

Components of the POST

The POST is a timed test divided into four sections. The time allotment for each section is only imposed for administrative efficiency. The times are designed to allow the vast majority of applicants (at least 90%) to complete all of the items within the section. In each of the sections, the questions are presented in a law enforcement context, but applicants do not need any previous knowledge of law enforcement to answer the questions correctly.

POST Section	Description	Number of Items	Minutes Allotted
Arithmetic	This section measures a person's ability to add, subtract, multiply, divide, determine percentages and calculate averages.	20	20
Reading Comprehension	This section measures a person's ability to understand written words and the ideas associated with them.	25	25
Grammar	This section measures a person's ability to spell and use grammar and punctuation correctly.	20	15
Incident Report Writing	This section measures a person's ability to write complete sentences with correct spelling, grammar and punctuation.	10	15
TOTAL		75	1 hour, 15 minutes

Section Descriptions and Sample Test Items

SECTION 1: ARITHMETIC

Description

This section of the test consists of 20 questions which require the use of basic arithmetic. The questions are based on information in a table or in a word problem. Calculators are not allowed and scratch paper is provided for performing calculations.

Sample Questions

QTY	DESCRIPTION	SERIAL NUMBER	VALUE
1	Computer	1452101	\$ 1,549.95
1	Printer	1670-E	\$ 150.00
1	Camera	546223-S01	\$ 120.00
1	Cell Phone	45687540	\$ 149.95

1. What is the combined value of all the stolen property listed in the table above?
 - A. \$ 1,969.90
 - B. \$ 1,996.90
 - C. \$ 2,069.90
 - D. \$ 2,096.90

2. A car was traveling 55 miles per hour in a 25 mph zone. If the driver is fined \$10.00 for each mile per hour over the speed limit, what is the amount of the fine?
 - A. \$ 25.00
 - B. \$ 55.00
 - C. \$ 250.00
 - D. \$ 300.00

In Question 1, the correct answer is **A**, because $1,549.95 + 150 + 120 + 149.95 = 1,969.90$.

In Question 2, the correct answer is **D**, because the driver was traveling 30 miles over the speed limit ($55 - 25 = 30$), and $30 \times \$10 = \300.00 .

SECTION 2: READING COMPREHENSION

Description

This section of the POST consists of a number of short paragraphs followed by questions. The information needed to answer the questions is contained in the paragraphs. In some instances, applicants will have to draw a conclusion based on the information given.

Sample Passage

When conducting investigations, police primarily gather two sources of information – information about people and about things. The field officer deals almost exclusively with people and their human frailties in perception and communication. The crime scene investigator (CSI) works with inanimate objects which cannot deceive, fight or escape. Both tasks are equally important but require different skills and techniques. Trial and appellate court cases have shown that the evidentiary value of information obtained from objects is higher than that obtained from persons. Unlike witness testimony, physical evidence speaks for itself, doesn't lie and is unaffected by emotions.

Sample Questions

1. According to the passage, which of the following would cause a greater impact in court?
 - A. The testimony of an eyewitness to a crime
 - B. A footprint found at the scene of a crime
 - C. A police officer's notes of a crime scene
 - D. A victim's theory on the motive for the crime

2. Based on the information in the passage, it can be concluded that the crime scene investigator
 - A. uses the same techniques as a field officer
 - B. deals with people more frequently than the field officer
 - C. would be responsible for finding fingerprints on a weapon
 - D. is more important to an investigation than the field officer

In Question 1, the correct answer is **B**, because according to the information provided in the passage, evidence based on objects has a higher value in court than a person's testimony, and choices A, C and D are all forms of testimony.

In Question 2, the correct answer is **C**, because according to the information provided in the passage, the CSI uses different techniques than a field officer does (A), deals mostly with objects (B and C) and completes tasks that are equally important to those of a field officer (D).

SECTION 3: GRAMMAR

Description

This section of the POST requires the applicant to identify errors in grammar, punctuation or spelling. There are two types of multiple choice questions in this section. In the first type, the applicant must choose the alternative that best completes a sentence. In the second type, sentences are presented which may contain a spelling error and the applicant must indicate which word, if any, is misspelled.

Sample Questions

1. According to a recent study, the hot spots for car thefts are coastal or border _____ where criminals can easily ship the stolen vehicles out of the country.
 - A. city
 - B. citys
 - C. cities
 - D. city's

2. Of the 30 metropolitan areas with the highest car theft rates, twenty _____ easy access to export markets.
 - A. has
 - B. was
 - C. have
 - D. were

Indicate which word in the sentence is misspelled.

3. Despite persistant threats, the officer could not issue a restraining order against a citizen's stalker.
 - A. stalker
 - B. restraining
 - C. citizen
 - D. persistant

In Question 1, the correct answer is **C**, the plural form of "city."

In Question 2, the correct answer is **C**, because based on the structure of the rest of the sentence, the present, plural form of the verb should be used.

In Question 3, the correct answer is **D** because the correct spelling is "persistent."

SECTION 4. INCIDENT REPORT WRITING

Description

This section of the POST tests an applicant's writing skills. Applicants answer questions based on the information provided in a sample incident report form. Answers must be written in complete sentences using proper spelling, grammar and punctuation.

Sample Questions

INCIDENT REPORT--POLICE DEPARTMENT					
1. ADDRESS OF INCIDENT	2. OFFENSE	3. CODE	4. DATE		
711 W Magnolia	Burglary	A6-250	Nov 11		
5. NAME OF VICTIM: INDIVIDUAL OR BUSINESS		6. ADDRESS	PHONE		
Thomas Stanton		711 W. Magnolia	753-9267		
7. ASSIGNED OFFICERS/BADGE NUMBERS	8. AGE OF VICTIM	9. RACE OF VICTIM	10. VICTIM'S DATE OF BIRTH		
David Crosby #201 Chris Taylor #176	43	White	08/05/80		
11. NAME OF SUSPECT		12. ADDRESS			
Eric Harvey		246 Ivy Lane			
13. AGE	14. RACE	15. SEX	16. DATE OF BIRTH	17. HEIGHT	18. WEIGHT
19	White	Male	04/22	5'10"	180
19. HAIR	20. EYES	21. PHYSICAL DESCRIPTION			
Brown	Blue	Wearing black sweatpants, gray sweatshirt			
22. CHARGES					
Burglary					
23. ITEM	24. BRAND	25. SERIAL NUMBER	26. VALUE		
Cash			\$150.00		
27. ITEM	28. BRAND	29. SERIAL NUMBER	30. VALUE		
Jewelry			\$600.00		
31. ITEM	32. BRAND	33. SERIAL NUMBER	34. VALUE		
MP3 Player	Apple	AE98RL567B901	\$200.00		
35. <u>David Crosby #201</u> SIGNATURE OF OFFICER/BADGE NUMBER					

1. What is the name of the suspect?

The suspect's name is Eric Harvey.

2. What is the value of the MP3 player?

The value of the MP3 player is \$200.00.