

# National Police Select Test™ (NPST™)



## Candidate Orientation Guide *with Reading Comprehension*

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# Overview

One of the first steps towards becoming a Police Officer begins with passing the written test which is made up of several test/screening components. This candidate orientation guide was written specifically to assist you with understanding the components of the written test, to provide you with helpful hints on test taking, and to offer you *practice* test questions.

The entry-level National Police Select Test™ (NPST™) consists of five sections designed to measure critical constructs required for successful job performance as a Police Officer. You do not need previous police experience to pass the NPST™. The components of this test have been developed and validated by Police Officers and Sergeants who have experience performing the essential functions of the Police Officer job. Each construct measured by this test has been carefully linked to an entry-level police officer job description and identified as a critical skill or ability necessary for performance of the job.

**The NPST™ with Reading Comprehension (NPST-R) entry-level written test is a 120 item test. The constructs measured in this test include:**

- Mathematical Reasoning—**15 items** (to include: basic addition, subtraction, multiplication, and division)
- Writing Ability—**31 items** (to include: correct wording, grammar, spelling, punctuation as well as ease of understanding)
- Situational Judgment/Human Relations—**40 items** (to include: ability to work under stressful conditions, integrity, ethics, decision-making, self-control, the ability to maintain confidentiality, interpersonal skills, teamwork, ability to follow rules, demonstrating respect for others)
- Reasoning/Analyzing—**14 items** (to include: sequential ordering and logical thinking)
- Reading Comprehension—**20 items** (to include: a twenty (20) page “Reading Comprehension Manual” that you are ***required*** to study for one to two weeks in order to answer the twenty (20) items in the NPST-R). *You will obtain this required reading manual from the City you are applying with as they will provide it to their qualified applicants.*

Subject-matter experts have endorsed every item on the test and have confirmed that the reading level of the passages and the test items are appropriate based upon the materials found on the job and in the academy.

## How to Prepare for the Test

All of the constructs measured on the test are based upon basic skills and abilities that a minimally qualified applicant should possess.

**Carefully follow any oral and written instructions that are given to you by the department or during any orientation sessions (if applicable) given before the test.** Failure to follow instructions can eliminate you from the testing process.

In addition to this orientation guide, there are a variety of preparatory publications available that *may* be helpful to those applicants who could use a refresher in basic math, reasoning, reading and writing skills. FPSI **cannot** endorse any particular publication or resource in terms of preparing for the test.

## **Test Yourself for Success with the Practice Test Items**

Sample questions from the constructs being measured on the written test are included in this orientation guide. These sample test items are very similar to the types of items found on the actual test.

### **Prepare for Your Test Day**

To decrease test anxiety, avoid junk food and concentrate on a well-balanced diet for several days before the test. A good night's sleep the night before the test and a healthy breakfast the morning of the test is strongly recommended.

Familiarize yourself with the test location and the parking requirements. Don't be late for the test. Plan on arriving a few minutes early. Please refer to your particular scheduled appointment date and time. If you do visit the testing site in advance, be aware that on the day of the test administration your movements to certain areas of the building where the test is being held might be restricted. Do not make absolute plans on where you want to sit or which restroom you wish to use. Just familiarize yourself with the location and the facilities. You will be instructed on the test day of any limitations on your movements during the test session.

### **The Day of the Test**

Arrive at least fifteen minutes early on the day of the test. Applicants who are late may be denied permission to take the test. Be sure to bring photo identification such as a driver's license or other picture I.D. If you fail to bring a picture I.D., you will not be permitted to test. Casual attire is recommended as the written test **may last up to three (3) hours**. You may want to dress in layers in the event the test room is too warm or too cold. Please be advised that applicants are not allowed to bring any test preparation materials or notes into the testing area. **You may NOT refer to any practice materials during the test.**

Carefully read all of the instructions and directions you receive from the agency conducting the test and follow them. Failure to follow the instructions may affect your score or even eliminate you from the testing process. Therefore, don't be afraid to ask the test proctor for help if you do not understand the instructions.

**You will be allotted three (3) hours to complete the written test.** Familiarize yourself with the time limits for the test and be aware of how much time you have used. You can check your remaining time periodically during the test. It is your responsibility to manage your time. If you do not know the answer to a question, skip it and come back to the question later. Do not spend too much time on one question. If you run out of time, questions you do not answer are counted as incorrect. Be sure you have answered all of the questions in each section. If you have extra time, you should review your answers and be sure to answer any questions you skipped. You are allowed to return to a section once you have completed it providing you have time remaining.

In the Mathematical Reasoning, Writing Ability, Reasoning/Analyzing, and Reading Comprehension Sections of the test, you will be instructed to choose one "best" or "most correct" alternative from four different alternatives. Most applicants find it helpful to read the entire question and all of the alternatives before choosing the best or most correct alternative. It is better to read all of the alternatives as you may find one that is a better answer than the one you first thought was correct.

In the Situational Judgment/Human Relations Section of the test, you will be asked to identify both the “most appropriate” response and the “least appropriate” response.

It is to your advantage to answer all of the test questions. If you are not sure which answer is correct, eliminate choices you know are wrong. If you can narrow the number of choices, you increase your chances of answering the question correctly.

Rely on your own ability; do not attempt to look at other candidates’ answer sheets for assistance answering any of the questions. Anyone caught cheating or attempting to cheat will be disqualified and his or her test results will be invalidated and the testing process will be stopped.

**DO NOT LEAVE ANY ANSWERS BLANK.** You are scored on the number of correct answers you give in response to the questions. In other words, you will be penalized for any answers left blank. Even if you are not certain of a correct answer, you **SHOULD GUESS** at what the correct answer might be. Try to eliminate alternatives that you know are wrong and guess from the ones that remain. This will increase your chances of guessing the correct answer(s). Answers left blank will **NOT** be counted towards the number of correct responses in your final score.

All of the items on the test are unit-weighted items (e.g., they are each worth one point). The highest score you can obtain on the written test is a raw score of 120.

## **Dealing with Anxiety**

This test is not a measure of your self-worth or your intelligence. This test is designed to measure your levels of math, reading, reasoning and writing ability and a variety of human relations skills. If you have performed poorly on other tests in the past that does not necessarily mean you will perform poorly on this test. Because unlike many other types of tests, this test is designed to measure a variety of critical skills and abilities that are essential to successful Police Officer job performance in a way that does not overestimate the importance of cognitive skills and other constructs which, historically, result in lower passing rates.

There are no trick questions on the test. Each and every question on the test can be answered based upon basic skills and abilities you should have developed throughout your life.

We wish you a successful testing experience in your employment endeavors to become a Police Officer with the City of Austin Police Department!

# Mathematical Reasoning Section

For this section of the practice test, you will answer five (5) sample items that are *similar* to those items found on the Mathematical Reasoning Section of the NPST. Please note the actual test contains fifteen (15) test items.

You may proceed to the next test section when finished.

1. A woman is traveling in her car at 25 miles per hour. How far will that woman travel in thirty minutes? (Distance = Rate x Time)
  - A. 10.75 miles
  - B. 11.25 miles
  - C. 12.50 miles
  - D. 15 miles
2. Which number should follow this series:  $\frac{64}{64}$ ,  $\frac{9}{12}$ ,  $\frac{6}{12}$ ,
  - A.  $\frac{1}{2}$
  - B.  $\frac{1}{4}$
  - C.  $\frac{6}{8}$
  - D.  $\frac{8}{8}$
3. You begin your first day as a police officer earning \$30,000/yr. Assuming that you obtain a full 5% increase each year, what will your salary be in three years?
  - A. \$31,500.00
  - B. \$33,075.75
  - C. \$34,500.00
  - D. \$34,728.75
4. A man is 25 years old. His mother is exactly three times his age. How old will the man's mother be when he is 35 years old?
  - A. 60
  - B. 75
  - C. 85
  - D. 105
5. You are about to enter an elevator with a weight capacity of 600 pounds. There are four people already in the elevator. The weights of the passengers are 103 pounds, 149 pounds, 117 pounds, and 86 pounds. Assuming that you weigh 168 pounds, is it safe for you to enter the elevator?
  - A. Yes
  - B. No, the weight capacity would be exceeded by 30 pounds
  - C. No, the weight capacity would be exceeded by 23 pounds
  - D. No, the weight capacity would be exceeded by 13 pounds

# Writing Ability Section

For this section of the practice test, you will answer ten (10) sample items that are *similar* to those items found on the Writing Ability Section of the Entry-Level Police Officer Written Test. Please note the actual test contains thirty-one (31) test items.

You may proceed to the next test section when finished.

**For items 6-7, choose the pair of words that best completes the sentence.**

6. Be \_\_\_\_\_ of obvious things and \_\_\_\_\_ of persons quick to produce identification or alibis.
- A. “caution” and “weary”
  - B. “cautious” and “wary”
  - C. “aware” and “skeptacle”
  - D. “cautious” and “skepticle”
7. Every officer should \_\_\_\_\_ in mind that when two objects meet, some \_\_\_\_\_ of that meeting can be established and verified at a later time.
- A. “bear” and “effect”
  - B. “bare” and “effect”
  - C. “bear” and “affect”
  - D. “bare” and “affect”
8. Considering grammar, spelling, and punctuation as well as ease of understanding, which of the following sentences is most acceptable?
- A. Listening to what others has to say is always a good idea?
  - B. Listening to what others have to say is always a good idea.
  - C. Always listen to what other’s have to say until answering her.
  - D. Always listen to what others has to say before answering them.
9. Considering grammar, spelling, and punctuation as well as ease of understanding, which of the following sentences is most acceptable?
- A. Strict traffic law enforcement is the most effective weapon with which the officer may combat the auto theft problem.
  - B. Strict traffic law enforcement is the best way with which the officer will combat a auto theft problem.
  - C. Officers can combat a auto theft problem by being strict law enforcers.
  - D. Officers which are strict law enforcers can best combat the auto theft problems.

10. Identify the type of error that is found in the following sentence:

**The public judges our department by our employees' actions.**

- A. Spelling
  - B. Grammar
  - C. Punctuation
  - D. There is no error
11. Identify the type of error that is found in the following sentence:

**When evaluating evidence ask yourself, "Is there anything I'm forgetting."**

- A. Spelling
  - B. Grammar
  - C. Punctuation
  - D. There is no error
12. A person has called on the telephone and asks to speak with your supervisor. Because he is not currently available, you take a message. Which of the following messages would be *most* correctly worded with respect to grammar, spelling, and punctuation?
- A. Joan called u this morning regarding dinner. If u return her call by 4:00 her number is 419-9813. If u call after 4:00, call her at home at 6671.
  - B. Joan called you this morning regarding dinner. If you return her call by 4:00 PM, her number is 419-9813. If you call after 4:00 PM, call her at home.
  - C. Joan called you this morning? If you return her call by 4:00 PM, her number is 419-9813. If you call after 4:00, she can be reached at home at 419-6671.
  - D. Joan called you this morning about dinner. If you return her call by 4:00 PM, her number is 419-9813. If you call after 4:00 PM, call her at home at 419-6671.
13. A person has called on the telephone and asks to speak with your supervisor. Because he is not currently available, you take a message. Which of the following messages would be *most* correctly worded with respect to grammar, spelling, and punctuation?
- A. Mike calls you this mourning asking about the gym. If you call him back at 345-8910 you can before 4:00 PM. Otherwise, call him at his other number.
  - B. Mike called you this morning to see if you'd like to meet him at the gym after work. You can reach him at the office before 4:00 PM at 345-8910 or on his cell phone at 432-7654 after 4:00 PM.
  - C. Mike calls about the gim. Call him at 345-8910 or 432-7654 after 4:00 PM.
  - D. Mike called you about the gym. You can reach him at 345-8910 before 4:00 PM or call him on his cell.

**For items 14-15, choose the word that is synonymous (meaning the same thing) as the underlined word in the sentence.**

14. The suspect had a(n) eclectic set of friends.

- A. assorted
- B. limited
- C. narrow
- D. restricted

15. The motive did not seem plausible to the jury.

- A. unreasonable
- B. conceivable
- C. unrealistic
- D. methodical



# Situational Judgment

## Human Relations Section

For this section of the practice test, you will read samples of short police-related situations and will then answer two multiple-choice questions relating to that situation. You will be asked to identify both the “most appropriate” response and the “least appropriate” response. For example:

*You are transporting an injured and intoxicated male who has a large amount of money protruding from his pocket. While transporting him to jail you notice that the money falls out of his pocket.*

- A. Pretend you didn't see the man drop the money.
  - B. Wait until you go back outside and take the money if nobody else has found it.
  - C. Pick up the money and give it to the staff at the jail for safekeeping.
  - D. Pick up the money and place it next to the victim's hand.
1. WHAT IS THE **MOST** APPROPRIATE RESPONSE?    **C**
2. WHAT IS THE **LEAST** APPROPRIATE RESPONSE?    **B**

There are five (5) additional sample practice situational vignettes that are *similar* to those items found on the Human Relations Section of the Entry-Level Police Officer Written Test. Please note the actual test will have twenty (20) situations requiring two responses per question for a total of forty (40) test items.

You may proceed to the next test section when finished.

*You and your backup simultaneously arrive at a house where a domestic violence incident is reported to be occurring. As you approach the house you hear a woman and child scream and a man yelling, “I’ll teach you!” Your backup officer is visibly nervous and says, “We should call a supervisor.” How would you handle this situation?*

- A. Ask the dispatcher for a call history on the house.
  - B. Forcibly enter the house and contact a supervisor after the situation is under control.
  - C. Tell your backup to calm down and knock on the door.
  - D. Call your supervisor to request permission to enter the home immediately.
16. WHAT IS THE **MOST** APPROPRIATE RESPONSE?
17. WHAT IS THE **LEAST** APPROPRIATE RESPONSE?
-

***You and your partner respond to a combative male. The suspect spits on your partner after he is handcuffed. Your partner punches the suspect while in custody. How would you handle this situation?***

- A. Don't question your partner but report the incident to his supervisor.
- B. Don't tell anyone; just keep the incident to yourself.
- C. Tell your partner that his behavior was inappropriate and that if he reacts this way again that you will report his behavior to his supervisor.
- D. Tell the officer that his behavior was inappropriate and that he needs to tell his supervisor or else you will.

18. WHAT IS THE **MOST** APPROPRIATE RESPONSE?

19. WHAT IS THE **LEAST** APPROPRIATE RESPONSE?

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***At the beginning of each shift you check the backseat of your patrol car for contraband, weapons, personal items, etc. You are starting your shift and notice that there is a new Maglite flashlight under the cushion in your backseat with a badge number engraved on it. The flashlight is obviously new and belongs to a fellow officer. Your flashlight is old and you don't have the money to purchase a new flashlight. How would you handle this situation?***

- A. Track down the officer based upon the badge number engraved on the flashlight and return it.
- B. Keep the flashlight and scratch out the badge number.
- C. Use the flashlight until the owner comes looking for it.
- D. Keep the flashlight and replace it with your older flashlight.

20. WHAT IS THE **MOST** APPROPRIATE RESPONSE?

21. WHAT IS THE **LEAST** APPROPRIATE RESPONSE?

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***You receive a noise complaint call. The reporting party states that the people behind him have been partying all night and it's after hours. He demands that the neighbors receive a ticket. You approach the house with the noise disturbance and are greeted by an elderly man who invites you inside. He states that he and his wife are celebrating their 55<sup>th</sup> wedding anniversary. How would you handle this situation?***

- A. Don't issue a citation.
- B. Tell the neighbor who complained that the music has been turned off for the night and that the neighbor will not receive a citation.
- C. Demand that he turns off the music and issue a citation.
- D. Go back on your normal duties and ignore the complaint.

22. WHAT IS THE **MOST** APPROPRIATE RESPONSE?

23. WHAT IS THE **LEAST** APPROPRIATE RESPONSE?

*You initiate a traffic stop on a vehicle for running a red light. The driver does not stop and instead speeds away. You use your police radio to advise dispatch that you are pursuing a vehicle that failed to stop for a traffic violation. Your Sergeant radios you to cancel pursuing the vehicle. How would you handle this situation?*

- A. Continue following the vehicle and say you did not hear the Sergeant's order due to radio interference.
  - B. Continue following the vehicle just to see where it goes so you can catch the driver.
  - C. Radio the Sergeant and explain why you should continue pursuing the car.
  - D. Stop pursuing the car and call the Sergeant on the radio to advise him/her that you understand and have followed the order.
24. WHAT IS THE **MOST** APPROPRIATE RESPONSE?
25. WHAT IS THE **LEAST** APPROPRIATE RESPONSE?

# Reasoning/Analyzing Section

For this section of the practice test, you will answer five (5) sample items that are *similar* to those items found on the Reasoning and Analyzing Section of the NPST. Please note the actual test contains fourteen (14) test items.

You may proceed to the next test section when finished.

26. How many of the items listed below are EXACT duplicates of one another?

81301	81301
24F6942IL	24E6492IL
11901VX4C29	11901VX42C9
A846141464HL	A846141464HL
63276R3981362	6S276R39613G2
8K029Z7829422	8K0279Z329422

- A. none
- B. one
- C. two
- D. three

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Four people witness the same occurrence and describe a person who was involved. The descriptions of the person involved are:

Witness #1: A male, wearing a black jacket, and green shoes.  
Witness #2: A female, wearing a black jacket, and tan shoes.  
Witness #3: A male, wearing a blue jacket, and green shoes.  
Witness #4: A male, wearing a brown jacket, and green shoes.

27. Based on the witness' descriptions, the MOST LIKELY correct description of the person involved is:
- A. A male, wearing a brown jacket, and tan shoes.
  - B. A female, wearing a black jacket, and green shoes.
  - C. A male, wearing a black jacket, and green shoes.
  - D. A male, wearing a black jacket, and tan shoes.

*On a Friday night in December 2013, a vehicle located on Washington Blvd. in Los Angeles, California was broken into. The owner reported hearing glass break and looked out his window to see two people running from the vehicle carrying what appeared to be a car stereo. Upon inspecting his vehicle, he noticed that his stereo was missing.*

28. Based upon the information above, which of the following statements is most accurate?
- A. The theft occurred around 10:00 p.m.
  - B. The suspect is a male.
  - C. The man's stereo was worth a lot of money.
  - D. The sound of broken glass alerted the man to the burglary.

- 
29. How many of the items listed below are EXACT duplicates of one another?

65321	65231
37E7184AW	337F7184AV
84259XW9H71	84259XW9H71
D746952049GL	D746952049GL
53279R39843G2	5S279R39843G2
4P826Z4423081	4P826Z4423081

- A. none
- B. one
- C. two
- D. three

---

Four people witness the same occurrence and describe a person who was involved. The descriptions of the person involved are:

Witness #1: A female, with black hair, wearing a black dress, and black shoes.  
Witness #2: A male, with black hair, wearing a black dress, and black shoes.  
Witness #3: A female, with blonde hair, wearing a blue dress, and black shoes.  
Witness #4: A female, with brown hair, wearing a brown dress, and brown shoes.

30. Based on the witness' descriptions, the MOST LIKELY correct description of the person involved is:
- A. A female, with black hair, wearing a black dress, and black shoes.
  - B. A male, with black hair, wearing a black dress, and black shoes.
  - C. A female, with brown hair, wearing a black dress, and black shoes.
  - D. A female, with blonde hair, wearing a black dress, and brown shoes.

# Reading Comprehension Section

For this section of the practice test, you will answer ten (10) sample items that are *similar* to those items found on the Reading Comprehension Section\* of the NPST. Please note the actual test contains twenty (20) test items.

\*Please note—The department you are testing for has added this construct into their testing process. It is strongly suggested that you study the *Reading Comprehension Manual* for one to two weeks prior to the examination in order to answer these questions!!

You may review any test sections with any remaining time.

31. When an officer encounters a traffic violator for driving on a suspended or revoked license, the officer should:
  - A. Provide written notification to the traffic violator of the suspension or revocation and issue the citation.
  - B. Complete a “Written Notice Form” and forward the form and license to his/her supervisor.
  - C. Verbally advise the traffic violator of the suspension or revocation and issue the citation.
  - D. Complete a “Written Notice Form” and forward the form and license to the Traffic Bureau.
  
32. Which of the following has the authority to dismiss a citation once it has been issued?
  - A. The officer responsible for the citation
  - B. The supervisor of the officer responsible for the citation
  - C. The court
  - D. The Traffic Bureau Manager
  
33. According to the ITRS requirements, traffic collision reports shall be taken in all circumstances EXCEPT:
  - A. When there is a death or injury on private property.
  - B. For a hit-and-run violation.
  - C. For a vehicle code violation.
  - D. For a non-injury traffic collision occurring on private property.
  
34. In the event of a parking violation and assuming that the vehicle is fully intact, a visible chalk mark should be placed:
  - A. only on one tire.
  - B. only on the pavement by the driver’s side door.
  - C. on one tire and the pavement.
  - D. on all tires and the pavement.

35. Following the suspension of a license, all of the following information must be forwarded to the Department of Motor Vehicles within five business days EXCEPT:
- A. Officer's statement form
  - B. The offender's driver's license
  - C. The officer's badge number
  - D. Order of suspension form
36. Which of the following statements is TRUE regarding *team policing*?
- A. Team policing stems from a movement within traditional law enforcement called strategic profiling.
  - B. Team policing is no longer used.
  - C. Team policing assigns accountability.
  - D. Team policing does not ensure community partnering.
37. The term \_\_\_\_\_ refers to a strategy to assign officers to a beat for an extended amount of time and to keep them in their own beat as much as possible.
- A. beat consistency
  - B. beat dependability
  - C. beat longevity
  - D. beat integrity
38. The stage in the SARA process which determines if a problem really exists to warrant further analysis is called \_\_\_\_\_.
- A. Scanning
  - B. Analysis
  - C. Response
  - D. Assessment
39. The National Center for Community Policing conducted a survey of 143 community-policing departments in the U.S. and determined that, of the following areas, community-policing was least prevalent in \_\_\_\_\_.
- A. shopping areas
  - B. business and recreational areas
  - C. downtown business districts
  - D. residential areas
40. According to the National Center for Community Policing study, which of the following community groups yielded the HIGHEST perceived acceptance percentages regarding the community-policing program?
- A. residents
  - B. other police units
  - C. politicians
  - D. church groups

## Answer Key

Item #	Key
1	C
2	B
3	D
4	C
5	C
6	B
7	A
8	B
9	A
10	D
11	C
12	D
13	B
14	A
15	B
16	B
17	A
18	D
19	B
20	A
21	B
22	C
23	A
24	D
25	A
26	C
27	C
28	D
29	D
30	A
31	C
32	C
33	D
34	C
35	C
36	D
37	D
38	A
39	D
40	C