Standardized Field Sobriety Test (SFST) Practice Test (Sample)

Study Guide

Everything you need from our exam experts!

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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!

Questions

1. During the stopping sequence, what is an indication that a driver is likely impaired?

A. Accurate directional signals

B. Striking the curb or another object

C. Maintaining a constant speed

D. Stopping at green lights

2. In the context of SFST, which type of nystagmus is most commonly evaluated?

A. Resting Nystagmus

B. Horizontal Gaze Nystagmus

C. Post Rotational Nystagmus

D. Caloric Nystagmus

3. In typical enforcement jurisdictions, how many DWI violations typically result in an arrest?

A. 50

B. 75

C. 100

D. 150

4. What three elements are present in every chemical classified as an "alcohol"?

A. Hydrogen, nitrogen, and oxygen

B. Hydrogen, carbon, and helium

C. Hydrogen, carbon, and oxygen

D. Hydrogen, carbon, and nitrogen

5. What should officers avoid when giving instructions during the SFST?

A. Using jargon that may confuse the subject

B. Providing too much information at once that could confuse the test subject

C. Allowing distractions in the environment

D. Giving commands rapidly without pausing

6. The Illegal Per Se Law makes it unlawful to _____.

A. Drive without a valid license

B. Drive with a prescribed blood alcohol concentration at or above the state level

C. Drive recklessly regardless of a BAC

D. Drive any vehicle while being visibly intoxicated

7. At what degree does the onset of nystagmus typically occur during the HGN test?

A. 30 degrees

B. 45 degrees

C. 60 degrees

D. 75 degrees

8. What is the main purpose of the PBT test?

A. To confirm BAC levels after arrest

B. To provide evidence for court

C. To gauge immediate impairment before arrest

D. To determine the license suspension period

9. What does the task of standing on one leg assess in the context of the SFST?

A. Speed and agility of the subject

B. Stability and balance, which can indicate more significant impairment

C. Cognitive reasoning during physical activity

D. Strength and endurance levels

10. Which type of conditions should an officer document during an SFST?

A. Personal interactions only.

B. Environmental and situational conditions affecting performance.

C. Interactions with others at the scene.

D. The weather forecast for the next day.

Answers

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

Explanations

1. During the stopping sequence, what is an indication that a driver is likely impaired?

A. Accurate directional signals

B. Striking the curb or another object

C. Maintaining a constant speed

D. Stopping at green lights

A driver striking the curb or another object during the stopping sequence is a strong indication of impairment. This behavior suggests a lack of control and awareness, which are common signs associated with alcohol or drug influence. Impaired drivers often have difficulty maintaining proper lane position and may misjudge distances, leading them to hit curbs or other objects. In contrast, indicators like accurate directional signals, maintaining a constant speed, or stopping at green lights tend to demonstrate good driving behavior. While these actions are certainly positive, they do not necessarily provide evidence of impairment. The ability to signal turns correctly, keep a consistent speed, or adhere to traffic signals may suggest the driver is capable of handling the vehicle well, which stands in stark contrast to the erratic behavior of hitting curbs or objects that typically signifies impairment.

2. In the context of SFST, which type of nystagmus is most commonly evaluated?

A. Resting Nystagmus

B. Horizontal Gaze Nystagmus

C. Post Rotational Nystagmus

D. Caloric Nystagmus

The assessment of Horizontal Gaze Nystagmus (HGN) is a crucial component of the Standardized Field Sobriety Test. This type of nystagmus is specifically evaluated because it is highly indicative of impairment due to alcohol consumption. During the HGN test, an officer observes the subject's eyes as they follow a moving stimulus, typically a pen or flashlight, to determine if an involuntary jerking motion occurs at certain angles. Research has shown that at heightened levels of blood alcohol concentration, the presence of HGN increases, making it a reliable indicator for assessing a person's level of impairment. HGN provides measurable evidence which can be used in a legal context, enhancing the validity of the sobriety assessment when compared to other types of nystagmus which may not correlate as strongly with intoxication. While resting nystagmus, post-rotational nystagmus, and caloric nystagmus exist, they are not commonly utilized in the field sobriety testing context. Resting nystagmus may indicate a potential medical condition unrelated to alcohol, while post-rotational and caloric nystagmus are typically studied in clinical or laboratory settings, making them less applicable in roadside sobriety evaluations

3. In typical enforcement jurisdictions, how many DWI violations typically result in an arrest?

A. 50

B. 75

C. 100

D. 150

The answer is based on typical enforcement patterns where law enforcement agencies establish arrest thresholds for Driving While Intoxicated (DWI) violations. In many jurisdictions, statistics indicate that on average, a significant number of DWI violations may lead to an arrest. The figure of 100 is often referenced as a standard benchmark that reflects enforcement practices, available resources, and public safety policies. This number can also represent a jurisdiction's commitment to addressing impaired driving effectively, emphasizing the need for rigorous enforcement and the role that SFST plays in identifying impaired drivers accurately during these arrests. The other numbers presented do not align with this established average and may either underrepresent or overestimate the common enforcement practices observed in many communities. Therefore, the choice of 100 as a typical average strikes a balance that underscores effective and prudent law enforcement measures in combating DWI offenses.

4. What three elements are present in every chemical classified as an "alcohol"?

A. Hydrogen, nitrogen, and oxygen

B. Hydrogen, carbon, and helium

C. Hydrogen, carbon, and oxygen

D. Hydrogen, carbon, and nitrogen

The correct choice identifies the essential elements that define the chemical structure of alcohols. Alcohols are organic compounds characterized by the presence of a hydroxyl group (-OH) attached to a carbon atom. In order to form the structure of alcohols, they necessarily contain hydrogen and carbon, which are fundamental components of organic molecules. Additionally, oxygen is present due to the hydroxyl group. The combination of hydrogen, carbon, and oxygen is crucial because it allows for the formation of various alcohols, each differing in the number of carbon atoms, which contributes to their unique properties and behaviors. This relationship among the three elements is foundational in organic chemistry, particularly in the study of alcohols and their functionalities. In contrast, the other combinations of elements listed do not adequately represent the structure of alcohols. Nitrogen, while an important element in many organic compounds, does not belong to the alcohol classification; helium is a noble gas and not typically a part of organic molecules; and nitrogen does not participate in the common structure of alcohols. Thus, hydrogen, carbon, and oxygen are essential and correctly identify the elements found in every chemical classified as an alcohol.

5. What should officers avoid when giving instructions during the SFST?

A. Using jargon that may confuse the subject

B. Providing too much information at once that could confuse the test subject

C. Allowing distractions in the environment

D. Giving commands rapidly without pausing

Providing too much information at once can overwhelm the test subject and may lead to misunderstandings about how to perform the tasks correctly. Effective communication during the Standardized Field Sobriety Test is crucial, as clear, concise instructions help ensure that the person being tested fully understands what is required of them. When officers give instructions in a simple and straightforward manner, it reduces ambiguity and allows for a more accurate assessment of the individual's abilities. In contrast, using jargon, allowing distractions, or giving commands rapidly can also hinder the test's effectiveness but do not address the specific challenge of cognitive overload that results from excessive information. Simplifying instructions promotes a higher likelihood of compliance and proper execution of the tasks involved in the SFST.

6. The Illegal Per Se Law makes it unlawful to _____.

A. Drive without a valid license

B. Drive with a prescribed blood alcohol concentration at or above the state level

C. Drive recklessly regardless of a BAC

D. Drive any vehicle while being visibly intoxicated

The Illegal Per Se Law explicitly prohibits individuals from operating a motor vehicle when their blood alcohol concentration (BAC) is at or above the legal limit established by the state. This means that a driver can be charged with a DUI or DWI solely based on their BAC level, regardless of whether they are exhibiting any signs of impairment or reckless behavior. The law sets a clear and quantifiable standard for intoxication, making it straightforward for law enforcement to enforce and for prosecutors to prove in court. Understanding this law is crucial for both drivers and law enforcement, as it emphasizes the idea that measurable impairment due to alcohol consumption is sufficient grounds for legal action, regardless of additional factors like reckless driving behavior or visible signs of intoxication. This makes option B the correct choice, as it directly aligns with the specific definition of the Illegal Per Se Law.

7. At what degree does the onset of nystagmus typically occur during the HGN test?

A. 30 degrees

B. 45 degrees

C. 60 degrees

D. 75 degrees

The onset of nystagmus during the Horizontal Gaze Nystagmus (HGN) test typically occurs at an eye gaze angle of 45 degrees. This is a critical point in the assessment of potential impairment due to alcohol consumption or other factors affecting a person's ability to coordinate their eye movements. Performing the HGN test involves observing the eyes as they follow a slowly moving target, and specifically, the examiner looks for the involuntary jerking of the eyes, known as nystagmus. At 45 degrees, the eyes begin to show signs of nystagmus with even slight alterations in the subject's balance or ability to concentrate. If nystagmus appears at this angle, it can suggest a higher blood alcohol concentration (BAC) level, indicating potential impairment. Understanding this is crucial for law enforcement officers and professionals conducting these tests, as this particular angle is a key marker in determining intoxication levels in subjects being evaluated.

8. What is the main purpose of the PBT test?

A. To confirm BAC levels after arrest

B. To provide evidence for court

C. To gauge immediate impairment before arrest

D. To determine the license suspension period

The primary purpose of the Preliminary Breath Test (PBT) is to gauge immediate impairment before an arrest. This roadside test allows law enforcement officers to assess whether a driver is under the influence of alcohol at the time of the traffic stop. It provides a quick and efficient way to gather probable cause for further investigation or potential arrest, allowing officers to make informed decisions based on the driver's level of impairment. While confirming blood alcohol concentration (BAC) levels, providing court evidence, and determining license suspension periods are relevant aspects of alcohol-related charges and consequences, these functions take place after the initial encounter and arrest. The PBT is specifically intended as an initial screening tool to detect alcohol presence and assert a driver's state of impairment at the moment of interaction.

9. What does the task of standing on one leg assess in the context of the SFST?

A. Speed and agility of the subject

B. Stability and balance, which can indicate more significant impairment

C. Cognitive reasoning during physical activity

D. Strength and endurance levels

The task of standing on one leg is designed to assess stability and balance, which are critical indicators of a person's level of impairment. When an individual is under the influence of alcohol or drugs, their balance can be significantly affected. This test requires the subject to maintain their position while focusing on the task at hand, which reflects their motor skills and ability to coordinate movements. In the context of the SFST, successful performance on this task indicates that the individual maintains adequate control over their body despite potential impairing substances. Difficulty in balance or the inability to hold the position suggests a higher level of impairment, which is why this specific task is pivotal in evaluating a person's intoxication level. By focusing solely on balance and stability, the test effectively highlights the physiological effects of impairment, whereas other options focus on aspects unrelated to the primary purpose of the SFST. For instance, speed and agility, cognitive reasoning, and strength are not primary indicators of impairment in the same way that balance is.

10. Which type of conditions should an officer document during an SFST?

A. Personal interactions only.

B. Environmental and situational conditions affecting performance.

C. Interactions with others at the scene.

D. The weather forecast for the next day.

The focus on documenting environmental and situational conditions during a Standardized Field Sobriety Test (SFST) is crucial because these factors can significantly influence the performance of the individual being tested. When officers record conditions such as the surface type (e.g., wet, uneven, or slippery ground), lighting (e.g., bright lights, darkness), and any distractions (e.g., noise from traffic, presence of other people), they provide a comprehensive context for evaluating the test results. These conditions can impact an individual's ability to perform the tests accurately, potentially affecting their balance, coordination, and concentration. For example, if the test is conducted on a slippery surface, it may be more challenging for the individual to maintain balance, which could lead to false indicators of impairment. By documenting these conditions, officers can support their findings and ensure that any assessments of impairment are considered within the full context of the situation. This thorough documentation is essential for establishing the reliability of the SFST results and defending those results in legal contexts.

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://standardizedfieldsobriety.examzify.com

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