

Study Guide and Sample Test for The National Police Officer Selection Test



Provided By



National Police Officer Selection Test (POST)

Study Guide

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Introduction

This study guide is designed to help you obtain your maximum potential score on the National Police Officer Selection Test (POST). It is divided into four parts, which provides useful information on preparing to take the test.

Preparing For The Test

Taking The Test

Sample Test Items

Sample Test Answer Key

Preparing For The Test

You will increase your chances of obtaining your best possible score if you spend a fair amount of time preparing for the test. This includes finding out as much as possible about the test ahead of time, paying proper attention to your physical well-being before the test, taking care to avoid becoming overly anxious about the test and using a good test-taking strategy. Preparation in these areas can help you achieve your best possible score on the test.

For optimal test results, read this study guide thoroughly and answer the sample test items beginning on page 7. Make sure you read all the directions carefully and each test question completely before answering.

Test Format

The POST is made up of four separately timed test sections. The first three sections, Mathematics, Reading Comprehension and Grammar utilize multiple-choice and True/False formats. The fourth section, Incident Report Writing, requires you to write your answers out in complete sentences in the spaces provided in the test booklet.

Though most of the questions in this test battery relate to police duty, no prior knowledge of law or law enforcement will be needed to answer the questions.

Examination Hints

Attempt to answer every question on the test. There is no penalty for guessing since your score is based on the total number of correct answers. This means you should respond to every question, even when you are not certain of the correct answer. When you are uncertain, your answer should be your best guess, and you should then move on to the next question. You will need to balance the amount of time you spend on each question with the total amount of time allotted to take the test. You will be told when to start and stop each section. If you have extra time, you are allowed to check your work in that section of the test only.

Time Limits

It is important to know the amount of time allowed for each section so you can pace yourself and not spend too much time on questions causing you problems. Remember there is no penalty for guessing. If you find you are spending too much time on a question, you should make your best guess and move on. If you finish before time is called, you can go back and check your answers in the section you are working on. The number of test items and time limits for each of the sections of the test are listed below.

Section	Test	Number of Items	Test Time
I	Mathematics	20	20 minutes
II	Reading Comprehension	25	25 minutes
III	Grammar	20	15 minutes
IV	Incident Report Writing	10	15 minutes

Marking Your Answers

The test will be computer scored. Therefore, it is important to follow the instructions below to insure your answers are read correctly.

- Use a #2 or softer lead pencil. Do not use ink.
- Make heavy black marks that completely fill the oval.
- Erase completely any marks you wish to change
- Make no stray marks on the test booklet. Scratch paper will be provided in the math section to do your figuring.
- Be sure that you blacken only one oval for each question. If you blacken more than one oval it will be counted as incorrect; even if one of the answers is correct.
- The first three sections of the test are in a multiple-choice format. The ovals appear next to the test questions as shown in the example below:

1. A
- B
- C
- D
- E

Notice that for each number there are five ovals labeled A, B, C, D and E. You will blacken the oval that corresponds to the answer you think is correct. For example, assume that for test question number 1, you feel that *B* is the correct answer. You would blacken the oval labeled *B* on your answer sheet as shown in the example below.

1. A
 B
 C
 D
 E

The fourth section of the test requires the test taker to answer questions in complete sentences. The sentences must contain the right information, be grammatically correct and all words should be correctly spelled. Pages 7-19 of this study guide give various sample test items and answers.

Taking The Test

This part of the POST study guide provides some common sense advice for the day you take the test. Although these points may seem obvious, it is attention to details such as these that will increase your probability of obtaining your maximum potential score.

Before The Test Begins

Arrive early. You may be assigned a seat or you may be able to pick your own. Either way, settle in and put your things away. Try to relax, but concentrate on the test you are about to take. Put outside distractions out of your mind. Give the test you are about to take your complete attention.

Listen Carefully

The test administrator will provide you with complete and detailed instructions for taking each section. Be sure that you pay close attention to what this person has to say. Do not read ahead because you may miss something very important. If you do not hear or do not understand the directions, ask the test administrator to repeat them. It is extremely important that you completely understand the directions **before** the test begins.

Test Timing

Just before the signal to begin each section is given, make a mental note of what time it will be when the time limit for the section is up. For example, if the time limit is 15 minutes and it is currently 4:15, make a mental note that time will be up at 4:30. This will allow you to pace yourself while working through the test. Remember, your score on the test will be the total number correct. Therefore, you will want to work both quickly and accurately.

You should balance the amount of time you spend on each question. You should devote enough time to work through the question, but you should not spend too much time on any one question that is giving you difficulty. When this occurs, make your best guess and move on to the next question. If you finish before time is up, you can always go back and check the questions where you guessed.

Preparing Yourself Physically For The Test

- Avoid junk food and concentrate on a well balanced diet for at least several days before the test.
- Avoid tranquilizers and stimulants, such as coffee, especially on the day of the test.
- Get a good night's sleep before the test.
- Do not drink a lot of liquids or eat a big meal before the test.
- Avoid alcohol several days prior to and especially on the day of the test.

Sample Test Items

Section I In this section of the exam you will be provided with situations that require the use of basic arithmetic. You will read each situation and solve the problem. You are not allowed to use a calculator in this section; scratch paper will be provided in the test booklet to do all of your figuring.

1. Officer Kelly visits community groups in the area as part of a personal safety awareness program. If Officer Kelly visits 4 groups every week, except for her two-week vacation, how many groups does she visit in one year?
- A. 50
 - B. 100
 - C. 150
 - D. 168
 - E. 200

Questions 2 and 3 are based on the following information.

In preparing a report on a school burglary, a police officer listed the following stolen items and their values.

Video camera	\$350
Laptop computer	\$800
Slide projector	\$450
Microscope	\$550

2. What was the total value of the stolen goods?
- A. \$1950
 - B. \$2050
 - C. \$2100
 - D. \$2150
 - E. \$2250
3. What was the value of all the stolen goods EXCEPT the microscope?
- A. \$550
 - B. \$1600
 - C. \$1650
 - D. \$1700
 - E. \$1850

4. During one 5-day period, Officer Anderson drove 525 miles. If Anderson drove 245 miles on one day, how many miles did he average on each of the other days?
- A. 56 miles
 - B. 70 miles
 - C. 107 miles
 - D. 280 miles
 - E. 770 miles
5. Burglars broke into a camera store and left with 20 cameras with a total retail value of \$6,500. What is the average retail value of each camera?
- A. \$35
 - B. \$325
 - C. \$350
 - D. \$355
 - E. \$375

There are 20 questions like these in this section of the test and you will have 20 minutes to answer them. Your score will be based on the number of questions you answer correctly. There is no penalty for guessing, so you should try to answer every question.

Section II

This section measures reading comprehension. You will read passages relating to police duty and then answer questions based on these passages. **NO PRIOR KNOWLEDGE OF LAW OR LAW ENFORCEMENT WILL BE NEEDED TO ANSWER THESE QUESTIONS.** All the information needed to answer the questions will be provided in the passage.

THE PASSAGES IN THIS SECTION ARE NOT INTENDED TO REPRESENT ACTUAL LAW OF ANY PARTICULAR STATE. THE PASSAGES PRESENT POTENTIAL RULES AND LAWS RELATING TO POLICE WORK.

Three different types of questions will be asked in this section.

- (1) True/False questions in which a statement will be given concerning a passage or sample report form. The statement will be either accurate and true based on the passage or form, or the statement will be inaccurate and false according to the passage or form.
- (2) Questions in which you will be asked to choose the correct answer according to the information presented in the passage or on a sample report form.
- (3) Questions in which you will be asked to choose the alternative that best completes the sentence. Again, answers should be based on the information in the passage or on the report form.

Questions 6-10 are based on the following passage.

Last year, automobile accidents killed more than 5,000 American teenagers and nearly three-fourths were under the age of 18. In order to reduce this heartbreaking statistic, many states have adopted a graduated license program where 16-year-olds earn their right to drive without restriction after completing three separate phases and reaching their 18th birthday.

In phase 1, a person who is at least 16-years old may apply for and receive a learner's permit. All those between 16 and 19 years of age must hold this learner's permit for at least six months before applying for a driver's license. During phase 1, the 16-year-old teenager may only drive while participating in a certified driving program. Upon successful completion of this driving program, they may proceed to phase 2.

During phase 2, teens are permitted to practice driving only when accompanied by a parent or guardian with a valid driver's license and at least two years of driving experience. The recommendation is that teens drive at least 5-7 hours each week for a period of six weeks. Once the teen has completed 30 hours of practice driving and a parent has signed a statement attesting to this fact, he or she may proceed to phase 3.

During phase 3, 16-year-olds may apply for their driver's license. If they successfully pass the test, they will be issued a specially marked phase 3 driver's license which allows them to drive with certain restrictions until their 18th birthday: no driving between 10 pm and 5 am unless accompanied by a parent or guardian and no passengers other than siblings. If the teenager is convicted of any moving violation during phase 3, his/her license will automatically be suspended for 6 months. Once a teen has turned 18, he/she is allowed to drive without restrictions.

The hope is that parents take an active role in monitoring their teens' driving and that this gradual transition for teens makes our roads and children safer.

6. According to the passage, once 16-year-old Lisa has completed a certified driving program, she
- A. may apply for her driver's license
 - B. should proceed to phase 3 of the driving program
 - C. may drive a car to school with her brother as a passenger
 - D. may drive with her mother as a passenger, assuming her mother has a valid driver's license and at least two year's driving experience
 - E. must wait until she is 18 years old before applying for a driver's license

7. According to the passage, the graduated driver's license program applies to all teenagers who want to obtain a driver's license.
- A. True
 - B. False
8. Sixteen-year-old Peter, who received his driver's license one month ago, has been cited for speeding 10 mph over the limit. According to the passage, Peter
- A. must return to phase 1 of the driving program
 - B. must wait until he is 18 before applying for a new driver's license
 - C. will have his driver's license suspended
 - D. will have his driver's license held until his 18th birthday
 - E. must return to phase 2 and practice driving with a parent, assuming they have a valid driver's and at least two year's driving experience
9. According to the passage, data indicate that the most dangerous driving age for teenagers is 16 or 17 years of age.
- A. True
 - B. False
10. According to the passage, which of the following statements would be accurate?
- A. 18-year-old Tyrone, who just received his learner's permit, must wait 3 months before applying for a driver's license.
 - B. 19-year-old Jane, who just received her learner's permit, must complete a driver's education class.
 - C. 16-year-old Kelly, who received her learner's permit 4 months ago, may apply for a driver's license at any time.
 - D. 16-year-old Jackson has had his driver's license for 6 months now and drives his sister and his girlfriend back and forth to school every day.
 - E. 16-year-old Joe just obtained his driver's license and now drives home from work at 9 pm.

Question 11 is based on the definition below. Do not assume anything to be true that is not stated in the passage or in the question.

Exploitation means the illegal use of the assets of a high-risk adult with disabilities and includes the misappropriation of assets or resources by fraud, deception or extortion.

Willful deprivation means willfully denying a person who because of age, health or disability, requires medication, medical care, shelter, services or food.

Intimidation of a dependent means subjecting a person who is a dependent because of age, health or disability to participate in or witness physical force against another or physical confinement of another.

Interference with personal liberty means committing physical abuse, harassment or intimidation to compel another to engage in conduct from which she/he has a right to abstain.

11. Mary Smith is 82 years old and confined to a wheelchair. Her niece Lisa is her sole caregiver and lives with her. Lisa takes care of Mary, the home they live in and is authorized to pay Mary's household expenses. Mary has told Lisa that she will inherit most of Mary's estate as a reward for her diligence in caring for her. In the past three months, Lisa has accrued credit card debt due to her catalog shopping. In order to avoid further high interest rates, Lisa has written a check from Mary's account, without her knowledge or permission, to pay the balance owed to the credit card company. According to the definitions provided above, Lisa could be charged with
- A. exploitation
 - B. willful deprivation
 - C. intimidation of a dependent
 - D. interference with personal liberty
 - E. None of the above since she will probably inherit money from the estate.

Questions 12 and 13 are based on the incident report form and the incident description below.

INCIDENT REPORT--POLICE DEPARTMENT					
1. ADDRESS OF INCIDENT		2. OFFENSE		3. CODE	4. DATE
5. NAME OF VICTIM: INDIVIDUAL OR BUSINESS			6. ADDRESS		PHONE
7. ASSIGNED OFFICERS/BADGE NUMBERS		8. AGE OF VICTIM	9. RACE OF VICTIM	10. VICTIM'S DATE OF BIRTH	
11. NAME OF SUSPECT			12. ADDRESS		
13. AGE	14. RACE	15. SEX	16. DATE OF BIRTH	17. HEIGHT	18. WEIGHT
19. HAIR	20. EYES	21. PHYSICAL DESCRIPTION			
22. CHARGES					
23. ITEM	24. BRAND	25. SERIAL NUMBER		26. VALUE	
27. ITEM	28. BRAND	29. SERIAL NUMBER		30. VALUE	
31. ITEM	32. BRAND	33. SERIAL NUMBER		34. VALUE	
35. _____ SIGNATURE OF OFFICER/BADGE NUMBER					

Stephanie Washington, owner of the Book Bin at 3450 Crown Avenue, Westwood called police headquarters at 8:30 am, Monday, July 17 to report that her book store had been broken into during the night. Officers Michael Logan and Isaac Johnson arrived at the store at 8:45 am to investigate the incident. Ms. Washington was able to report immediately that a fax machine and \$54.74 from the cash register were missing.

12. The incident report can be fully completed based on the information in the paragraph.

- A. True
- B. False

13. The incident was reported on July 17.

- A. True
- B. False

There are 25 questions like these in this section of the test and you will have 25 minutes to answer them. There is no penalty for guessing. Your score will be the percentage of problems you answer correctly. Therefore, you should try to answer each problem.

Section III This section of the exam requires you to identify errors in grammar, punctuation, or spelling. There are two types of questions presented in this section. The first type presents incomplete sentences and you are to choose the alternative that best completes the sentence. For these items, be sure to read carefully any material appearing before or after the item. The right answer may be dependent on this material. The second type of question presents sentences that contain a spelling error and you are to choose the alternative that contains the misspelled word.

14. Three _____ broke into the museum and stole a valuable painting.
- A. thieves
 - B. thieves
 - C. thief's
15. Westwood has not raised _____ taxes in five years.
- A. its
 - B. it's
 - C. its'
16. One of the officers _____ not in full dress uniform.
- A. was
 - B. were
17. A recent study found that nearly three-quarters of child saftey seats are misused.

Which word in the above sentence is misspelled?

- A. recent
 - B. found
 - C. quarters
 - D. saftey
 - E. misused
18. A robbery was reported to Dispatch on Wednesday, Febuary 18.

Which word in the above sentence is misspelled?

- A. robbery
- B. reported
- C. Wednesday
- D. Febuary
- E. None of the above

There are 20 questions like these in this section of the test. You will have 15 minutes to answer them. There is no penalty for guessing. Your score is based on the number of questions answered correctly, so try to answer each question.

Section IV Section IV tests your writing skills. On the following page is a completed sample incident report form. Use the information contained on the form to answer the questions that follow. You should write your answers in the spaces provided. All your answers must contain the correct information and be written in complete sentences. The sentences must be grammatically correct and all words should be correctly spelled.

EXAMPLE QUESTION

Read the sample question and answer below.

What is the victim's date of birth?

EXAMPLE OF CORRECT ANSWER

The victim's date of birth is August 5.

Note that the answer above contains the correct information, is a complete sentence and the grammar and spelling are correct.

EXAMPLES OF INCORRECT ANSWERS

August 5

The answer above is not a complete sentence and does not contain the correct information.

Victim's date of birth is August 5.

The answer above is not grammatically correct. The word "the" is missing.

The victim's date of berth is August 5.

In the above answer, birth is spelled incorrectly.

Questions 19-23 are based on the incident report form below.

INCIDENT REPORT--POLICE DEPARTMENT						
1. ADDRESS OF INCIDENT		2. OFFENSE		3. CODE	4. DATE	
711 W Magnolia		Burglary		A6-250	Nov 11	
5. NAME OF VICTIM: INDIVIDUAL OR BUSINESS			6. ADDRESS		PHONE	
Thomas Stanton			711 W. Magnolia		753-9267	
7. ASSIGNED OFFICERS/BADGE NUMBERS		8. AGE OF VICTIM	9. RACE OF VICTIM	10. VICTIM'S DATE OF BIRTH		
David Crosby #201 Chris Taylor #176		43	White	08/05/80		
11. NAME OF SUSPECT			12. ADDRESS			
Eric Harvey			246 Ivy Lane			
13. AGE	14. RACE	15. SEX	16. DATE OF BIRTH	17. HEIGHT	18. WEIGHT	
19	White	Male	04/22	5'10"	180	
19. HAIR	20. EYES	21. PHYSICAL DESCRIPTION				
Brown	Blue	Wearing black sweatpants, gray sweatshirt				
22. CHARGES						
Burglary						
23. ITEM	24. BRAND	25. SERIAL NUMBER		26. VALUE		
Cash				\$150.00		
27. ITEM	28. BRAND	29. SERIAL NUMBER		30. VALUE		
Jewelry				\$600.00		
31. ITEM	32. BRAND	33. SERIAL NUMBER		34. VALUE		
MP3 Player	Apple	AE98RL567B901		\$200.00		
35. <u>David Crosby #201</u> SIGNATURE OF OFFICER/BADGE NUMBER						

19. Where did the incident take place?

20. What is the name of the victim?

21. How old is the suspect?

22. What is the suspect charged with?

23. What is the brand name of the MP3 player?

There are 10 questions in this section of the test and you will have 15 minutes to work on them. To receive maximum credit, answers must contain the correct information, be complete sentences, contain no misspelled words and be grammatically correct.

Sample Test Answer Key

Section I	1.	E	200
	2.	D	\$2150
	3.	B	\$1600
	4.	B	70 miles
	5.	B	\$325

Section II	6.	D	may drive with her mother as a passenger assuming her mother has a valid driver's and at least two year's driving experience
	7.	B	False
	8.	C	will have his driver's license suspended
	9.	A	True
	10.	E	16-year-old Joe just earned his driver's license after successfully completing phase 1 and 2 and is now permitted to drive himself home from work at 9 pm.
	11.	A	exploitation
	12.	B	False
	13.	A	True

Section III	14.	B	thieves
	15.	A	its
	16.	A	was
	17.	D	saftey – the correct spelling is safety
	18.	D	Febuary – the correct spelling is February

Section IV	19.	The incident took place at 711 W. Magnolia.	
	20.	The victim's name is Thomas Stanton.	
	21.	The suspect is 19 years old.	
	22.	The suspect is charged with burglary.	
	23.	The brand name of the MP3 player is Apple.	

Note: The correct answers in Section IV may be written in several formats.