

# Strategies and Tactics of Patrol Stops (STOPS) 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. 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. Which of the following should be considered while evaluating unknown risk patterns?**
  - A. The time of day**
  - B. The behavior of the passengers in the vehicle**
  - C. The make and model of the vehicle**
  - D. All of the above**
  
- 2. What is the primary purpose of STOPS?**
  - A. To enforce speed limits**
  - B. To maintain tactical advantage while establishing voluntary compliance**
  - C. To handle traffic violations effectively**
  - D. To protect community integrity**
  
- 3. What is the primary goal of patrol activities?**
  - A. Detainment of suspects**
  - B. Control through voluntary compliance**
  - C. Prevention of crime**
  - D. Collection of evidence**
  
- 4. During what phase of the Tactical 8-Step does an officer explain the reasoning for the stop?**
  - A. Justification**
  - B. Greeting**
  - C. Decision**
  - D. Registration and Insurance**
  
- 5. According to Maryland v. Wilson (1997), who may be ordered to exit the vehicle during a traffic stop?**
  - A. Only the driver**
  - B. Only passengers with evidence of wrongdoing**
  - C. Both the driver and passengers**
  - D. Only those suspected of criminal activity**

- 6. Which title corresponds to the criminal code?**
- A. Title 30**
  - B. Title 35**
  - C. Title 40**
  - D. Title 25**
- 7. Who is usually designated as “Suspect #2” in a traffic stop scenario?**
- A. Driver of the suspect vehicle**
  - B. Unidentified party**
  - C. Passenger of the suspect vehicle**
  - D. Backup officer**
- 8. Which of the following is the minimum level of proof required to initiate a vehicle stop?**
- A. Probable cause**
  - B. Preponderance of the evidence**
  - C. Reasonable suspicion**
  - D. Beyond a reasonable doubt**
- 9. What is the Tactical Walk-Up approach used for?**
- A. When traffic is not a concern**
  - B. When the violator poses a greater threat than traffic**
  - C. For high-speed chases only**
  - D. For routine traffic offenses**
- 10. What is a key consideration for officers during patrol stops according to Graham v. Connor?**
- A. The number of officers present**
  - B. The reasonableness of their actions based on the situation**
  - C. Strict adherence to departmental guidelines**
  - D. The duration of the stop**

## Answers

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

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## **Explanations**

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**1. Which of the following should be considered while evaluating unknown risk patterns?**

- A. The time of day**
- B. The behavior of the passengers in the vehicle**
- C. The make and model of the vehicle**
- D. All of the above**

Evaluating unknown risk patterns during a patrol stop involves a comprehensive assessment of various factors that could indicate potential threats or hazards. Considering the time of day is crucial because certain hours may correlate with higher criminal activity, impacting the officer's approach and preparedness. The behavior of passengers in the vehicle is also vital, as unusual or suspicious behavior can be a strong indicator of risk, suggesting that passengers might be involved in illegal activities or that they could pose a threat to officer safety. Additionally, the make and model of the vehicle can provide important context; for example, certain vehicles may be associated with higher rates of criminal behavior or may be commonly used in specific types of crimes. By integrating all these elements—temporal context, observable behavior, and vehicle characteristics—officers can develop a more complete understanding of the potential risks associated with any given traffic stop. This holistic approach enhances situational awareness and aids in making informed decisions during patrol operations. Thus, all of these factors are essential in assessing unknown risk patterns effectively.

**2. What is the primary purpose of STOPS?**

- A. To enforce speed limits**
- B. To maintain tactical advantage while establishing voluntary compliance**
- C. To handle traffic violations effectively**
- D. To protect community integrity**

The primary purpose of STOPS is to maintain tactical advantage while establishing voluntary compliance. This approach emphasizes the importance of officer safety and effectiveness during traffic stops by blending tactical awareness with communication skills. By maintaining a tactical advantage, officers can better manage the interaction with the subject, ensuring their safety as well as the safety of the public. Establishing voluntary compliance helps to foster a cooperative atmosphere, encouraging individuals to comply with instructions without the need for coercive measures. This not only enhances the overall effectiveness of the stop but also contributes to building trust within the community, which is essential for successful policing. This focus on tactical advantage combined with communication strategies leads to more successful outcomes in interactions with the public during patrol stops.

### 3. What is the primary goal of patrol activities?

- A. Detainment of suspects
- B. Control through voluntary compliance**
- C. Prevention of crime
- D. Collection of evidence

The primary goal of patrol activities is to foster control through voluntary compliance. This approach emphasizes building positive relationships between law enforcement and the community, wherein the presence of officers can encourage individuals to follow laws and regulations willingly. By establishing trust and rapport, officers can create an environment where individuals feel motivated to comply with the law, leading to a safer community overall. In the context of patrol activities, the focus is not solely on detaining suspects or collecting evidence, which can be more reactive measures. Instead, patrol is often about proactively engaging with the community, addressing issues before they escalate into criminal activities. Preventing crime, while a significant aim of patrol efforts, is part of the broader strategy that emphasizes voluntary compliance as a means of maintaining order and safety in the community.

### 4. During what phase of the Tactical 8-Step does an officer explain the reasoning for the stop?

- A. Justification**
- B. Greeting
- C. Decision
- D. Registration and Insurance

The phase during which an officer explains the reasoning for the stop is the Justification phase. This phase is crucial because it provides the officer an opportunity to communicate clearly to the driver the reasons behind the traffic stop. This transparency helps foster understanding and can de-escalate potential tensions during the interaction. During the Justification phase, the officer articulates the specific traffic violations or suspicious behavior that prompted the stop. This explanation is not only important for the driver's awareness but also serves to document the officer's actions should the situation escalate or lead to further legal proceedings. By effectively communicating the reasons for the stop, the officer reinforces their professionalism and adherence to lawful procedures. Other phases in the Tactical 8-Step process serve different purposes, such as initial greetings, making decisions, or checking documentation, but the Justification phase is distinctly focused on conveying the rationale behind the officer's actions to ensure transparency and clarity.

**5. According to Maryland v. Wilson (1997), who may be ordered to exit the vehicle during a traffic stop?**

- A. Only the driver**
- B. Only passengers with evidence of wrongdoing**
- C. Both the driver and passengers**
- D. Only those suspected of criminal activity**

The ruling in Maryland v. Wilson established that law enforcement officers have the authority to order both the driver and passengers of a vehicle to exit during a lawful traffic stop. This decision is rooted in the need for officer safety and the practicalities of managing potential threats. The court recognized that the risks associated with stopping a vehicle are not confined to the driver alone, as passengers could also pose a danger to the officers. By allowing both the driver and passengers to be ordered out of the vehicle, the law provides officers with the ability to more effectively control the situation and maintain safety during the stop. This ruling emphasizes the idea that all occupants of a vehicle can be subject to orders that support the overall safety and efficiency of law enforcement operations during traffic stops.

**6. Which title corresponds to the criminal code?**

- A. Title 30**
- B. Title 35**
- C. Title 40**
- D. Title 25**

The title that corresponds to the criminal code is Title 35. This designation reflects the specific section of the legal code that outlines the various criminal offenses, penalties, and definitions that govern criminal law in a particular jurisdiction. Understanding which title pertains to criminal law is crucial for law enforcement and legal professionals as it provides the framework for handling criminal cases, including arrest procedures, legal definitions, and the elements of different crimes. Each title within the criminal code serves a distinct purpose, addressing areas of law like civil procedures, family law, or administrative regulations, but Title 35 specifically deals with criminal offenses and legal proceedings related to crime, making it the correct answer in this context.

**7. Who is usually designated as “Suspect #2” in a traffic stop scenario?**

- A. Driver of the suspect vehicle**
- B. Unidentified party**
- C. Passenger of the suspect vehicle**
- D. Backup officer**

In a traffic stop scenario, the designation of "Suspect #2" typically refers to the passenger of the suspect vehicle. This designation arises from the understanding that during a traffic stop, there may be multiple individuals involved in the situation, and the primary focus of attention is often the driver. However, passengers can also pose a potential threat or may be involved in the suspected criminal activity, making them a point of interest for an officer conducting the stop. Situational awareness is crucial during operations like traffic stops. If the driver is a suspect, officers need to be cautious regarding any passengers who could either assist the driver or be involved in the situation. Therefore, recognizing the passenger as "Suspect #2" allows officers to effectively manage the dynamics of the stop, ensuring that all individuals in the vehicle are monitored and assessed accordingly for officer safety and potential investigation purposes.

**8. Which of the following is the minimum level of proof required to initiate a vehicle stop?**

- A. Probable cause**
- B. Preponderance of the evidence**
- C. Reasonable suspicion**
- D. Beyond a reasonable doubt**

The minimum level of proof required to initiate a vehicle stop is reasonable suspicion. This standard is based on specific and articulable facts that would lead a law enforcement officer to believe that a particular vehicle or individual is involved in criminal activity. Reasonable suspicion is a lower standard than probable cause, which is required for making an arrest or obtaining a search warrant. In practice, this means that if an officer observes behavior that raises suspicion—such as erratic driving, a violation of traffic laws, or knowledge of prior criminal activity linked to a specific vehicle—they have sufficient grounds to stop that vehicle for further investigation. This precaution helps ensure that officers can act on their instincts and training while still respecting the rights of individuals against arbitrary detention. The standard of reasonable suspicion strikes a balance between the need for effective law enforcement and the protection of civil liberties.

**9. What is the Tactical Walk-Up approach used for?**

- A. When traffic is not a concern
- B. When the violator poses a greater threat than traffic**
- C. For high-speed chases only
- D. For routine traffic offenses

The Tactical Walk-Up approach is specifically designed for situations where the violator may pose a greater threat than the surrounding traffic conditions. This approach emphasizes officer safety and situational awareness, as it allows the officer to assess the potential risks associated with the encounter before engaging with the individual. In scenarios where a driver exhibits behaviors that could indicate dangerous intentions or when prior knowledge of the individual suggests they may be armed or involved in criminal activity, the Tactical Walk-Up is effective because it allows the officer to maintain a safe distance initially, observe behavior, and prepare for any confrontations that may arise. This approach prioritizes the officer's safety, particularly when approaching suspects who might react unpredictably. When compared to other options, such as those focusing on circumstances where traffic issues are minimized or routine stops without significant threat, the Tactical Walk-Up is a strategic response intended for higher-threat situations, making it appropriate for encounters where the level of potential danger is elevated.

**10. What is a key consideration for officers during patrol stops according to *Graham v. Connor*?**

- A. The number of officers present
- B. The reasonableness of their actions based on the situation**
- C. Strict adherence to departmental guidelines
- D. The duration of the stop

A key consideration for officers during patrol stops, as established by the case of *Graham v. Connor*, is the reasonableness of their actions based on the situation at hand. This landmark Supreme Court case emphasized that the standard for evaluating the use of force by law enforcement officers is the "objective reasonableness" of the officers' actions, considering the totality of the circumstances they faced at the time. This means that officers must assess their responses to situations based on what a reasonable officer would do under similar circumstances, factoring in elements like the severity of the crime, the threat posed by the suspect, and whether the suspect is actively resisting arrest or attempting to flee. This principle ensures that officers' actions are judged by the context of the encounter rather than hindsight or after-the-fact evaluations. Focusing on the reasonableness of actions allows for a balanced approach in evaluating police conduct during patrol stops, maintaining both public safety and the rights of individuals. This framework is crucial for law enforcement to uphold their duty effectively while ensuring the use of force is justified.

## 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](mailto:hello@examzify.com).**

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

**<https://stops.examzify.com>**

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

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