

CRIMINAL JUSTICE SDC PRACTICE TEST (SAMPLE)

STUDY GUIDE



**SAMPLE STUDY GUIDE
WITH LIMITED QUESTIONS**

**VISIT US ONLINE FOR
THE FULL VERSION STUDY GUIDE**

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Introduction

Preparing for a certification exam can feel overwhelming, but with the right tools, it becomes an opportunity to build confidence, sharpen your skills, and move one step closer to your goals. At Examzify, we believe that effective exam preparation isn't just about memorization, it's about understanding the material, identifying knowledge gaps, and building the test-taking strategies that lead to success.

This guide was designed to help you do exactly that.

Whether you're preparing for a licensing exam, professional certification, or entry-level qualification, this book offers structured practice to reinforce key concepts. You'll find a wide range of multiple-choice questions, each followed by clear explanations to help you understand not just the right answer, but why it's correct.

The content in this guide is based on real-world exam objectives and aligned with the types of questions and topics commonly found on official tests. It's ideal for learners who want to:

- Practice answering questions under realistic conditions,
- Improve accuracy and speed,
- Review explanations to strengthen weak areas, and
- Approach the exam with greater confidence.

We recommend using this book not as a stand-alone study tool, but alongside other resources like flashcards, textbooks, or hands-on training. For best results, we recommend working through each question, reflecting on the explanation provided, and revisiting the topics that challenge you most.

Remember: successful test preparation isn't about getting every question right the first time, it's about learning from your mistakes and improving over time. Stay focused, trust the process, and know that every page you turn brings you closer to success.

Let's begin.

How to Use This Guide

This guide is designed to help you study more effectively and approach your exam with confidence. Whether you're reviewing for the first time or doing a final refresh, here's how to get the most out of your Examzify study guide:

1. Start with a Diagnostic Review

Skim through the questions to get a sense of what you know and what you need to focus on. Your goal is to identify knowledge gaps early.

2. Study in Short, Focused Sessions

Break your study time into manageable blocks (e.g. 30 – 45 minutes). Review a handful of questions, reflect on the explanations.

3. Learn from the Explanations

After answering a question, always read the explanation, even if you got it right. It reinforces key points, corrects misunderstandings, and teaches subtle distinctions between similar answers.

4. Track Your Progress

Use bookmarks or notes (if reading digitally) to mark difficult questions. Revisit these regularly and track improvements over time.

5. Simulate the Real Exam

Once you're comfortable, try taking a full set of questions without pausing. Set a timer and simulate test-day conditions to build confidence and time management skills.

6. Repeat and Review

Don't just study once, repetition builds retention. Re-attempt questions after a few days and revisit explanations to reinforce learning. Pair this guide with other Examzify tools like flashcards, and digital practice tests to strengthen your preparation across formats.

There's no single right way to study, but consistent, thoughtful effort always wins. Use this guide flexibly, adapt the tips above to fit your pace and learning style. You've got this!

Questions

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- 1. Define reasonable suspicion and explain its use in stop-and-frisk or brief detentions.**
 - A. Reasonable suspicion is a probable cause threshold for arrest.
 - B. Reasonable suspicion is a credible belief that criminal activity may be occurring; it justifies brief stops and investigations.
 - C. Reasonable suspicion requires proof beyond a reasonable doubt.
 - D. Reasonable suspicion allows full searches and arrests.
- 2. Which term denotes acts that are illegal because of statutes rather than inherent moral wrongfulness?**
 - A. Mala in Se
 - B. Mala Prohibita
 - C. Mens Rea
 - D. Deprivation Model
- 3. Which doctrine describes the state acting as guardian of children and intervening in family matters for the child's best interests?**
 - A. Stare Decisis
 - B. Social Reality of Crime
 - C. Psychoanalytic Theory
 - D. Parens Patriae
- 4. Which term represents the study of crime and its causes?**
 - A. Criminology
 - B. Corpus Delicti
 - C. Choice Theory
 - D. Cultural Deviance Theory
- 5. The taking of property under the amount of \$500 is called**
 - A. Grand theft auto
 - B. Petty theft
 - C. Robbery
 - D. Burglary

- 6. What is the difference between actual possession and constructive possession?**
- A. Actual possession is the owner's legal title to property and constructive possession is physical handover.
 - B. Actual possession is the ability to exercise control over property; constructive possession is physical handover.
 - C. Constructive possession is physical possession.
 - D. Actual possession is physical control of property; constructive possession is the ability to exercise control or influence over it.
- 7. Which school of criminology holds that wrongdoers weigh the potential benefits of crime against the costs of being apprehended?**
- A. Choice Theory
 - B. Classical Criminology
 - C. Control Theory
 - D. Criminology
- 8. Which case held that peremptory challenges based on race violate the U.S. Constitution?**
- A. Swain v. Alabama
 - B. Miller-El v. Dretke
 - C. Edmonson v. Leesville
 - D. Batson v. Kentucky
- 9. The right to a speedy trial is embodied in the _____ Amendment to the U.S. Constitution.**
- A. 1st
 - B. 4th
 - C. 5th
 - D. 6th
- 10. Which is an example of tangible physical evidence?**
- A. A witness's sworn statement.
 - B. A firearm found at the scene.
 - C. A recorded confession.
 - D. A newspaper article summarizing the incident.

Answers

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1. B
2. B
3. D
4. A
5. B
6. D
7. B
8. D
9. D
10. B

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Explanations

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1. Define reasonable suspicion and explain its use in stop-and-frisk or brief detentions.

- A. Reasonable suspicion is a probable cause threshold for arrest.
- B. Reasonable suspicion is a credible belief that criminal activity may be occurring; it justifies brief stops and investigations.**
- C. Reasonable suspicion requires proof beyond a reasonable doubt.
- D. Reasonable suspicion allows full searches and arrests.

Reasonable suspicion is a credible belief, based on specific, articulable facts and reasonable inferences from those facts, that criminal activity may be afoot. It sits between a mere hunch and probable cause, and it lets an officer briefly stop and investigate. This standard supports a stop-and-frisk or brief detention by allowing a momentary seizure to determine whether further action is warranted, without authorizing a full search or an arrest. For a search or arrest, the law requires probable cause, not just reasonable suspicion. The other statements miss the key point: they either demand a higher standard (probable cause or beyond a reasonable doubt) or claim that reasonable suspicion justifies full searches and arrests, which it does not.

2. Which term denotes acts that are illegal because of statutes rather than inherent moral wrongfulness?

- A. Mala in Se
- B. Mala Prohibita**
- C. Mens Rea
- D. Deprivation Model

The main idea is the distinction between acts that are illegal because the law says so versus acts that are morally wrong in themselves. Mala prohibita refers to acts illegal due to statutes or regulations, not because they are inherently wrong. Examples include speeding, illegal drug possession, or tax evasion—these are crimes because the law prohibits them, even if their moral acceptability might be debated in some cases. In contrast, mala in se covers offenses that are wrong by their very nature, such as murder or robbery, which society views as morally wrong regardless of specific statutes. Mens rea is about the mental state or intent behind an act, which affects culpability but isn't itself a label for why an act is illegal. The deprivation model is a criminology concept explaining why people may commit crimes based on deprivation or lack of resources, not a category of illegal acts. So the term that denotes acts illegal because of statutes rather than inherent moral wrongfulness is mala prohibita.

3. Which doctrine describes the state acting as guardian of children and intervening in family matters for the child's best interests?

- A. Stare Decisis
- B. Social Reality of Crime
- C. Psychoanalytic Theory
- D. Parens Patriae**

Parens Patriae is the principle that the state acts as guardian of minors, stepping in to protect a child's welfare when a parent or guardian cannot or will not. In practice, this justifies government authority to intervene in family matters—removing a child from an unsafe or neglectful home, placing them in foster care, or arranging other arrangements in the child's best interests. The focus is on ensuring safety and well-being when those needs aren't being met within the family. Stare Decisis is about following legal precedent in court decisions, not about child welfare or guardianship. The Social Reality of Crime is a criminology perspective that emphasizes social factors in crime rates rather than protective state intervention in families. Psychoanalytic Theory is a psychological framework about unconscious motives, not a legal doctrine governing how the state protects children.

4. Which term represents the study of crime and its causes?

- A. Criminology**
- B. Corpus Delicti
- C. Choice Theory
- D. Cultural Deviance Theory

Criminology is the study of crime, its causes, and the social responses to it. It explores why people commit offenses, how crime rates fluctuate, and how laws, policies, and institutions influence crime. It draws on multiple disciplines to understand patterns and develop strategies to prevent and control crime. The other terms don't fit because corpus delicti refers to the body of the crime—the facts that establish that a crime occurred—rather than the study of crime. Choice Theory is a specific approach within criminology that emphasizes rational decision-making by individuals, not the entire field. Cultural Deviance Theory is another theory explaining crime through subcultural norms, not the broad study itself.

5. The taking of property under the amount of \$500 is called

- A. Grand theft auto
- B. Petty theft**
- C. Robbery
- D. Burglary

The value of the property often determines how theft is charged. When the item taken is worth less than a set amount—here, \$500—the offense is petty theft, typically a misdemeanor. This contrasts with grand theft, which covers higher-value property and is usually a felony. Robbery, on the other hand, involves taking property from a person through force or intimidation, no matter the value. Burglary involves unlawfully entering a building with intent to commit a theft or felony inside, not simply the value of the stolen item. So, taking property under \$500 fits petty theft because it relies on the lower value threshold.

6. What is the difference between actual possession and constructive possession?

- A. Actual possession is the owner's legal title to property and constructive possession is physical handover.
- B. Actual possession is the ability to exercise control over property; constructive possession is physical handover.
- C. Constructive possession is physical possession.
- D. Actual possession is physical control of property; constructive possession is the ability to exercise control or influence over it.**

Actual possession means you have physical control of the item right now—you're holding it, carrying it, or it's in your immediate custody. Constructive possession means you don't have the item in your hands, but you have the power and intent to control it or influence it, or you control the place where it's located, so you could access it if you chose. That makes the statement the best description: actual possession = physical control; constructive possession = the ability to exercise control over the item, even without touching it. For example, someone has actual possession of a ring if they're wearing it. Someone has constructive possession of a ring stored in their safe if they have the keys and authority to get it—control exists even without direct hands-on possession. Ownership title isn't required for possession, and constructive possession isn't the same as physically holding the item.

7. Which school of criminology holds that wrongdoers weigh the potential benefits of crime against the costs of being apprehended?

- A. Choice Theory
- B. Classical Criminology**
- C. Control Theory
- D. Criminology

Crime is seen as a rational choice in this view: individuals weigh the expected benefits of committing a crime against the costs, including the risk and consequences of getting caught. This emphasis on weighing benefits and the likelihood of apprehension is what deterrence is all about. In classical criminology, people are believed to act with free will, making calculated decisions, so punishment should aim to make the costs of crime clear and certain enough to outweigh any perceived benefits. The certainty and swiftness of punishment help reduce crime by increasing the perceived costs of offending. That focus on how costs (like being caught) influence decision-making is what makes this perspective the classical, deterrence-based approach.

8. Which case held that peremptory challenges based on race violate the U.S. Constitution?

- A. Swain v. Alabama
- B. Miller-El v. Dretke
- C. Edmonson v. Leesville
- D. Batson v. Kentucky**

The main idea is that striking jurors because of their race violates the Constitution. In Batson v. Kentucky, the Supreme Court ruled that peremptory challenges cannot be used to remove jurors on the basis of race, since that would deny equal protection under the law. The decision established the framework for challenging such strikes: once a party shows a pattern or conduct suggesting racial discrimination in jury selection, the opposing side must give race-neutral explanations for the strikes, and the court must assess whether those explanations are genuine or a pretext for discrimination. This ruling moved beyond the older Swain approach and laid the foundation later clarified in cases like Miller-El v. Dretke and extended to civil cases in Edmonson v. Leesville.

9. The right to a speedy trial is embodied in the _____ Amendment to the U.S. Constitution.

- A. 1st
- B. 4th
- C. 5th
- D. 6th**

The main idea here is that the right to a speedy trial is a protection granted to someone facing criminal charges in the Sixth Amendment. This amendment sets out several trial-related rights to ensure fairness, and the speedy-trial clause is one of them. Its purpose is to prevent long delays that could prejudice the defense—delays can erase or distort evidence, tire witnesses, or keep a person detained for too long without trial. The other amendments cover different protections: the Fourth Amendment deals with searches and seizures, the Fifth with due process and self-incrimination, and the First with basic liberties like speech and religion. So the speedy-trial guarantee appropriately belongs to the Sixth Amendment, which governs the conduct of criminal prosecutions and the rights of the accused.

10. Which is an example of tangible physical evidence?

- A. A witness's sworn statement.
- B. A firearm found at the scene.**
- C. A recorded confession.
- D. A newspaper article summarizing the incident.

Tangible physical evidence consists of actual objects that can be touched, moved, and analyzed. An item like a firearm recovered at the scene fits this category because it's a real object that investigators can preserve, test for fingerprints, analyze for ballistics, and link to individuals or events through physical properties. In contrast, a witness's sworn statement and a recorded confession are forms of testimonial evidence—their value lies in what someone says rather than in a physical object. A newspaper article is a documentary record about the incident, not a physical item obtained from the crime scene. So the firearm recovered at the scene is the tangible physical evidence.

Next Steps

Congratulations on reaching the final section of this guide. You've taken a meaningful step toward passing your certification exam and advancing your career.

As you continue preparing, remember that consistent practice, review, and self-reflection are key to success. Make time to revisit difficult topics, simulate exam conditions, and track your progress along the way.

If you need help, have suggestions, or want to share feedback, we'd love to hear from you. Reach out to our team at hello@examzify.com.

Or visit your dedicated course page for more study tools and resources:

<https://crimjusticesdc.examzify.com>

We wish you the very best on your exam journey. You've got this!

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