

POLICE OFFICER  
PREPARATION MATERIALS

1

# Testing Hints

## Prepare you for testing.

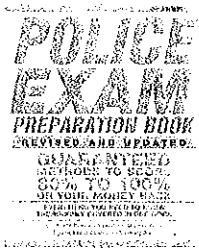
Plan ahead – make sure you know:

- ❖ Where and when you are scheduled to take the test. Plan your route to the testing location, and where you will park your vehicle. If you are scheduled either early in the day or late in the day you may run into rush hour traffic.
- ❖ Allow plenty of time to get there early or to handle any problems that may occur.
- ❖ Promptness is mandatory – there is no late admittance into the test.
- ❖ **Be sure to bring your valid driver's license – check it to make sure it is not expired.**
- ❖ If you wear glasses be sure you have them with you.
- ❖ Exercising for a few days before the test will help reduce stress.
- ❖ Get a good night's rest.
- ❖ Fuel your body with appropriate brain food the night before and day of the exam. If you need to, bring a bottle of water with you and a healthy, satisfying snack to keep your stamina going throughout the test. But don't eat a heavy meal before the test.
- ❖ Go to the bathroom before walking into the exam room. You don't want to waste any time worrying about your bodily needs during the test.
- ❖ Don't worry about how fast other people finish their test; just concentrate on your own test.
- ❖ Focus on the question at hand. Don't let your mind wander on other things.
- ❖ Chew gum during the test to help relieve test anxiety (but do it quietly).
- ❖ Rely on your own ability, and don't try to copy from someone else. Your neighbor may not know as much as you do!
- ❖ Cheating may eliminate you from the rest of the testing process and any testing for future positions with the City of Omaha.
- ❖ Wear comfortable clothes. This is a test, not a fashion show. Layer on the clothes or bring a sweater. The test room may be hot or cold.
- ❖ Do not bring any materials, equipment, books, etc., to the testing room. You will not be allowed to have the materials with you. The test will be closely monitored. You will be provided any required materials.
- ❖ You will not be allowed to discuss or share answers with other candidates during the test.
- ❖ If you need a reasonable accommodation due to a learning disability, you must notify the Human Resources Department well before the testing date to ensure that your accommodation can be met. Failure to provide notification in a reasonable timeframe may result in an inability to provide accommodation.

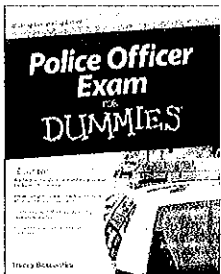
**The best way to pass a multiple choice test is to keep these tips in mind:**

- ❖ Read. Do a little more that you have been doing to prepare for the test. Read a quality newspaper, columns, articles and magazines.
- ❖ Get additional test preparation materials geared towards the subject matter and review carefully.
- ❖ If possible, take practice tests (as given in the Study Guide) as if they are real examinations.
- ❖ Review all practice questions that you missed to determine the reason for your error. Decide how you will avoid errors in the future.

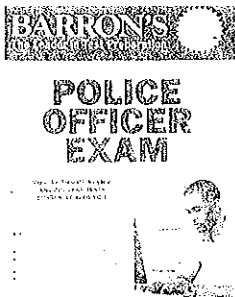
**Check out books at your local Library or online to help you study. Below are some examples:**



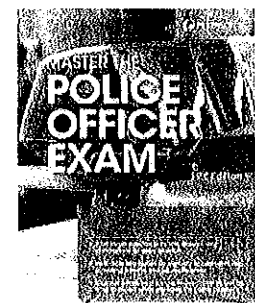
Norman Hall's Police Exam Preparation Book Second Edition Edition  
by Norman Hall (Author)



Police Officer Exam For Dummies 1st Edition  
by Raymond Foster (Author), Tracey Biscantini (Author)



Barron's Police Officer Exam, 9th Edition 9th Edition  
by Donald Schroeder (Author), Frank Lombardo (Author)



Master the Police Officer Exam, 1  
Peterson's (Firm)

# Police Officer Multiple Choice Examination Testing Tips

Listen carefully to the instructions given by the test facilitator and read ALL written instructions. Don't assume you know the test directions. Follow specific directions and ask questions if you are confused.

Take a close look at the answer sheet and observe its format (a left to right format) and layout (front and back sides).

- ❖ Be careful when marking your answers.
- ❖ Mark only one answer to each question.
- ❖ Don't make extra marks on your answer sheet.
- ❖ Completely darken the allocated space for the answer chosen.
- ❖ Completely erase any answer you wish to change.

Make absolutely certain that you are marking the answer to the right question. If you put down one answer in the wrong space, you will probably continue to mistakenly mark the wrong answer.

Make certain that you understand what the question is asking. You may need to read the question twice. Do not add more information to the question than what is provided.

Always read all the choices, before you select an answer. Look for key terms like "not" and "except" to make sure that you do not end up trying to answer the exact opposite of the question asked.

Eliminate choices you know are wrong. The process of elimination will improve your chances of guessing correctly.

Don't get bogged down on any one question. If a question is taking too long, guess, and go on to the next question. If there is time, go back and review the question after you have completed the other questions.

Never leave questions unanswered. Your score will be based only on the number of correct answers for each section, unless otherwise stated in the section. There is no penalty for wrong answers. Make an educated guess.

Be very reluctant to change an answer, unless you have a very good reason to do so. It is usually a good idea to not change your first answer.

Be sure you answer **all** questions in Section I and Section II of the test.

Be aware of the set time limit.

## Studying Tips

These tips can be used not only to study for the multiple choice exam but if you are lucky enough to be hired, you can use them during the training academy.

You can prepare yourself to succeed in your studies. Try to develop and appreciate the following habits:

- **Take responsibility for yourself**  
Recognize that in order to succeed you need to make decisions about your priorities, your time, and your resources
- **Center yourself around your values and principles**  
Don't let friends and acquaintances dictate what you consider important
- **Put first things first**  
Follow up on the priorities you have set for yourself, and don't let others, or other interests, distract you from your goals
- **Discover your key productivity periods and places**  
Morning, afternoon, or evening?  
Find spaces where you can be the most focused and productive.  
Prioritize these for your most difficult study challenges
- **Consider yourself in a win-win situation**  
When you contribute your best to a class, you and your fellow students will benefit.  
**Look for better solutions to problems**  
For example, if you don't understand the course material, don't just re-read it.  
Try something else! Don't be shy. Ask your instructor, family, or friends for help. It is important to address the problem area as soon as possible. Otherwise, you will end up having to spend even more time studying to catch up.
- **Look to continually challenge yourself**
- **Eat Frequent Small Meals**  
Avoid eating a big meal before a study session. Too much food will send your body into a 'rest' mode. On the other hand, don't starve yourself either. Frequent small meals are best.
- **Study When You're Sharpest**  
Study according to your body-clock. Are you sharpest in the morning or at the evening?  
Schedule your most difficult materials when you are mentally at your best, and schedule the easier ones when you are mentally less efficient.
- **Drink Water Often**  
Drink plenty of water during a study session, especially when you feel sluggish. Caffeine may help you to stay awake, but it can increase your anxiety – use it in moderation.
- **Don't Get Too Comfortable in Your Chair**  
Choose a chair that supports your back. It should be comfortable, but not too comfortable. Just like an athlete during a performance, your body should be relaxed, so that all your energy goes to where it matters – your brain.
- **Take Breaks Every Hour**  
It is important to take a break before you feel tired and lose your concentration completely.  
Regular breaks at least once an hour helps to sustain your concentration. If the work is not going too well and you have difficulties in concentrating, you may need a long break and go back to it later.

- **Concentration**

The ability to concentrate is one of the more important study skills you need to develop. You won't always be able to study in absolute silence or be able to spend as much time as you would like on a particular project. Learn how to overcome distractions so you can focus all your attention on your studies.

Know and respect your concentration span which will vary from hour to hour and from day to day. When you sit for long periods, gravity draws the blood to the lower part of your body.

When you take a break, take a few deep breaths and get more oxygen to your brain: try walking around and doing some light stretching for a few minutes. It will help to release tension in your body, and help your circulation.

- **Study at the Same Time, Same Place**

Study at the same time and at the same place, devoted to study only. This helps you to associate the time and place with studying and concentrating. You will find that you get into a habit of studying as soon as you sit down.

- **How you approach studying matters**

Too many people look at studying as a necessary task, not an enjoyment or opportunity to learn. That's fine, but researchers have found that **how** you approach something matters almost as much as what you do. Being in the right mindset is important in order to study smarter.

- Sometimes you can't "force" yourself to be in the right mindset, and it is during such times you should simply avoid studying. If you're distracted by a relationship issue, an upcoming game, or finishing an important project, then studying is just going to be an exercise in frustration. Come back to it when you're not focused (or obsessed!) by something else going on in your life.
- If you are not motivated and have a poor attitude, your study session will not be very productive. You have just one opportunity to pass that Geometry exam or ace the term paper. Pick a time of day where you can get motivated to prepare for tests, write essays, and solve problems.
- Way to help improve your study mindset:
- *Aim to think positively when you study*, and remind yourself of your skills and abilities.
- *Avoid catastrophic thinking*. Instead of thinking, "I'm a mess, I'll never have enough time to study for this exam," look at it like, "I may be a little late to study as much as I'd like, but since I'm doing it now, I'll get most of it done."
- *Avoid absolute thinking*. Instead of thinking "I always mess things up," the more objective view is, "I didn't do so well that time, what can I do to improve?"
- *Avoid comparing yourself with others*, because you usually just end up feeling bad about yourself.

- **Where you study is important**

A lot of people make the mistake of studying in a place that really isn't conducive to concentrating. A place with a lot of distractions makes for a poor study area. If you try and study in your dorm room, for instance, you may find the computer, TV, or a roommate more interesting than the reading material you're trying to digest.

The library, a nook in a student lounge or study hall, or a quiet coffee house are good places to check out. Make sure to choose the quiet areas in these places, not the loud, central gathering areas. Investigate multiple places on-campus and off-campus, don't just pick the first one you find as "good enough" for your needs and habits. Finding an ideal study place is important, because it's one you can reliably count on for the next few years.

- **Clear Your Desk of Everything You Don't Need**

Have everything you need on the desk. Put away what you do not need for the study session. Seeing reminders of other assessments or domestic bills may increase your anxiety and distract you.

Unfortunately, when you find an ideal place to study, sometimes people bring things they don't need. For instance, while it may seem ideal to type notes into a computer to refer back to later, computers are a powerful distraction for many people because they can do so many different things. Playing games, going online, IM'ing, surfing the Web, and answering emails are all wonderful distractions that have nothing to do with studying. So ask yourself whether you really need a computer to take notes, or whether you can make do with the old-fashioned paper and pen or pencil.

Don't forget the things you need to study for the class, exam or paper you're focusing on for the study session. Nothing is more time-consuming and wasteful than having to run back and forth regularly because you forget an important book, paper, or some other resource you need to be successful. If you study best with your favorite music playing, make sure your iPod is with you.

- **Time-Management**

It is not the amount of time you spend studying that matters. It's what you can accomplish during that time. Spending 40 hours to prepare for an exam and barely passing was a waste of your time. Develop a study plan and learn how to manage your time effectively to maximize your results.

- **Procrastination**

It feeds on itself. The trick is to get started quickly. If necessary, fool yourself. Plan to work for just a few minutes, then get back to procrastination. Try thumbing through the chapter to build interest, before really studying, or read the introduction. Generate exam-type questions with classmates. Use a schedule. Work for short periods. Think positive.

- **Memory**

When we first learn something, information is processed into the brain to form a neural trace. This trace first enters your sensory memory, and then, if you're paying attention, to your Short Term Memory, or STM. If you keep working to process the information and adapt it correctly it then moves to your Long Term Memory, or LTM. The information processed into your LTM is more or less permanent; with occasional reviewing you will not forget it. The trick is to adapt the information you really need into your LTM as quickly as possible. Your STM has a small capacity and a short duration; you may learn something very quickly, but in 24 hours you will lose 80% of that information. The STM is fast and easily accessed, the LTM is slower but larger.

- **Repetition**

The key to learning something well is repetition; the more times you go over the material the better chance you have of storing it permanently. Before you begin this process, however, it makes sense that you determine the type of learner you are. There are three basic types of learning: Visual, Auditory and Haptic. Most of us are, in fact, some combination of the three, but chances are one style will suit us more than the other two. Take some time to look over the types and figure out which category best describes your method of learning.

- **Visual Learners:**

Visual learners study best when the material is graphic, ie. charts, tables, maps, etc. When in class, visual people should look at the professors when they are speaking, participate in class discussions and take detailed notes during lectures. When studying, study alone in a quiet place and try to transcribe your material on paper. When possible make drawings, graphs or tables of complex abstract ideas and work alone. Visual learners often have trouble working while having a dialogue, even if the dialogue directly pertains to the subject matter.

- **Auditory Learners:**

Auditory people work best when they can hear the material. Read aloud, go over your notes and talk to yourself about the important points. Before reading, set a purpose and verbalize it, after you've finished be sure to summarize out loud what you just read. Speak your ideas into a tape machine as if you were having a conversation with someone, if you can, talk to your friends about the material. Because Auditory learners sometimes have trouble keeping columns aligned, try doing math computations by hand, on graph paper.

- **Haptic Learners:**

Haptic learners are the most maligned division; they are the people that can't sit still. Haptics have to pace around the room, they must have music or a television playing in the background and are almost constantly finding themselves distracted. Despite what parents and teachers have been saying to the contrary, Haptic learning is just as effective as the other two, more traditional, types. Instead of fighting against your nature, adapt to it and find a method that really works. Make studying more physical; work at a standing desk, pace around the room, do reading while on an exercise bike, chew gum. Try to use color when you can; highlight your readings, read with a filtered light, put posters and bright colors around your desk. Haptic people should vary their activities, if you feel frustrated or 'clogged up' do something different for a few minutes. Try and keep a list of distractions as they come to you; once you write them down, they won't bother your concentration as much. If you want to, play music in the background at whatever volume you choose to. When reading, try skimming over the chapter to get a solid basic meaning before you really dig in. Try to visualize complex projects from start to finish before you begin them. Visualization is a useful tool for Haptic people, it helps you keep a positive, productive outlook on the task at hand.

- **SQ3R**

The SQ3R method is the reading and studying system preferred by many educators. Reading research indicates that it is an extremely effective method for both comprehension and memory retention. It's effective because it is a system of active reader involvement.

**Step 1. "S"= Survey** Before you actually read a chapter, or go over a particular section of notes, take five minutes to survey the material. Briefly check headings and subheadings in order to understand the author's organizational pattern of ideas to be discussed. Scan all visual material. Read introductory and summary paragraphs. This preview will enable you to anticipate what the chapter is about.



- **Step 2. "Q"= Question** Create interest in the material by asking: What are the main points of the chapter? As you read, keep the question in mind and figure out the most important points. It gives you a clearly defined purpose for reading, and helps you maintain interest in the material.

**Step 3. "R"= Read** Read the chapter actively for meaning. Go through the paragraph before underlining, then underline key words and phrases to help you recall the main points. Be selective, you don't want to highlight non-important points or miss anything that can help your comprehension. Summarize main concepts in your own words in the margins. The more active you are in the reading process, the more you will retain.

**Step 4. "R"= Recite** After every few pages, close your book and recite aloud the main points to the questions you posed in step 2. Try to recall basic details as to the author's intent by putting them in your own words. Verify your answer by checking the text. If you can't remember the text, read through it again. If you don't get it now, you won't remember it for a test. Take as much time as you need to answer your questions. Don't be frustrated, this takes more time but the information will be clearer in your mind.

**Step 5. "R"= Review** Finally, review the chapter every so often to fix the material in your mind. Keep rereading your margin notes and underlinings. Verbalize the sequence of main ideas and supporting facts to aid retention. Numerous reviews are a lot more effective than one cramming session the night before an exam. Review once right after you've finished reading and then every couple of days. The SQ3R is time consuming at first, expect it to take ten to fifteen percent longer to read a given chapter when you first begin. Research indicates a 70%% increase in retention after two months of using the system and, eventually, a reduction in time spent preparing for exams.

- **Note Taking Techniques**

The most comprehensive note taking systems require attention on your part. You must be alert enough in class to take legible, meaningful notes. You can't rely on "writing everything down" because a lot of information in a given class won't help you actually learn the material. If you have problems determining the specific relevant points in a particular section, you can always ask the training staff to clarify them for you. The 2-6 Method refers to the way you divide the space on your notepaper. Make two columns, using the red line on the left of the page as your border. Then, when you take notes in class, use the 6 column for the notes and the smaller 2 column on the left as a highlighting system. Write main headings and important points on the left, including material you think you will be tested on. When you're finished, you should have a comprehensive page of information that you can quickly scan for important points. Studying is 99% perspiration; if you give it a real, concentrated effort you will see an improvement.

**Your success is entirely up to you.**