

Google Cloud Professional Cloud Architect

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Step 1: Understand the Exam (Official Guide)

- **Exam Code:** *PCA*
 - **Format:** 50-60 multiple-choice questions (2 hours)
 - **Cost:** \$200 (discounts sometimes available)
 - **Topics:**
 - Designing scalable/secure cloud solutions (25%)
 - Managing GCP infrastructure (20%)
 - Compliance/security (15%)
 - Analyzing business requirements (15%)
 - **Full blueprint:** [Google Cloud Exam Guide](#)
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Step 2: Study Resources (Free + Paid)

1. Google's Official Training

- **Free Courses:**
 - [Google Cloud Skills Boost](#) (Free tier available)
- **Recommended Path:**
 - *Architecting with Google Compute Engine*

- *Networking in Google Cloud*
- **Paid Courses:**
 - Coursera's [GCP Professional Architect](#) (\$49/month)

2. Hands-On Labs

- **Google Cloud Free Tier** (\$300 credit for new users): cloud.google.com/free
- **Qwiklabs** (GCP-focused labs): [qwiklabs.com](https://www.qwiklabs.com)

3. Books & Cheat Sheets

- **Book:** *Official Google Cloud Certified Architect Study Guide* (Sybex)
- **Cheat Sheets:** [Google Cloud Cheat Sheets](#)

4. Practice Exams

- **Tutorials Dojo** (Best for scenario-based questions)
 - **Whizlabs** (Budget-friendly)
 - **ExamTopics** (Free but verify answers)
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Step 3: Key Topics to Master

Focus on these **high-weight areas**

1. **Compute Options:**
 - When to use **Compute Engine** vs. **Kubernetes Engine** vs. **App Engine**.
 2. **Networking:**
 - VPCs, Shared VPC, Cloud Load Balancing, Hybrid Connectivity (VPN/Interconnect).
 3. **Security:**
 - IAM roles, Service Accounts, Cloud KMS, Organization Policies.
 4. **Storage & Databases:**
 - Choosing between **Cloud SQL**, **Spanner**, **Firestore**, **Bigtable**.
 5. **Cost Optimization:**
 - Committed Use Discounts, Sustained Use Discounts, Quotas.
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c# Step 4: Study Plan (4-8 Weeks)

Week	Focus	Tasks
1-2	Core Services	Complete Coursera labs + Free Tier projects
3-4	Advanced Topics	Deep dive into networking/security
5-6	Scenarios & Cases	Practice exams + review weak areas
7-8	Final Prep	Mock tests (aim for 80%+ consistently)

Pro Tips

1. **Think Like an Architect:** The exam tests **decision-making** (e.g., "Which GCP service is best for X scenario?").
2. **Case Studies:** Memorize the **4 official case studies** (Her, Helicopter Racing, etc.). They repeat in exams!
3. **Time Management:** Flag tricky questions and revisit them.

Exam Day Checklist

- Review **Google's Well-Architected Framework**.
 - Practice **time-bound mock tests** (2 hours max).
 - Join **Reddit r/googlecloud** for last-minute tips.
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After Passing

- **LinkedIn Badge:** Share it—recruiters actively search for GCP certs!
- **Next Cert?** Consider **Google Cloud DevOps Engineer** or **AWS/Azure equivalent**.