

Major Field Test (MFT) Criminal Justice Practice Exam (Sample)

Study Guide



Everything you need from our exam experts!

Copyright © 2026 by Examzify - A Kaluba Technologies Inc. product.

ALL RIGHTS RESERVED.

No part of this book may be reproduced or transferred in any form or by any means, graphic, electronic, or mechanical, including photocopying, recording, web distribution, taping, or by any information storage retrieval system, without the written permission of the author.

Notice: Examzify makes every reasonable effort to obtain accurate, complete, and timely information about this product from reliable sources.

SAMPLE

Table of Contents

Copyright 1

Table of Contents 2

Introduction 3

How to Use This Guide 4

Questions 5

Answers 8

Explanations 10

Next Steps 16

SAMPLE

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

SAMPLE

- 1. Which description best fits a search incident to arrest?**
 - A. A warrantless search of an arrested individual conducted to ensure the safety of the arresting officer.**
 - B. A search of the area surrounding the arrestee's home conducted without a warrant.**
 - C. A search conducted with a warrant after an arrest.**
 - D. A search of the arrestee's person and immediate surroundings conducted without a warrant to ensure safety.**

- 2. The notion that individuals calculate whether the benefits of committing a crime outweigh the possible penalties is known as**
 - A. Hedonistic calculus**
 - B. Rational choice**
 - C. Classical deterrence**
 - D. Routine activities theory**

- 3. Which amendment guarantees freedom of religion, speech, press, assembly, and petition?**
 - A. Amendment II**
 - B. Amendment III**
 - C. Amendment I**
 - D. Amendment IV**

- 4. Appellate jurisdiction is best defined as which of the following?**
 - A. The authority to hear a case from its beginning**
 - B. The power to appoint judges**
 - C. The lawful authority to review a decision made by a lower court**
 - D. The power to prosecute cases**

- 5. What writ directs bringing a detainee before a judge to determine the lawfulness of imprisonment?**
 - A. Interlocutory appeal**
 - B. Mark system**
 - C. Writ of habeas corpus**
 - D. 3 strike law**

- 6. Which term describes the authority of a court to review a decision from a lower court?**
- A. Original jurisdiction**
 - B. Limited jurisdiction**
 - C. Concurrent jurisdiction**
 - D. Appellate jurisdiction**
- 7. Which concept limits Fifth Amendment protection to criminal prosecutions and does not automatically apply to civil actions?**
- A. Writ of habeas corpus**
 - B. Noncriminal application**
 - C. Double jeopardy**
 - D. Exclusionary rule**
- 8. Prohibits use of items obtained as a result of unreasonable search and seizure as evidence against a criminal defendant.**
- A. Exclusionary Rule**
 - B. Double Jeopardy**
 - C. Miranda Rule**
 - D. Probable Cause Rule**
- 9. Which term describes a pervasive condition of normlessness and a disjunction between approved goals and means?**
- A. Anomie**
 - B. Conformity**
 - C. Innovation**
 - D. Ritualist**
- 10. Which rule states that the defendant knew what they were doing was wrong but could not help himself or herself?**
- A. McNaughten rule**
 - B. Concurrence**
 - C. Strict liability**
 - D. Irresistible impulse rule**

Answers

SAMPLE

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

SAMPLE

Explanations

SAMPLE

1. Which description best fits a search incident to arrest?

- A. A warrantless search of an arrested individual conducted to ensure the safety of the arresting officer.**
- B. A search of the area surrounding the arrestee's home conducted without a warrant.**
- C. A search conducted with a warrant after an arrest.**
- D. A search of the arrestee's person and immediate surroundings conducted without a warrant to ensure safety.**

The key principle here is the search incident to arrest rule. This doctrine allows police to conduct a warrantless search of the person being arrested and the area within that person's immediate control at the time of the arrest, primarily to protect officer safety and to prevent the destruction or concealment of evidence. The description that fits best emphasizes a warrantless search of the arrestee conducted to ensure the safety of the officer, which aligns with the core purpose of SITA: immediate, safety-focused search without a warrant. The scope is limited to the arrestee themselves and the area within reach; broader searches, such as rummaging the home without a warrant or after the arrest, or conducting a search with a warrant, do not fit this rule.

2. The notion that individuals calculate whether the benefits of committing a crime outweigh the possible penalties is known as

- A. Hedonistic calculus**
- B. Rational choice**
- C. Classical deterrence**
- D. Routine activities theory**

People weigh the potential rewards of a crime against the penalties or pains if caught. This mindset is described as hedonic calculus—the idea of calculating pleasures (benefits) and pains (costs) to guide behavior. In criminal decision making, it means a mental tally of the expected benefits of the crime versus the expected costs, such as punishment, harm to future opportunities, or other negative consequences. When the net payoff looks favorable, the act becomes more likely; when it doesn't, the person is less likely to offend. This framing highlights the calculative, utility-maximizing aspect of choice in crime. While rational choice theory also centers on purposeful decision making, hedonic calculus specifically emphasizes the pleasure-pain calculation behind the decision. Classical deterrence focuses on how punishment influences behavior at a broad level rather than detailing an individual's internal tally. Routine activities theory explains crime in terms of opportunity—the convergence of a motivated offender, a suitable target, and the absence of capable guardians—rather than a cost-benefit calculation.

3. Which amendment guarantees freedom of religion, speech, press, assembly, and petition?

- A. Amendment II**
- B. Amendment III**
- C. Amendment I**
- D. Amendment IV**

The main idea here is a foundational set of individual liberties—the right to believe and express freely, to publish ideas, to gather in groups, and to petition the government. This is secured by the First Amendment, which explicitly protects religion, speech, press, assembly, and petition, and bars Congress from making laws that abridge these freedoms. It creates a broad protection for personal conscience and public discourse, allowing people to practice their faith, speak openly, publish information, gather peaceably, and seek change through government channels. Think about how these freedoms play out in real life: attending a church or temple or choosing not to follow any religion, voicing opinions or criticisms, publishing articles or posts, organizing a protest or meeting, and asking the government to address grievances—all without fear of government punishment. The other amendments—such as those addressing the right to keep and bear arms, prohibiting the quartering of soldiers in homes, or guarding against unreasonable searches and seizures—protect different rights and do not enumerate these five freedoms together, which is why they don't fit the question.

4. Appellate jurisdiction is best defined as which of the following?

- A. The authority to hear a case from its beginning**
- B. The power to appoint judges**
- C. The lawful authority to review a decision made by a lower court**
- D. The power to prosecute cases**

Appellate jurisdiction refers to the power of a higher court to review the decisions of a lower court. It focuses on whether the law was correctly applied and whether procedures were followed, rather than re-trying the case from scratch or introducing new evidence. Through this authority, an appellate court can affirm, reverse, or remand a decision for further proceedings. This distinguishes it from original jurisdiction, which is the authority to hear a case in the trial court from its start, and from functions like appointing judges or prosecuting cases.

5. What writ directs bringing a detainee before a judge to determine the lawfulness of imprisonment?

- A. Interlocutory appeal**
- B. Mark system**
- C. Writ of habeas corpus**
- D. 3 strike law**

The key idea here is habeas corpus, the legal mechanism used to challenge the legality of someone's detention. A writ of habeas corpus directs the custodian holding the detainee to bring them before a judge so the court can determine whether there is a lawful basis for keeping them imprisoned. This procedure protects against unlawful confinement by ensuring there is proper authority, valid charges, or due process behind the detention. If the court decides the imprisonment isn't legally justified, it can order the detainee released or provide appropriate relief. Interlocutory appeal, on the other hand, is about challenging a ruling within a case as it progresses, not about the ongoing legality of detention. The mark system refers to a historical prison classification or release-tracking method, not a mechanism to review detention. A three-strikes law is a sentencing enhancement for repeat offenders, not a procedure to test whether someone should still be confined.

6. Which term describes the authority of a court to review a decision from a lower court?

- A. Original jurisdiction**
- B. Limited jurisdiction**
- C. Concurrent jurisdiction**
- D. Appellate jurisdiction**

Appellate jurisdiction is the authority of a court to review decisions made by a lower court. When a party believes there was an error in applying the law or in the procedure, they can appeal to a higher court. The appellate court doesn't retry the case; it reviews the trial record to determine if legal errors affected the outcome. Depending on what it finds, it can affirm, reverse, or remand the case for further proceedings. Other terms describe different roles: original jurisdiction applies to courts that hear cases for the first time, limited jurisdiction restricts the kinds of cases a court can handle, and concurrent jurisdiction means more than one court may hear the same matter.

7. Which concept limits Fifth Amendment protection to criminal prosecutions and does not automatically apply to civil actions?

- A. Writ of habeas corpus**
- B. Noncriminal application**
- C. Double jeopardy**
- D. Exclusionary rule**

The essential idea here is how the Fifth Amendment protection against self-incrimination is applied. Its strongest protection is in criminal prosecutions, and it does not automatically bar testimony or evidence in civil actions. In civil cases, a person can be required to testify, and the privilege may be invoked only if answering would expose them to criminal liability or if immunity is provided to permit testimony. This distinction is captured by the notion of noncriminal application—the Fifth Amendment isn't automatically invoked in civil proceedings the same way it is in criminal prosecutions. Writs of habeas corpus concern challenging unlawful detention, double jeopardy deals with being tried twice for the same offense, and the exclusionary rule governs whether unlawfully obtained evidence can be used in criminal trials. None of these address the specific way the Fifth Amendment's protection is limited to criminal contexts versus civil contexts.

8. Prohibits use of items obtained as a result of unreasonable search and seizure as evidence against a criminal defendant.

- A. Exclusionary Rule**
- B. Double Jeopardy**
- C. Miranda Rule**
- D. Probable Cause Rule**

The Exclusionary Rule is the principle that evidence obtained through unreasonable searches and seizures cannot be used against a defendant in court. This rule exists to deter unlawful police conduct and to protect the Fourth Amendment right against unreasonable searches. It covers not only the seized items themselves but also other evidence derived from the initial illegality (the "fruits of the poisonous tree"), though there are notable exceptions where such evidence may still be admitted, like good faith reliance on a warrant. Other listed rules address different protections: Double Jeopardy protects against being tried twice for the same offense, Miranda warnings relate to interrogation and the right to counsel, and the concept of probable cause concerns whether a search or arrest is justified in the first place, not suppression of evidence.

9. Which term describes a pervasive condition of normlessness and a disjunction between approved goals and means?

- A. Anomie**
- B. Conformity**
- C. Innovation**
- D. Ritualist**

Anomie describes a state of normlessness in society, where the usual rules guiding behavior break down. When norms loosen or fail to regulate action, there's often a gap between culturally approved goals (like wealth or success) and the legitimate means available to achieve them (education, employment). That mismatch creates strain and can push people to adjust their behavior in deviant or innovative ways as they try to navigate the competing pressures. The other terms refer to specific adaptive responses: conformity sticks with both goals and means, innovation pursues goals but through illegitimate or unconventional methods, and ritualism adheres to the means while giving up on the goals. The description in the question aligns best with anomie because it highlights the pervasive normlessness and the disconnect between what society says to strive for and how one is allowed to obtain it.

10. Which rule states that the defendant knew what they were doing was wrong but could not help himself or herself?

- A. McNaughten rule**
- B. Concurrence**
- C. Strict liability**
- D. Irresistible impulse rule**

This item hinges on an insanity-based defense that focuses on loss of self-control due to mental illness. The irresistible impulse rule says a defendant can be not guilty because, although they knew their conduct was wrong, they could not resist the impulse to commit the act. The crucial idea is a failure of self-control driven by a mental condition, not a lack of knowledge about wrongdoing. So even with acknowledging the act's wrongfulness, the person is excused because they could not help themselves at the moment. This differs from the McNaughten rule, which centers on whether the defendant knew the nature or wrongfulness of the act; strict liability crimes ignore mental state entirely; and concurrence deals with the timing of the mental state relative to the criminal act. Thus, the description fits the irresistible impulse rule.

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://mftcrimjustice.examzify.com>

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

SAMPLE