

HOSA Crime Scene and Death Investigation Practice Test (Sample)

Study Guide



Everything you need from our exam experts!

This is a sample study guide. To access the full version with hundreds of questions,

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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. Don't worry about getting everything right, 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, and take breaks to retain information better.

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.

7. Use Other Tools

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!

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Questions

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- 1. What factors can affect the determination of time of death?**
 - A. Environmental conditions, body temperature changes, and insect activity**
 - B. Time of year, location, and weather patterns**
 - C. Witness statements and suspect actions**
 - D. Body weight, age, and ethnicity**

- 2. What is the primary duty of a coroner?**
 - A. To conduct criminal investigations**
 - B. To oversee court proceedings**
 - C. To investigate deaths under unusual circumstances**
 - D. To provide medical treatment**

- 3. How is manual strangulation typically different from strangulation using ligatures?**
 - A. It uses mechanical devices**
 - B. It requires no tools**
 - C. It involves the use of chemicals**
 - D. It is less lethal**

- 4. What term describes the cooling of the body after death?**
 - A. Algor mortis**
 - B. Rigor mortis**
 - C. Livor mortis**
 - D. Autolysis**

- 5. Which of the following is NOT a type of physical evidence?**
 - A. Hair samples**
 - B. Blood stains**
 - C. Testimonies from witnesses**
 - D. Fingerprints**

6. How does a crime scene sketch differ from a crime scene photograph?

- A. A sketch provides a visual layout with key evidence marked**
- B. A photograph captures only the background of the scene**
- C. A sketch is drawn on paper while a photograph is digital**
- D. A sketch is more accurate than a photograph**

7. What is an implication of oxyhemoglobin levels in a death investigation?

- A. Indicates hydration levels**
- B. Indicates oxygen saturation**
- C. Indicates carbon build-up**
- D. Indicates body temperature**

8. How is "modus operandi" best defined?

- A. Criminal evidence collected from a scene**
- B. Someone's habits of working; mode of operation**
- C. A method for identifying suspects**
- D. Physical characteristics of the crime scene**

9. Which term describes an injury characterized by the accumulation of blood?

- A. Hemorrhage**
- B. Contusion**
- C. Hematoma**
- D. Cyanosis**

10. What is the purpose of a toxicology analysis during an autopsy?

- A. To detect the presence of blood types**
- B. To identify the time of death**
- C. To detect the presence of drugs, alcohol, or toxins in the body**
- D. To assess the overall health of the individual**

Answers

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- 1. A**
- 2. C**
- 3. B**
- 4. A**
- 5. C**
- 6. A**
- 7. B**
- 8. B**
- 9. C**
- 10. C**

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Explanations

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1. What factors can affect the determination of time of death?

A. Environmental conditions, body temperature changes, and insect activity

B. Time of year, location, and weather patterns

C. Witness statements and suspect actions

D. Body weight, age, and ethnicity

The determination of time of death is influenced by several critical physiological and environmental factors, making the first option the correct choice. Environmental conditions play a pivotal role; factors such as temperature and humidity can accelerate or slow down the decomposition process. For instance, a higher ambient temperature tends to speed up decay, whereas cooler conditions can hinder it. Body temperature changes are also significant in estimating time of death. After death, the body begins to cool at a predictable rate, known as *algor mortis*, which can provide a timeframe for when death occurred if measured accurately. Insect activity, particularly the presence of specific types of insects such as blowflies, can be extremely informative in estimating time of death since certain insects arrive at a corpse within a specific timeframe after death. Forensic entomology utilizes this information to help pinpoint the time of death. Other factors, such as the time of year and location, may also influence decomposition rates but are encompassed within the scope of environmental conditions. While witness statements can provide context around the time of death, they are less scientifically reliable than the biological indicators offered by environmental conditions, body temperature changes, and insect activity. Thus, these factors are the primary elements that forensic experts analyze to estimate time of death accurately.

2. What is the primary duty of a coroner?

A. To conduct criminal investigations

B. To oversee court proceedings

C. To investigate deaths under unusual circumstances

D. To provide medical treatment

The primary duty of a coroner is to investigate deaths that occur under unusual or suspicious circumstances, which includes untimely, unexpected, or unexplained deaths. This role is critical in determining the cause and manner of death, often involving the collection of evidence, conducting autopsies, and collaborating with law enforcement and forensic experts. Coroners play an essential part in the legal and medical communities, ensuring that the deceased are treated with respect while also fulfilling legal requirements related to death investigations. While conducting criminal investigations can be a part of the role if foul play is suspected, the coroner's primary function is not to investigate crimes *per se*, but rather to examine the circumstances surrounding a death. Oversight of court proceedings is typically the responsibility of judges or legal professionals, and providing medical treatment falls under the domain of healthcare providers, not coroners. Thus, the core focus of a coroner revolves around investigating specific types of deaths to provide clarity and answers regarding the cause of death.

3. How is manual strangulation typically different from strangulation using ligatures?

- A. It uses mechanical devices
- B. It requires no tools**
- C. It involves the use of chemicals
- D. It is less lethal

Manual strangulation is characterized by the use of the hands to constrict the neck, which means that it requires no tools or external objects. This method relies solely on the physical strength of the perpetrator to obstruct the airflow and disrupt blood flow to the brain. The absence of ligatures—such as ropes, cords, or other materials—distinguishes it from ligature strangulation, where an external object is used. In contrast, strangulation with ligatures involves additional implements, which can vary in complexity and may include various types of materials or devices. This method can also create different injuries and leave different marks compared to manual strangulation. The distinction emphasizes the direct physical interaction in manual strangulation as opposed to the use of external tools in ligature cases. Thus, the correct understanding of manual strangulation highlights its inherent reliance on the perpetrator's own body rather than any tools, leading to the conclusion that it requires no additional implements.

4. What term describes the cooling of the body after death?

- A. Algor mortis**
- B. Rigor mortis
- C. Livor mortis
- D. Autolysis

The term that describes the cooling of the body after death is algor mortis. This process begins shortly after death, as the body no longer retains heat and starts to equilibrate with the surrounding temperature. The cooling rate can vary based on several factors, including environmental conditions and the individual's body fat content, but generally, it is a key indicator that forensic scientists will assess when estimating the time of death. In contrast, rigor mortis refers to the stiffening of the body's muscles post-mortem, which typically begins a few hours after death and can last for up to several days. Livor mortis is the pooling of blood in the lowest parts of the body, leading to discoloration of the skin and can indicate the position of the body after death. Autolysis refers to the self-digestion and breakdown of cells and tissues due to the body's own enzymes and bacteria, which occurs after cell death but is not specifically related to body temperature. Understanding these definitions helps in forensic analysis and the investigation of death.

5. Which of the following is NOT a type of physical evidence?

- A. Hair samples**
- B. Blood stains**
- C. Testimonies from witnesses**
- D. Fingerprints**

In the context of crime scene investigation, physical evidence refers to tangible items that can be collected and analyzed to help reconstruct events or identify individuals involved in a criminal act. Hair samples, blood stains, and fingerprints are all examples of physical evidence because they are direct, physical items that can be gathered at the crime scene, preserved, and subjected to forensic analysis. On the other hand, testimonies from witnesses are considered testimonial or circumstantial evidence rather than physical evidence. This type of evidence relies on the accounts and observations of individuals who witnessed or have knowledge about an event. While witness testimony can be crucial in establishing facts and providing context to a case, it does not involve a physical item that can be analyzed scientifically. Thus, it does not fit the definition of physical evidence, making it the correct choice for this question.

6. How does a crime scene sketch differ from a crime scene photograph?

- A. A sketch provides a visual layout with key evidence marked**
- B. A photograph captures only the background of the scene**
- C. A sketch is drawn on paper while a photograph is digital**
- D. A sketch is more accurate than a photograph**

A crime scene sketch serves a specific purpose by presenting a visual representation of the scene, highlighting important details such as the layout, scale, and the locations of significant pieces of evidence. This can include measurements, labels, and orientations that help investigators recreate the events that took place. The sketch allows for a clear understanding of the spatial relationships within the scene, which is essential for juries, investigators, and other legal professionals who may need to consider how the elements of the scene are related to one another. In contrast, while photographs provide a direct visual capture of the scene as it appeared at the time of the investigation, they do not always convey the same level of detail regarding measurements and relationships between different items. Photographs can serve as powerful documentation but are often limited by perspective and may not always capture the context in which evidence is found as effectively as a sketch does. The other options, while they present different perspectives on sketches and photographs, do not accurately reflect the primary distinction between the two. Thus, the function of a sketch in providing detailed context and clarity regarding key evidence marked within the layout of the scene is what makes it a vital tool in crime scene documentation.

7. What is an implication of oxyhemoglobin levels in a death investigation?

- A. Indicates hydration levels**
- B. Indicates oxygen saturation**
- C. Indicates carbon build-up**
- D. Indicates body temperature**

Oxyhemoglobin levels are crucial in a death investigation as they provide important insights into a person's oxygen saturation. Oxyhemoglobin refers to the form of hemoglobin that is bound to oxygen in the blood. Monitoring oxyhemoglobin levels can reveal how effectively oxygen is being transported to tissues and organs at the time of death. Low levels may indicate asphyxiation or drowning, while normal or high levels could suggest that the individual was alive and breathing prior to the time of death. Understanding oxyhemoglobin levels is particularly important in distinguishing between the causes of death, such as whether it resulted from hypoxia (lack of oxygen) or other environmental factors. This information can be critical for forensic pathologists and investigators analyzing the circumstances leading to a person's death.

8. How is "modus operandi" best defined?

- A. Criminal evidence collected from a scene**
- B. Someone's habits of working; mode of operation**
- C. A method for identifying suspects**
- D. Physical characteristics of the crime scene**

The term "modus operandi" refers to an individual's habits and methods of operation, particularly in the context of criminal behavior. It describes the typical patterns and techniques that a criminal uses to commit offenses, which can provide valuable insights for investigators. Understanding the modus operandi can help link crimes, identify potential suspects, and establish profiles based on prior behaviors. In criminal investigations, recognizing a perpetrator's modus operandi can be critical in predicting future actions and developing strategies for apprehension. The term emphasizes the systematic approach that a criminal may adopt, influenced by their skills, preferences, and psychological profile. Detectives often analyze these patterns to connect different crimes and streamline their investigative processes. The other options do not capture the essence of "modus operandi." Collecting criminal evidence relates to physical forensic aspects rather than behavior, while methods for identifying suspects and details about crime scene characteristics are important but do not define the term in question.

9. Which term describes an injury characterized by the accumulation of blood?

- A. Hemorrhage**
- B. Contusion**
- C. Hematoma**
- D. Cyanosis**

The term that best describes an injury characterized by the accumulation of blood is hematoma. A hematoma refers to a localized collection of blood outside of blood vessels, typically due to injury or trauma, where the blood pools and accumulates in the tissues, often leading to swelling and discoloration. While other terms related to blood and injury are mentioned, they have different specific meanings. Hemorrhage refers to blood loss from the circulatory system and doesn't inherently indicate accumulation in one area. Contusion, which is also known as a bruise, involves injury to blood vessels that causes bleeding under the skin, but it does not specifically denote a significant buildup of blood as seen in a hematoma. Cyanosis, on the other hand, describes a bluish discoloration of the skin due to inadequate oxygen levels in the blood, not related to the accumulation of blood. Therefore, hematoma is the most accurate term for the described injury.

10. What is the purpose of a toxicology analysis during an autopsy?

- A. To detect the presence of blood types**
- B. To identify the time of death**
- C. To detect the presence of drugs, alcohol, or toxins in the body**
- D. To assess the overall health of the individual**

The purpose of a toxicology analysis during an autopsy is to detect the presence of drugs, alcohol, or toxins in the body. This analysis plays a critical role in understanding the circumstances surrounding a person's death, especially if foul play is suspected or if the death is sudden and unexplained. By identifying substances that could have contributed to the death or influenced the individual's state before dying, forensic scientists can provide valuable information that aids in the investigation. For instance, knowing whether a deceased individual had drugs or alcohol in their system can help determine if substance abuse played a role in the cause of death or if an overdose occurred.

Toxicology reports can also indicate whether any toxins from environmental exposure might have contributed to the person's demise. This information is crucial for medical examiners, law enforcement, and legal teams in reconstructing the events leading up to the death. Understanding these aspects can also guide public health responses if there are trends observed in a particular community or geographic area. Other types of analyses, such as identifying blood types or assessing general health, do not specifically address the complex interaction of substances that could result in fatal outcomes. Additionally, determining the exact time of death would rely on different forensic techniques rather than toxicology analysis, making it clear why the focus

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://hosacrimescenedeathinvestigation.examzify.com>

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

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