

Examination Preparation Guide

for the Entry Level Firefighter Examination

Purpose of this guide

This guide was developed to assist you in doing your best on the Firefighter examination. It will provide some advice and tips for preparing yourself to take the test and discuss strategy for taking the test effectively. While this guide may be applied to other written tests, it was specifically produced to provide guidance for this particular exam.

Preparing for the test

Tests are given to assure selection of the most qualified persons while providing all candidates a chance to compete fairly. Knowing the rationale for this test and having a realistic idea of the job can improve your chance to demonstrate your job potential.

This test is designed to assess:

- ▶ how well you observe things and how well you remember what you observed
- ▶ your ability to listen to and understand complex spoken instructions
- ▶ your ability to read with understanding
- ▶ your basic computational skills
- ▶ your ability to understand the mechanical relationships between objects
- ▶ personal factors related to such areas as teamwork, perseverance, and motivation

So in the days and weeks before the exam, these suggestions can be offered:

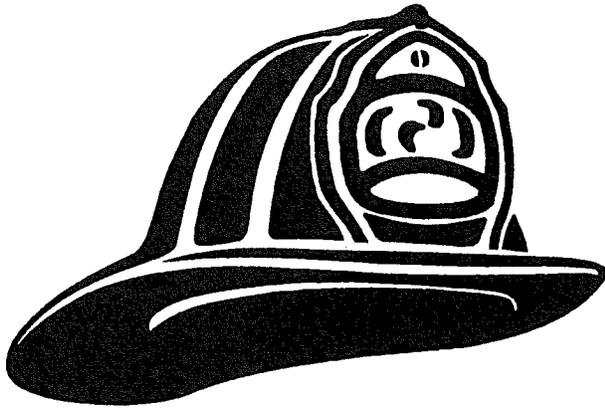
1. Make sure you understand each step in the process to show your very best at each stage. Get a feel for what the job of a new firefighter is really like and what it will be like to be a fire services professional.
2. Make sure that you accurately complete any forms or requirements prior to the exam.
3. Try to take some time every day to improve your reading and computational skills. These skills are important for effective performance as a new firefighter and will be assessed by the test. Of course, these skills are also important in many other lines of work, including those that would represent fire department promotions.
4. Try to get some practice taking other tests. This can reduce testing anxiety and improve your test taking strategies.
5. Organize your schedule so you can perform your best on the day of the test.

Getting ready the day of the test

1. Stick to your normal routine as much as possible. Some of the following suggestions may not be in your normal routine, but they usually allow most persons to perform at their best.
2. Get adequate sleep. Most adults do best with 7-8 hours. Try to adopt this pattern at least several days before the exam.
3. Get up early enough to have plenty of time to have a light, balanced breakfast.
4. Minimize the use of outside influences (food, caffeine, nicotine, entertainment, etc.) that might over or under stimulate you. The main thing is to not do anything too radical - and not too different than what is normal for you.
5. Arrive at the test early enough to cope with traffic, weather, parking, etc.

Taking the test effectively

1. Listen to instructions and directions from the test administrators. Make sure that you understand the instructions. Ask questions at the designated time before the test begins if you are unsure of any aspect of what you should do during the test.
2. Use your time carefully, especially on the first two parts of the test that have special timing requirements. After those parts, you should have enough time to finish the rest of the test if you move through it steadily and do not spend too much time on any one question.
3. Read the questions and alternatives carefully. Do not jump to an answer before you have completely read all of the alternatives.
4. Answer all of the questions. Use your informed judgment to make a choice between alternatives. This may feel like an "educated guess" but to the extent that it is informed, you are demonstrating a degree of knowledge and not just blindly guessing.
5. Don't worry about trick questions. None of the questions in this test is designed to be a trick question. The test is really intended to allow you to show your best on what it is assessing. Avoid reading too much into a question.
6. Take care of your answer sheet. Follow the test administrator's instructions on filling in your name and other information. Make sure that you fill in the bubbles, not making too light or small a mark - or one that goes out of the bubble. Make sure that the number of the space on the answer sheet you are marking actually corresponds to the question you are answering. Do not make stray marks or smudges on the answer sheet. If you change a response, make sure that you completely erase your first choice.



Sample Test

Firefighter Examination

This booklet must be returned to the test administrator at the close of the examination. The test administrator will announce when you are to start and when you are to stop working on the examination.

Work on each examination part according to the instructions provided. Do not answer any question until you have read it carefully. **Do not make any marks in this booklet.** You may write or perform computations on the scratch paper provided except during those parts of the test where note taking is specifically prohibited. However, to receive credit, **you must mark your answers on the Answer Sheet.**

Any examinee who talks with or attempts to talk with another or who copies or aids another in copying during the course of the examination will be disqualified.

Content of the Examination

	<u>Sample Test</u>	<u>Firefighter Examination</u>
Following Oral Instructions	7 questions	20 questions
Observation and Memory Skills	4 questions	30 questions
Reading with Understanding	2 questions	25 questions
Mechanical Reasoning Skills	2 questions	25 questions
Computational Ability	2 questions	20 questions
Biodata	<u>4 questions</u>	<u>40 questions</u>
	21 questions	160 questions

Do not turn this page until told to do so.

Booklet Number _____

General Instructions

The following instructions are to be used for answering the multiple-choice questions in this examination.

To mark your answers on the answer sheet, you are to blacken the space for one, and only one, of the letters to indicate your answer to each question. Before you answer each question, be sure that the number of the answer space you mark is the same as the number of the question you are answering.

If you mark an answer and then wish to change it, **be sure you completely erase your first choice** before you mark your new choice. Use only a soft lead pencil to record your answers.

Multiple-Choice Instructions: When you are given a multiple-choice question, select the ONE BEST ANSWER of the choices given. Then blacken the space for the correct letter on the answer sheet.

Note how the answer to the multiple-choice example is marked on the sample answer sheet.

Multiple-Choice Example:

1. The capital of the United States is:

- A. Washington, D.C.
- B. Los Angeles.
- C. New York.
- D. Chicago.
- E. Denver.

Sample Answer Sheet

(T) (F)

1

2

3

Scoring Formula

All questions in this booklet will be scored on the basis of the number of correct answers, except for the Biodata Section. In scoring the Biodata questions, some credit is given for every answer choice. It is to your advantage to use your best judgment and answer all of the questions in this test booklet.

Do not turn the page until told to do so.

Following Oral Instructions

General Instructions

This part of the test is designed to measure how well you can follow oral instructions. In order to do this, the test questions are presented by an audio recording. When the recording is started, it will provide all of the instructions that you will need to complete this part of the test. Listen very carefully and follow the instructions that you hear.

When the recording stops, **you are not to turn the page in the test booklet!** The test administrator will tell you what to do when the recording stops.

Do not turn the page until you are told to do so.

Following Oral Instructions

(7 questions)

(The actual Firefighter Examination will contain 20 questions like these.)

E	R	M	<u>K</u>	N	<u>W</u>	Y	P
▲	9	■	5	◇	7	<u>2</u>	○
G	<u>J</u>	T	<u>V</u>	R	S	F	Q

Box A

1.

- A. 2
- B. 5
- C. 7
- D. 9

5.

- A. K
- B. V
- C. W
- D. S

2.

- A. 6
- B. 15
- C. 21
- D. 27

6.

- A. ◇
- B. ○
- C. ▲
- D. ■

3.

- A. P
- B. Q
- C. F
- D. Y

7.

- A. 2
- B. 5
- C. 7
- D. 9

4.

- A. ◇
- B. ○
- C. ▲
- D. ■

Observation and Memory Skills

Instructions

This part of the examination consists of a picture and thirty (30) questions that test your observation and memory abilities. When the test administrator tells you to begin, you will turn the page and have ONE (1) minute to look at the picture and observe as many details as possible. **You are not allowed to take notes during this study period.** When time is called, you must turn the page and stop studying the picture.

When the one-minute study period is over, you will answer questions that ask about the content of the picture.

You are not to look at the questions until after the one-minute study period is over.

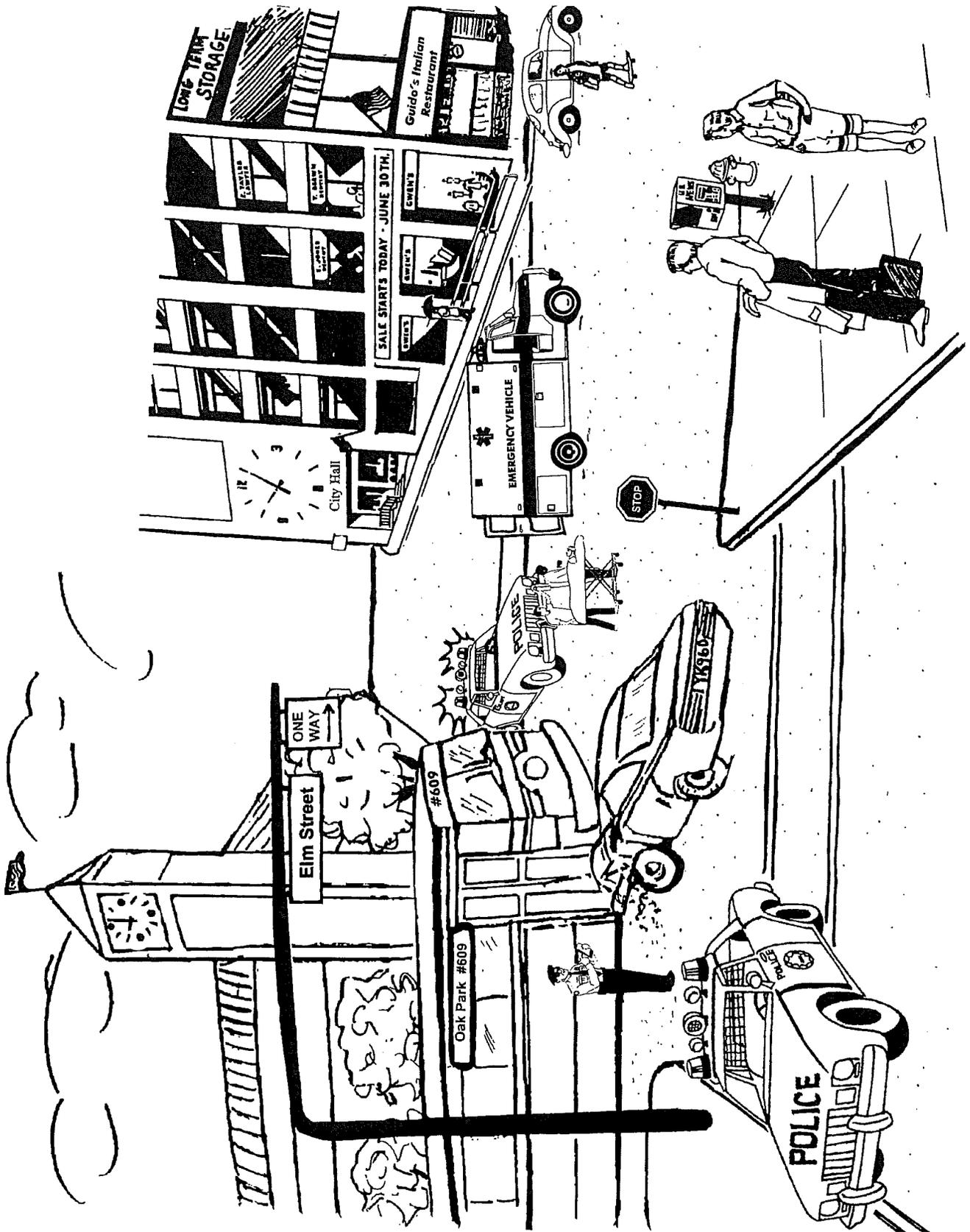
After the study period is over, you are not to look at the picture again at any time during the remainder of the test.

Time Limit

When the one-minute study period is over, you will have twenty (20) minutes to complete the remainder of this practice test. Do not spend too much time on any one question or test part, or you may not finish before time is called.

(Following the study period, the actual Firefighter Examination will allow two and one-half (2½) hours to complete the remainder of the examination.)

Do not turn the page until told to do so.



**TURN THE PAGE
AND BEGIN WORKING.**

Observation and Memory Skills

(4 questions)

(The actual Firefighter Examination will contain 30 questions like these.)

8. The bus in the picture was going to:
 - A. Elm Park.
 - B. Oak Park.
 - C. Park Street.
 - D. Oak Avenue.

9. The activities that are shown in the picture are taking place at what time of day?
 - A. 9:00 a.m.
 - B. 1:45 p.m.
 - C. 12:50 p.m.
 - D. 10:05 a.m.

10. The restaurant that can be seen in the picture serves which of the following kinds of food?
 - A. Seafood.
 - B. Italian food.
 - C. Mexican food.
 - D. Chinese food.

11. In the picture, which of the following is located in the building that has a large clock above its entrance?
 - A. City Hall.
 - B. A restaurant.
 - C. The City Library.
 - D. Long term storage.

Reading With Understanding

(2 questions)

(The actual Firefighter Examination will contain 25 questions like these.)

This part of the test contains several reading passages. You are to read each passage and answer the questions that follow. You are to answer the questions using only the written information provided in the reading passages. This is *not* a test of your memory skills. You may refer back to the written information as often as you wish.

Fire Prevention

Fires are primarily prevented by addressing the circumstances that produce them. Nearly all fire causes can be put into one of three categories. These categories are improper use of materials, unstable and hazardous materials, and human carelessness. Arson is one of the few fire causes that does not fit into one of these three categories. All of the three major kinds of fire causes can be reduced through public education and enforcement of fire and building codes.

The enforcement of fire and building codes results in the prevention of loss of life and property. Of course, the foundation for effective enforcement is a well conceived and implemented inspection program. Such inspections are conducted to determine compliance with codes that are directed toward fire safety, for example, exits and the number of occupants.

12. According to this reading passage, the successful enforcement of fire and building codes results in:
- A. public education.
 - B. the prevention of loss of life and property.
 - C. a well conceived and implemented inspection program.
 - D. compliance with codes that are directed toward fire safety.
13. Arson falls into which of the categories of fire causes that is discussed in the reading passage?
- A. Human carelessness.
 - B. Improper use of materials.
 - C. Unstable and hazardous materials.
 - D. It does not fit into one of these categories.

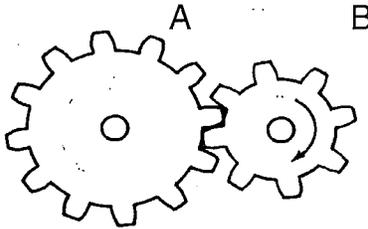
Mechanical Reasoning Skills

(2 questions)

(The actual Firefighter Examination will contain 25 questions like these.)

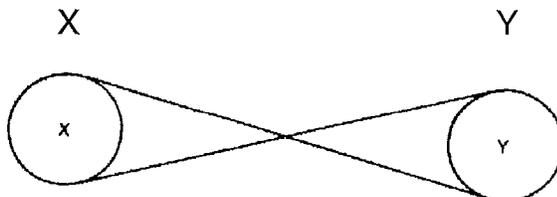
14. In the gears shown below in Figure 1, which of the following statements correctly describes their rotation?
- A. As gear B turns in a clockwise direction, gear A will turn in a counterclockwise direction at a slower speed.
 - B. As gear B turns in a clockwise direction, gear A will turn in a counterclockwise direction at the same speed.
 - C. As gear B turns in a clockwise direction, gear A will turn in a clockwise direction at the same speed.
 - D. As gear B turns in a clockwise direction, gear A will turn in clockwise direction at a slower speed.

Figure 1



15. In Figure 2 below, what is the purpose or result of the cross in the belt that connects pulleys X and Y?
- A. This makes pulley Y turn faster.
 - B. This makes pulley Y turn slower.
 - C. This reduces the force on pulley Y.
 - D. This changes the direction in which pulley Y turns.

Figure 2



Computational Ability

(2 questions)

(The actual Firefighter Examination will contain 20 questions like these.)

16. A 60,000 gallon tank is full of water. The discharge system allows it to be emptied at the rate of 100 gallons per minute. How long would it take to completely empty the tank?
- A. 60 minutes.
 - B. 10 hours.
 - C. 60 hours.
 - D. 100 hours.
 - E. 600 hours.
17. Use the formula below to compute the area of a triangle that has a 3 inch base and a height of 4 inches.

$$A = \frac{B \times H}{2}$$

where:

A is the area of the triangle

B is the base of the triangle

H is the height of the triangle

The area of the triangle is:

- A. 2 square inches.
- B. 4 square inches.
- C. 6 square inches.
- D. 8 square inches.
- E. 16 square inches.

BIODATA
(4 questions)

(The actual Firefighter Examination will contain 40 questions like these.)

General Information

The questions included in this Biodata Section ask for information about you and your background. These kinds of questions are often asked during an oral interview. For years, employers have been using interviews to relate personal history, preferences, and attitude to job success. This Biodata Section attempts to do the same.

An interview often fails because the wrong questions are asked or different questions are asked of each candidate. The Biodata Section includes questions that have been shown to be related to job success. It has been found that successful employees tend to select some answers more often than other answers, while less successful employees tend to select different answers.

The usual employment test includes questions which have one "correct" or "best" answer and credit is only given for that answer choice. In the scoring of the questions in the Biodata Section, some credit is given for every answer choice. Therefore, it is important that you answer every question, because no credit is given for questions that you do not answer. Also, no credit is given if you mark more than one answer to a question.

You should answer the following questions using the instructions for multiple choice questions provided previously. You may only mark **one** answer to each question. It is possible that none of the answers applies well to you. However, one of the answers will surely be more true (or less inaccurate) for you than the others. In such a case, mark that answer.

Answer each question honestly. The credit that is assigned to each answer choice is based on how successful employees describe themselves when honestly responding to these questions.

Turn the page and continue working.

18. When you were a student, how would you compare yourself with others if you had done the very best you could?
- A. I would have been at the top of the class.
 - B. I would have been in the top 10 percent of the class.
 - C. I would have been above average.
 - D. I would have been average.
 - E. I would have been below average.
19. How often do you like to be told how well you are doing in your job?
- A. About once a week.
 - B. About once a month.
 - C. About once a quarter.
 - D. Only during standard performance reviews.
 - E. Only when a major project has been completed.
20. Do you feel that the grades you received in high school were as good as your capabilities?
- A. Yes, they were about as good as I could do.
 - B. No, they were poorer than what I could do.
21. In what area did you have your most outstanding negative experience on your first job?
- A. Relationships with management or supervisors.
 - B. Relationships with my fellow workers.
 - C. Relationships with clients or the public.
 - D. Lack of enjoyment of the work itself.
 - E. None of the above.

This is the end of the examination.

If you finish before time is called, you may review your work on questions 12 through 21 only.

Sample Firefighter Test

Answers to the Practice Questions

Following Oral Instructions

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

Observation and Memory Skills

8. B
9. D
10. B
11. A

Reading with Understanding

12. B
13. D

Mechanical Reasoning Skills

14. A
15. D

Computational Ability

16. B
17. C

Biodata

Questions 18 through 21 are sample biodata questions for which no research-based scoring key has been developed.