

MAJOR FIELD TEST (MFT) CRIMINAL JUSTICE PRACTICE EXAM (SAMPLE)

STUDY GUIDE



SAMPLE STUDY GUIDE WITH LIMITED 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. 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. Murder, rape, and shoplifting are examples of which type of crime?**
 - A. Crimes of omission
 - B. Crimes of commission
 - C. Inchoate offense
 - D. Strict liability

- 2. Which principle holds that the offender's criminal history should objectively be taken into account in sentencing decisions?**
 - A. Social debt
 - B. Recidivism credit
 - C. Dismissal
 - D. Moral culpability

- 3. Which act required prison-made goods conform to the regulations of states through which they were shipped?**
 - A. Hawes-Cooper Act
 - B. Ashurst-Sumners Act
 - C. Pride Act
 - D. Punitive era

- 4. Which amendment protects the right to a jury trial in civil cases?**
 - A. First Amendment
 - B. Fifth Amendment
 - C. Seventh Amendment
 - D. Ninth Amendment

- 5. Which amendment protects against unreasonable searches and seizures?**
 - A. Amendment I
 - B. Amendment II
 - C. Amendment III
 - D. Amendment IV

- 6. Which entity holds the power of judicial review over lower court decisions?**
- A. US Supreme Court
 - B. Power of Judicial Review
 - C. US Court of Appeals
 - D. Appellate jurisdiction
- 7. In the sequence of the nine steps, which step follows Arraignment?**
- A. Trial
 - B. Arraignment
 - C. Information and indictment
 - D. Booking
- 8. Which term embodies the concept of punishment being proportional to the crime and the offender's culpability, often described as 'Just Desserts'?**
- A. Mitigating factors
 - B. Aggravating circumstances
 - C. Truth in sentencing
 - D. Just Desserts
- 9. Which mode describes rejects goals but adheres to the means?**
- A. Conformist
 - B. Ritualist
 - C. Retreatist
 - D. Innovator
- 10. What term describes the requirement that an actus reus and a mens rea occur together in time to convict?**
- A. Corpus delicti
 - B. Inchoate offense
 - C. McNaughten rule
 - D. Concurrence

Answers

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

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Explanations

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1. Murder, rape, and shoplifting are examples of which type of crime?

- A. Crimes of omission
- B. Crimes of commission**
- C. Inchoate offense
- D. Strict liability

Crimes of commission involve a voluntary act that itself violates the law. Murder, rape, and shoplifting all fit this because each requires the offender to perform an active conduct—killing someone, engaging in non-consensual intercourse, or taking property without paying. These are completed criminal acts. By contrast, crimes of omission are failures to act when a legal duty exists, inchoate offenses are attempts or conspiracies toward a crime, and strict liability offenses require the act but not a specific mental state. So these examples illustrate crimes of commission.

2. Which principle holds that the offender's criminal history should objectively be taken into account in sentencing decisions?

- A. Social debt**
- B. Recidivism credit
- C. Dismissal
- D. Moral culpability

Prior criminal history is treated as an aggravating factor in sentencing, signaling that the offender poses an ongoing risk and has shown a pattern of wrongdoing. The principle that captures this is social debt—the idea that a person who has harmed society by committing crimes owes a debt that sentencing should address, often by increasing punishment to reflect past behavior and deter future offenses. Moral culpability, by contrast, focuses on the offender's blameworthiness for the current act and the intent behind it, rather than past acts. The other options don't describe how past conduct influences punishment; terms like recidivism credit aren't standard concepts used to justify harsher penalties based on history, and dismissal is unrelated to sentencing decisions.

3. Which act required prison-made goods conform to the regulations of states through which they were shipped?

- A. Hawes-Cooper Act**
- B. Ashurst-Sumners Act
- C. Pride Act
- D. Punitive era

Prison-made goods crossing state lines had to meet the regulations of the states they passed through. The Hawes-Cooper Act established this requirement, prohibiting interstate shipment of prison-made goods unless they conformed to the labor and manufacturing standards of the states involved. In practice, it meant a product from a prison couldn't move through or into another state if it didn't align with that state's rules, guarding against undercutting free labor and ensuring some baseline standards. The Ashurst-Sumners Act later strengthened and broadened this regime, extending coverage to convict-made goods and tightening enforcement, but the fundamental idea of requiring conformity to state regulations across interstate shipments originates with Hawes-Cooper. The Pride Act and the Punitive era aren't the statutes that establish this specific requirement.

4. Which amendment protects the right to a jury trial in civil cases?

- A. First Amendment
- B. Fifth Amendment
- C. Seventh Amendment
- D. Ninth Amendment

The right to a jury trial in civil cases is protected by the Seventh Amendment. It guarantees that in suits at common law where the value in controversy exceeds twenty dollars, the right to a jury trial shall be preserved, and the jury's findings of fact shall not be re-examined by the courts except according to the rules of common law. This protection is specific to civil matters in federal courts; criminal trials are covered by the Sixth Amendment. The other amendments listed protect different rights—expression and religion (First), due process and protections against self-incrimination and double jeopardy (Fifth), and unenumerated rights (Ninth)—so the Seventh Amendment is the one that specifically addresses juries in civil litigation.

5. Which amendment protects against unreasonable searches and seizures?

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

The main idea is protection from government intrusion in searching for evidence or detaining someone. The amendment that guards against unreasonable searches and seizures is the Fourth Amendment. It limits police power by requiring that searches and the seizure of people or property be reasonable, usually backed by a warrant based on probable cause. A warrant must be specific about where the search will take place and what will be seized. There are exceptions where a search or seizure can occur without a warrant, such as when the person consents, in exigent circumstances, during a lawful search incident to arrest, in plain view, or in certain vehicle searches. This emphasis on reasonableness and warrants helps safeguard privacy and due process, distinguishing it from amendments that protect other rights like speech, religion, or bearing arms, or the prohibition on quartering soldiers.

6. Which entity holds the power of judicial review over lower court decisions?

- A. US Supreme Court
- B. Power of Judicial Review
- C. US Court of Appeals
- D. Appellate jurisdiction

*Judicial review over lower court decisions is exercised by the highest court in the land. In the United States, that power lies with the US Supreme Court, an authority established by *Marbury v. Madison* that allows the Court to interpret the Constitution and overturn lower court rulings that raise constitutional questions. Through its appellate jurisdiction and the mechanism of certiorari, the Supreme Court reviews cases from lower courts and can reverse or remand decisions to ensure conformity with constitutional principles. This is why the Supreme Court holds the power of judicial review over lower court decisions, unlike intermediate appellate courts or the general concept of appellate jurisdiction alone.*

7. In the sequence of the nine steps, which step follows Arraignment?

- A. Trial**
- B. Arraignment
- C. Information and indictment
- D. Booking

After arraignment, the case moves to trial. Arraignment is the stage where charges are formally read and the defendant enters a plea. If the plea isn't guilty or the case isn't resolved there, the next distinct phase is the trial, during which the prosecution and defense present evidence and witnesses to determine guilt or innocence before a judge or jury. Booking and information or indictment happen earlier in the process, and a guilty plea at arraignment can end with sentencing instead of going to trial, but in the typical sequence the trial follows arraignment.

8. Which term embodies the concept of punishment being proportional to the crime and the offender's culpability, often described as 'Just Desserts'?

- A. Mitigating factors
- B. Aggravating circumstances
- C. Truth in sentencing
- D. Just Desserts**

Punishment should fit the crime and the offender's level of guilt, a principle captured by the idea of just deserts in criminal justice. This view holds that sentences ought to reflect the seriousness of the offense and the offender's culpability, not primarily to deter or rehabilitate or simply to follow procedures. The term that embodies this approach is Just Desserts, representing the belief that a person deserves punishment commensurate with their wrongdoing. Mitigating factors describe circumstances that lessen blame and can lead to a lighter sentence, so they temper the punishment rather than establish the baseline proportionality. Aggravating circumstances are factors that increase blameworthiness and can raise the sentence, but they're used to adjust upward from the baseline rather than define the proportional relationship itself. Truth in sentencing is a policy aimed at ensuring the actual time served mirrors the offense's severity, but it does not by itself define moral proportionality between crime and punishment.

9. Which mode describes rejects goals but adheres to the means?

- A. Conformist
- B. Ritualist**
- C. Retreatist
- D. Innovator

In Merton's strain theory, people respond to the gap between culturally prescribed goals and the legitimate means to achieve them. A ritualist rejects the societal goal—so they aren't pursuing wealth or status—but they still go through the motions of using established, conventional means. They maintain the routines and rules of society without believing in or actively chasing the end these goals represent. This combination—disinterest in the goal but continued adherence to the means—best fits the description of someone who rejects goals while sticking to the means. To contrast briefly: a conformist accepts both goal and means; an innovator accepts the goal but uses illegitimate methods to try to reach it; a retreatist rejects both the goals and the means. An everyday example is someone who follows all the rules at work but no longer has ambition for advancement or higher status, simply going through the motions.

10. What term describes the requirement that an actus reus and a mens rea occur together in time to convict?

- A. Corpus delicti
- B. Inchoate offense
- C. McNaughten rule
- D. Concurrence**

Concurrence is the requirement that the actus reus and the mens rea occur together in time for liability to attach. This means the criminal mind must be present at the same moment as the prohibited act; the wrongdoing isn't punishable if the mental state and the physical act don't coincide. For most offenses, the law looks for that alignment—the intentional or knowingly reckless mindset must accompany the act itself. For example, if someone intends to commit a crime and actually performs the act with that intent at the same time, concurrence is satisfied. If the mental state is formed after the act, or the act occurs without any corresponding mens rea, the typical charged offense may not stand under the standard framework (though other theories or offenses might apply). Other terms describe different ideas: corpus delicti is the proof that a crime occurred; an inchoate offense covers incomplete crimes like attempts or conspiracies; the McNaughten rule concerns insanity.

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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!

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