test.
- preview screens, which reduces study time by allowing the user to determine if they need to take the time to load the explanation or illustration in full screen mode.
- ability to take exams over and over with no time restraints, valid per user agreement.
- one year of free updates.
- distribution on a USB drive so you can take it with you.
- compatibility with most PCs with a USB port. Please check system requirements below.

Minimum System Requirements:

Mariner Advancement Exam Prep version 10.0 will run on any Microsoft Windows PC compatible computer that has a USB port and that meets the system requirements below:

- Microsoft Windows Version 8, 8.1, 10, or 11
- Apple Mac with Microsoft Windows via Parallels or VMware Fusion (free option)
- Not compatible with Chromebook, Android or IPAD.
- 1.0 Ghz CPU, 4 GB Ram
- 1024 X 768 Screen Resolution
- USB-A port or USB-C port with adaptor
- Mouse, or touch screen

Looking for a tablet? I recommend Microsoft Surface Pro 5 - Surface Pro10 or Surface Go.