



Could you pass a Security Guard Licensing Exam?

By Robert Ing, DSc, FAPSc, FInstMP(UK), CPO

Yes, in most places you have to take an exam to be a Security Guard!

Throughout Canada and the United States; Provinces and States are requiring those who wish to work as a Security Guard to take a course and pass a licensing examination before being permitted to work as a Security Guard. While the specific curriculum varies from each jurisdiction, as do laws and the emphasis placed on some subject areas, common curriculum requirements are basic safety and security procedures. The purpose of this article is to offer a short quiz on these basic areas to see if you could pass these elements in a Security Guard licensing exam. Of course, in order to fully pass the exam offered by your Provincial or State authority you will need to know much more than the correct answers in this short quiz, but by taking this quiz you will have an idea with regard to the feel of such an exam and your general knowledge as it applies to being a professional Security Guard.

I based this quiz on common questions used in most licensing exams. Give it a go and see how well you do.

Take the Quiz

Find a quiet place, grab a pen or pencil and a piece of paper. Now, don't cheat by skipping to the answers section at the bottom! Put the numbers 1 to 25 on your paper and then place the letter of what you believe is the correct answer beside the appropriate question number. Good luck!

- 1) Which of the following is a principle of accurate note taking for a security guard?
 - a) A chronological entry in his/her notebook of all daily activities as they occur.
 - b) Blank lines between entries in his/her notebook to record additional information he/she may remember later.
 - c) Use more than one notebook at a time to record details.
 - d) Make some illegible entries in the notebook so that only he/she can understand what is written down.



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2) Why is it important for a security guard to have a working knowledge of the rules of evidence as they may pertain to his/her work?

- a) To know how to obtain, handle, store and maintain evidence in order to preserve its integrity and admissibility in court.
- b) To recognize the similarities between direct and circumstantial evidence.
- c) To learn how to conceal evidence during a trial.
- d) To only understand the basic principles of evidence.

3) When appearing as a witness, what action should a security guard take before he/she makes a court appearance?

- a) Review original notes and files.
- b) Review the final report only.
- c) Send copies of the final report to the lawyers and judge in the case.
- d) Review and modify the final report.

4) Which of the following fuels are associated with a Class B fire?

- a) Wood, paper, cloth
- b) Gasoline, oil, grease
- c) Metal, paper, cloth
- d) Wood, paper, electrical equipment

5) Which of the following are considered access control points?

- a) Door, turnstile, parking gate
- b) Window, door, stairs
- c) Sidewalk, pathway, lane
- d) Room, garage lobby



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6) A security guard is on patrol and encounters an individual who has injured himself. The individual refuses help from the security guard although the security guard advises the individual that he/she is trained in first aid. What should the security guard do?

- a) Demand the individual let the security guard perform first aid on him/her.
- b) Ask a passer-by to assist the individual instead.
- c) Call for help and wait until the ambulance/medical help arrives.
- d) Call for help and leave the individual alone.

7) A well written report must not contain opinions, slang, poor grammar or abbreviations. Instead it should be;

- a) accurate
- b) concise
- c) non-biased
- d) all of the above

8) A security guard should carry a pocket notebook at all times while on duty to

- a) record important details while on patrol, so that they may not be forgotten or overlooked when a formal security report is written.
- b) take the place of a formal written security report.

- c) record items of personal interest such as the names of friends and shopping lists.
- d) keep notes in, but this is not really necessary.

9) Fire requires three components. These are heat, fuel and

- a) Carbon Monoxide
- b) Carbon Dioxide
- c) Oxygen
- d) Hydrogen



- 10) When calling someone on the telephone it is important that you
- a) identify yourself and then ask for the person you wish to speak with
 - b) ask for the person you wish to speak with, without identifying yourself first
 - c) hang-up on the third ring if there is no answer
 - d) not identify yourself unless you are asked

11) When operating a two-way radio;

- a) Listen before you transmit
- b) Speak directly into the microphone in a normal tone of voice
- c) Know that everything you say on the radio can be heard by anyone with the proper radio equipment
- d) All of the above

12) The two-way radio ten code, 10-9 means;

- a) Acknowledgement/Yes
- b) Emergency
- c) Say your message again
- d) Call Police

13) A two-way radio should not be used in an area

- a) where a suspected bomb or explosives may be present.
- b) that has a telephone readily available.
- c) near an airport.
- d) except under special circumstances.



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- 14) The role of a security guard is to:
- a) protect property but not people or information.
 - b) provide protection to people, property and information.
 - c) protect people and property but not information.
 - d) enforce rules, regulations and laws that are designed to protect people and property.

15) A Class C fire involves:

- a) combustible metals
- b) flammable liquids
- c) a live source of electricity
- d) wood, paper and cloth

16) What must a security guard who is coming on duty make sure to do before the guard whom he/she is relieving leaves?

- a) Complete a thorough patrol of the property perimeter to ensure that it is secure.
- b) Make sure that the guard has a safe means of getting home.
- c) Receive a briefing from the guard with respect to any unusual or particular instructions or information that the guard who is coming on duty should be aware of.
- d) Make three photocopies of the shift report prepared by the guard.

17) The sensor component of an alarm system is the component that:

- a) detects a change in the physical environment around the sensor that may suggest a problem
- b) tells the alarm system what time of day to turn on or turn off
- c) announces that an alarm has gone off by producing an audible or visual signal that can be monitored
- d) allows the alarm system to continue to work during a power failure



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18) A purpose for taking a statement from a person who has been a witness to an event is to:

- a) eliminate that witness as a potential suspect
- b) discourage the witness from changing his/her story later
- c) comply with the reporting requirements under provincial security licensing legislation
- d) create a record of what that person saw, did and experienced

19) Situational awareness means:

- a) already knowing all of the important facts about a situation before going into it
- b) being constantly aware of one's location and surroundings
- c) knowing what the other person is thinking
- d) being aware of your own biases and prejudices going into a situation



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20) Improvised explosive devices (IEDs):

- a) are easy to find once you know how to identify them
- b) should be viewed as safe as long as no one touches them
- c) always have some sort of visible wires attached to them
- d) can look like any ordinary object or container that might be found in a building or on a property

21) A security guard who comes upon a crime scene should note and record anything observable about the scene that may no longer be observable by the time the police arrive. Such things are called:

- a) conditional circumstances
- b) transient conditions
- c) circumstantial conditions
- d) conditional evidence



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22) The best place for a security guard to have his/her hands while talking to a potentially aggressive person is:

- a) hanging straight down at his/her sides, in order to look natural.
- b) behind his/her back, in order to appear less threatening.
- c) in his/her pockets, so that the person cannot be sure what is in them.
- d) in front of him/her at waist height or higher, in order to react quickly.

23) Which of the following guidelines should a security guard follow in his/her approach to securing compliance from a confrontational or resistant individual?

- a) The job of a security guard in a conflict situation is to obtain compliance from people using any means necessary.
- b) In most cases, being patient usually does more to resolve a conflict situation than taking action just to get things over with.
- c) People view hesitation by a security guard as a sign of weakness, so a security guard should always take charge of a situation as quickly as possible.
- d) Some people just do not want to comply, and in these cases the best thing for a security guard to do is to diffuse the situation by walking away.

24) The term "tactical communication" refers to:

- a) the use of two-way radios in an emergency situation.
- b) techniques used to criticize people's actions in a way that does not hurt their feelings.
- c) the use of specific verbal skills intended to help secure voluntary compliance on the part of a subject.
- d) the use of specific language as a stalling tactic while waiting for backup.



25) A person who has been arrested and has his hands secured behind his back with handcuffs will be most in danger of positional asphyxia if he is left in which position for any period of time?

- a) lying on his side
- b) lying face down
- c) lying on his back
- d) sitting on a chair

How Did You Do?

Step 1:

Compare your answers with the answer key below.

- 1) a) A chronological entry in his/her notebook of all daily activities as they occur.
- 2) a) To know how to obtain, handle, store and maintain evidence in order to preserve its integrity and admissibility in court.
- 3) a) Review original notes and files.
- 4) b) Gasoline, oil, grease
- 5) a) Door, turnstile, parking gate
- 6) c) Call for help and wait until the ambulance/medical help arrives.
- 7) d) all of the above
- 8) a) record important details while on patrol, so that they may not be forgotten or overlooked when a formal security report is written.
- 9) c) Oxygen
- 10) a) identify yourself and then ask for the person you wish to speak with
- 11) d) All of the above
- 12) c) Say your message again
- 13) a) where a suspected bomb or explosives may be present.



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14) The role of a security guard is to:

b) provide protection to people, property and information.

15) c) a live source of electricity

16) c) Receive a briefing from the guard with respect to any unusual or particular instructions or information that the guard who is coming on duty should be aware of.

17) a) detects a change in the physical environment around the sensor that may suggest a problem

18) d) create a record of what that person saw, did and experienced

19) b) being constantly aware of one's location and surroundings

20) d) can look like any ordinary object or container that might be found in a building or on a property

21) b) transient conditions

22) d) in front of him/her at waist height or higher, in order to react quickly.

23) b) In most cases, being patient usually does more to resolve a conflict situation than taking action just to get things over with.

24) c) the use of specific verbal skills intended to help secure voluntary compliance on the part of a subject.

25) b) lying face down

Step 2:

Multiply your score by 4 to obtain your overall score and percentage.

Step 3:

Find your percentage below.

0 to 31: Don't give up your day job!

32 to 61: Cadet - With about 2 to 4 weeks of study you could be all decked out in a Security Guard uniform.

62 to 81: Watchman or is that Watchperson? - You are field ready to hit the mean back "off limits" corridors of the mall or to observe and report what really goes on in the toy factory after hours.



82 to 100: Guardian - You are more than a mere Security Guard but a Security Supervisor with a staff ready to be your eyes and ears everywhere.

On a serious note, this article and quiz is based on professional guard exams and a small sampling of what a Security Guard needs to know. Security Guards provide a valuable service in the community and despite being paid wages much lower than the amount of responsibility placed upon them, they provide a deterrent to crimes of opportunity, conduct fire and safety patrols, and help free up police resources. I have presented this article in the hope to dispel the common belief that Security Guards do not need to, nor have any job specific training or skills. Security Guards must know the law; security, health and safety procedures; customer service; first aid; fire prevention and basic electronic security systems. More information on Security Guard certification curriculum may be obtained from the International Foundation for Protection Officers (IFPO) at www.ifpo.org

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