

FW: advice for ccna certification

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Don't get a 2610, get a 2620. A 2610 only has an Ethernet port where as a 2620 has a fastethernet port for trunking built in. Three 2501's, a 1900xl, and a 2620 would allow you to do everything but ISDN for cheap. If you really want to do ISDN you can get an ISDN simulator, not cheap, and a 2520. If shopping on ebay watch out for the CCNA LAB KIT FOR ONLY \$1000. Buying them in pieces can be much cheaper. Watch out for the IOSs that come with the routers, try and get all that have at least 12.0. Unless you want to have some fun with the restrictions of some of the older IOSs. Yes a 1900 series switch does have a different way to build vlans than a 2900 series. If you find a 2916 make sure that it has a 4 port fastethernet extension slot filled because the main fa0/1-16 do NOT support trunking. Also, there can be variations in the switching commands with in the 2900 series also. I would just go for a super cheap 1900 and get a full understanding of VLANs/VTP/STP that way then concentrate on some of the 2900 series syntax for port security and such. The exam doesn't go into switching simulations at the CCNA level because there is such a wide discrepancy between different models let alone two major divides between set based and IOS based. At the professional level and above then you'll really need to know the syntax properly.

You'll know when your ready for the certification once you've memorized every table, matrix, and understand every debug out put that is listed in your CCNA prep books whether they are Sybex, Cisco press, or whatever and you can sit down in front of your routers and build a complete network from scratch with out any guidance other than maybe the "?" then rework the network. Be able to build up ppp, frame-relay, ACLs, different banners, host tables, different levels of passwords, password recovery, dynamic/static NAT, PAT, static routes, RIP, IGRP, OSPF, EIGRP, VTP Domains with password and pruning, and debug everything and understand what you are seeing. Then explore on from there. Don't just do a simple straight forward IP scheme either. Plan out the network with VLSM and watch what happens with RIP then switch to version 2 and watch it build up. I truly believe hands-on is the most important thing to passing any of the Cisco exams. The first time you sit down with your lab kit you might take 5 hours just to setup telnet and a password, who cares. Just keep doing it and it will go faster and faster. Frustration is common and expected but don't ever give up.

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