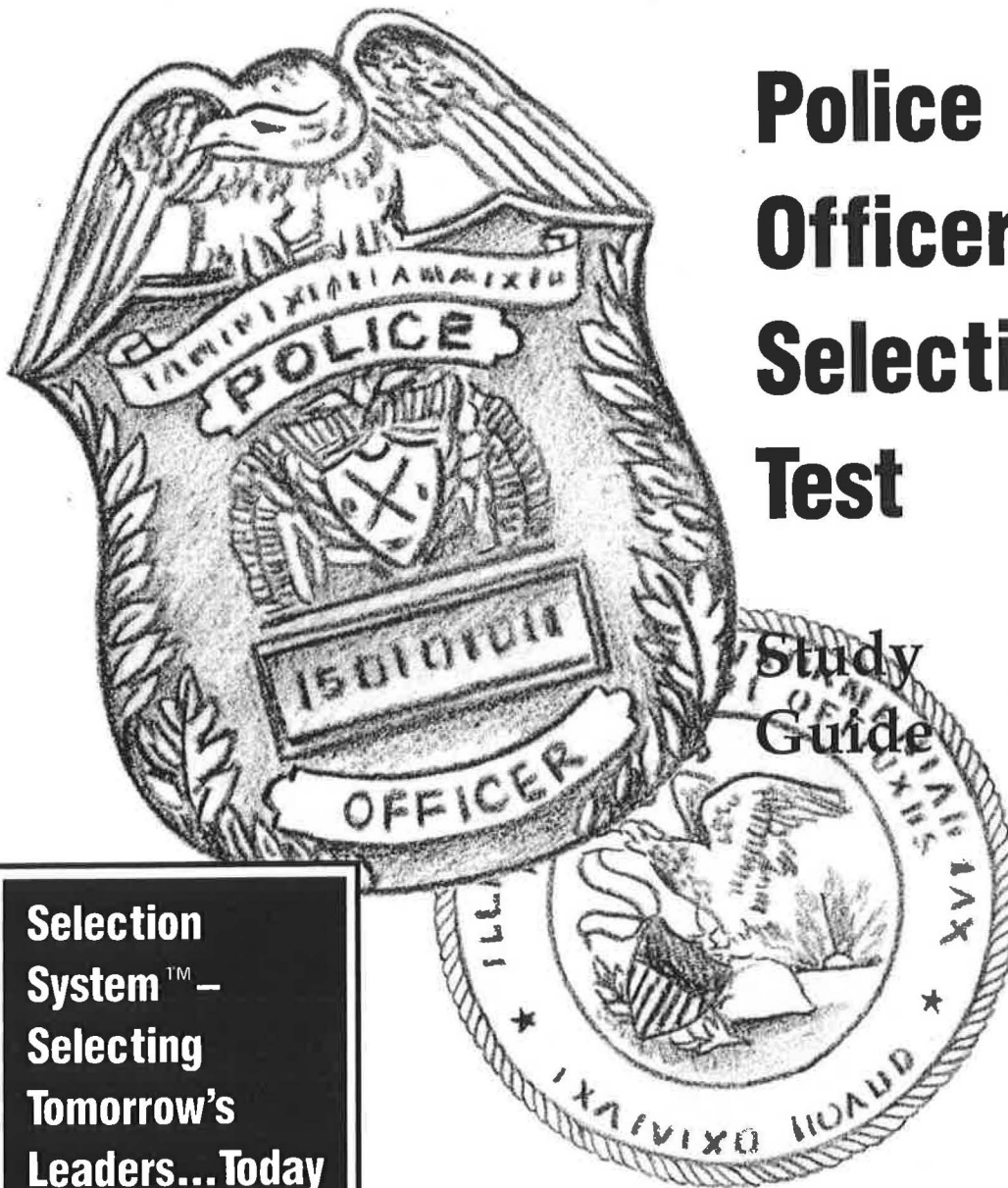


# The National



## Police Officer Selection Test

Study  
Guide

**Selection  
System™ —  
Selecting  
Tomorrow's  
Leaders... Today**

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*Data for Decisions in Management*

# National Police Officer Selection Test (POST)

## Study Guide

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*Data for Decisions in Management*

# **Introduction**

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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 provide 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

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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 8. Make sure you read all directions carefully and each test question completely before answering.

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## Test Format

POST is made up of four separately timed test sections. The first three sections, Mathematics, Reading Comprehension and Grammar utilize the multiple-choice and True/False formats. The fourth section, Incident Report Writing, requires you to write your answers in complete sentences in the spaces provided in the test booklet. Some departments may choose to administer all four sections, while others will administer Sections I-III only. Reviewing and answering all four sections will prepare you for either format your department has selected.

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.

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## Examination Hints

Attempt to answer every question in 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 on that section of the test only.

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## 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 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 min.
II	Reading Comprehension	25	25 min.
III	Grammar	20	15 min.
IV	Incident Report Writing	10	15 min.

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## 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 below.

1.  A  
 B  
 C  
 D  
 E

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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 below. If the correct answer for question number 2 is D, you would blacken the oval corresponding to D as shown below.

1.	<input type="radio"/> A	2.	<input type="radio"/> A	3.	<input type="radio"/> A	4.	<input type="radio"/> A	5.	<input type="radio"/> A
	<input checked="" type="radio"/> B		<input type="radio"/> B		<input type="radio"/> B		<input type="radio"/> B		<input type="radio"/> B
	<input type="radio"/> C		<input type="radio"/> C		<input type="radio"/> C		<input type="radio"/> C		<input type="radio"/> C
	<input type="radio"/> D		<input checked="" type="radio"/> D		<input type="radio"/> D		<input type="radio"/> D		<input type="radio"/> D
	<input type="radio"/> E		<input type="radio"/> E		<input type="radio"/> E		<input type="radio"/> E		<input type="radio"/> 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 8-19 of this guide give various sample test items and answers.

# Taking The Test

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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.

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## 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.

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## 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.

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## 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.

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## **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 figuring.

1. On Tuesday, Officer Jones worked the 3 p.m.-11 p.m. shift. At 10:55 p.m. he was called to the scene of an accident where he remained until 1:30 a.m. How long past his regular shift did Officer Jones work?

- (A) 55 minutes
- (B) 1 hour, 50 minutes
- (C) 2 hours
- (D) 2 hours, 30 minutes
- (E) 3 hours, 5 minutes

**Questions 2 and 3 are based on the following information.**

In preparing her report on a home burglary, a police officer listed the following stolen items and their values:

television set	\$ 400.00
radio	\$ 40.00
stereo equipment	\$1500.00
gold chain	\$ 100.00

2. What was the total value of the stolen goods?

- (A) \$2,000
- (B) \$2,040
- (C) \$2,400
- (D) \$2,840
- (E) \$3,000

3. What was the value of all the stolen goods EXCEPT the gold chain?

- (A) \$ 440
- (B) \$ 540
- (C) \$1,900
- (D) \$1,940
- (E) \$2,640

---

4. A police officer is called to an accident scene across town from his present location. If he has to travel two miles on Grant Road, three miles on route 47, and 12 miles on interstate 70, how many miles does he have to travel to get to the accident scene?

- A 17 miles
- B 19 miles
- C 52 miles
- D 59 miles
- E 82 miles

5. An appliance store is burglarized and 21 clock radios with a total value of \$1050 are stolen. What is the average value of the radios?

- A \$ 10.50
- B \$ 50.00
- C \$ 55.00
- D \$105.50
- E \$22,050

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.

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## 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 THE 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 a 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.**

Young people probably don't think of "permanently borrowing" a library book as a crime, but it is. Thousands, possibly millions, of books and other materials are vandalized or stolen each year from libraries across the United States. These institutions must obtain repayment or close down.

The state criminal code contains a section that deals specifically with crimes involving library materials, defining such terms as "library facility," "library material," "premises of a library facility," and "library card." The section particularly describes two general offenses: "library theft" and "criminal mutilation or vandalism of library materials."

Sentences for the offenses vary. Examples follow. A person who borrows and fails, after notification, to return books and materials valued at \$75 may be fined up to \$500 and ordered to pay the replacement costs of the books and materials; this is considered a petty offense. Any library theft of books and materials worth more than \$300 is a class 3 felony.

Mutilation or vandalism of library books and materials valued at less than \$300 is a class A misdemeanor, while the same offense is a class 3 felony if the books and materials are valued at more than \$300.

- 
6. According to the passage, libraries in the United States do not experience very much theft or vandalism.
- A True  
 B False
7. According to the passage, a person who borrows and fails to return library books and materials valued at \$75 has committed a class A misdemeanor.
- A True  
 B False
8. According to the passage, a petty offense involving library books and materials could result in payment of both a fine and replacement costs.
- A True  
 B False
9. According to the passage, mutilating and vandalizing library books and materials worth more than \$300 is a
- A petty offense  
 B class A misdemeanor  
 C class 3 felony
10. The passage is mainly about
- A the extent of library theft among young people  
 B the prevalence of library theft across the United States  
 C the way in which the criminal code handles library theft  
 D the effect that theft has on libraries  
 E the "criminal mutilation or vandalism of library materials"

---

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

An individual who intentionally kills someone without lawful justification commits **murder in the first degree**.

A person who commits the offense of murder in the first degree, as described above, commits **murder in the second degree** if he was provoked into a state of uncontrollable passion.

An individual who unintentionally kills someone without lawful justification commits **involuntary manslaughter** if he performs the act which caused the death recklessly, whether the act be lawful or unlawful.

A person who unintentionally kills someone as the result of the reckless driving of a motor vehicle commits **reckless homicide**.

11. Two men in a tavern got into a shouting match and stepped outside to settle the problem. According to witnesses, the first man continued yelling obscenities at the second despite the second man's loud and firm requests that he stop. After 10 minutes of being taunted, the second man attacked the first with a knife and killed him before witnesses could intervene. According to the definitions, the second man should be charged with

- (A) murder in the first degree
- (B) murder in the second degree
- (C) involuntary manslaughter
- (D) reckless homicide

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

INCIDENT REPORT-- SHERIFF'S 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							

Susan Olson, owner of Quick Food convenience store at 20 E. Locust Avenue, Ellettsville, called police headquarters at 7:00 a.m., Tuesday, May 10, to report that her establishment had been broken into during the night. Officers Jane Wright and Alan Webber arrived at the store at 7:10 a.m. to investigate the incident. Mrs. Olson was able to report immediately that a 10-inch portable color TV and \$76.50 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 to police on May 10.

- 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. Mr. Smith always kept his cooking utensils in good working condition. All the kitchen \_\_\_\_\_ were very sharp

(A) knife  
 (B) knives  
 (C) knifes

and the pots and pans were scrubbed clean.

15. During \_\_\_\_\_ existence from 1964-66, the courthouse

(A) its  
 (B) it's  
 (C) its'

received 450,000 calls of complaint. Each complaint was acted upon.

16. The officer \_\_\_\_\_ working overtime last night.

(A) was  
 (B) were

17. Driving an automobile while under the influence of alcohol or drugs is prohibited by law.

Which word in the sentence above is misspelled?

(A) automobile  
 (B) influence  
 (C) alcohol  
 (D) prohibited  
 (E) None of the above

---

18. The clerk at the motor vehicles office confirmed Wednesday, that William Gray resides at 1301 Oak Avenue, Anytown, Georgia.

Which word in the sentence above is misspelled?

- A vehicles
- B confirmed
- C Wednesday
- D resides
- 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.



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## 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.

Read the example question and answer below.

### EXAMPLE QUESTION

On what date did the incident take place?

### EXAMPLE OF CORRECT ANSWER

The incident took place  
January 17.

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

### EXAMPLES OF INCORRECT ANSWERS

January 17

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

Incident took place January 17.

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

The incedent took place  
January 17.

In the above answer, incident is spelled incorrectly.

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

INCIDENT REPORT			
1. ADDRESS OF INCIDENT	2. OFFENSE	3. CODE	4. DATE
15 W. Greenville	Armed Robbery	AR-100	Jan. 17
5. NAME OF VICTIM: INDIVIDUAL OR BUSINESS	6. ADDRESS	PHONE	
Jose Cacks	15 W. Greenville	701-2301	
7. ASSIGNED OFFICERS/BADGE NUMBERS	8. AGE OF VICTIM	9. RACE OF VICTIM	10. VICTIM'S DATE OF BIRTH
Matt Arnold #2818 Local O'Brien #3887	52	White	3/17
11. NAME OF SUSPECT	12. ADDRESS		
Unknown	Unknown		
13. AGE	14. RACE	15. SEX	16. DATE OF BIRTH
18	White	Male	
17. HEIGHT	18. WEIGHT	19. HAIR	
5'6"	150	Brown	
20. EYES	21. PHYSICAL DESCRIPTION		
Brown	Wearing blue jeans, red sweatshirt		
22. CHARGES			
Armed Robbery			
23. ITEM	24. BRAND	25. SERIAL NUMBER	26. VALUE
Cash			\$125.00
27. ITEM	28. BRAND	29. SERIAL NUMBER	30. VALUE
Jewelry			\$350.00
31. ITEM	32. BRAND	33. SERIAL NUMBER	34. VALUE
35. <u>Matt Arnold #2818</u> SIGNATURE OF OFFICER/BADGE NUMBER			

19. What items were stolen from the victim?

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20. Where does the victim reside?

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21. What are the name and address of the suspect?

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22. What was the suspect wearing?

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23. Who were the officers assigned to the complaint?

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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 in complete sentences, contain no misspelled words, and be grammatically correct.

# Sample Test Answer Key

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## Section I

1. D - 2 hours, 30 minutes
2. B - \$2,040
3. D - \$1,940
4. A - 17 miles
5. B - \$50.00

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## Section II

6. B - False
7. B - False
8. A - True
9. C - class 3 felony
10. C - the way in which the criminal code handles library theft
11. B - murder in the second degree
12. B - False
13. A - True

---

## Section III

14. B - knives
15. A - its
16. A - was
17. B - influence - the correct spelling is influence
18. C - Wednesday - the correct spelling is Wednesday

---

## Section IV

19. Cash and jewelry were stolen from the victim.
20. The victim lives at 15 W. Grenville.
21. The name and address of the suspect are unknown.
22. The suspect was wearing blue jeans and a red sweatshirt.
23. Officers Matt Arnold and Carol O'Brien were assigned to the complaint.

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