

HOW TO HANDLE CITY MULTIPLE CHOICE TYPE CIVIL SERVICE EXAMINATIONS

How the Examination Is Given

When you take a Civil Service Examination there is a system of bell or buzzer signals which you must obey.

At the first signal, the monitor distributes the examination booklets. At this time, you should carefully read the general instructions which are usually on the first page of the booklet. This is the only part of the booklet that you are allowed to read until the next signal.

At the second signal, you should promptly open the test booklet, check that it is not defective, read any further instructions, and begin answering the questions. Try to answer all the questions with time to check over your paper before the third and final signal. A little of your time will be taken by the fingerprint monitor while you are taking the examination. Some of this time should also be budgeted to copy down a record of your answers.

At the third (and final) signal, you must stop all work; your answer sheet will be collected.

General Techniques

Read the general instructions carefully. They give you important information such as how much time you will be allowed to take the examination (between the second and third signal), how many questions are on the examination and other important information. Also, listen carefully to any instructions given by the monitor in charge of your test room.

When you start taking the examination, read all further instructions carefully, especially those that come before each group of questions. You can fold and mark up the question booklet in a way to help you do your best, so fold the booklet if that will help you see better, and underline important words or phrases such as most, least, best, worst, the same as, opposite. Then do as requested. Don't pick the worst if you are asked to pick the best, etc.

Specific Techniques

1. Examine your question booklet as soon as you start the examination. If you are missing any pages or questions, etc., let the monitor know immediately so that he or she will get you another booklet - make sure that one is good.
2. Read and follow all instructions carefully, and listen to and follow any instructions given by the monitor in charge of your examination room.
3. Be sure you know what each question is asking.
4. You will choose which of four suggested answers - marked A, B, C, D - is correct.
5. Work on the questions in their numbered order, but don't spend too much time on a question or group of questions that you find very difficult. Skip this question or group of questions and come back to it or them later. Especially if you skip questions, make sure that you are answering on the right line on your answer sheet, that your answer is the same number as the question. Make some special mark in your question booklet next to any questions that you skip, so that you can find them later when you are ready to try to answer them. Make a different mark in your answer booklet next to questions which you answered but are not sure of.
6. If you get to the end of the test before time is up, which you should, go back and first try to answer those questions that you skipped. Don't use up all of your time on this because you should also check to see that you put all of your answers where you wanted to on the answer sheet.
7. Be careful about changing any answers, even if you guessed. Usually your first guess is correct. Change answers only after you have carefully read the question again, considering important words and phrases, such as not, most likely, most, fewest, least, etc. If you do change your answer, completely erase the previous answer.
8. If you feel yourself getting tired or nervous, stop and relax as you need to. Rest your eyes, stretch, take deep breaths. If you have to "leave the room" notify the monitor and then use this opportunity to stretch your legs, do a few waist bends and get the blood circulating through the system again.
9. Don't waste too much time relaxing, though. Use all of your time constructively. Stay with that examination until they make you turn in your paper. Even if you have finished the examination and have checked your paper, check it again. You may have circled the correct answer in your question booklet but forgot to block it in on your paper; or you may have circled (C) in the booklet but blocked (B) on the answer sheet, etc.

TO GUESS OR NOT TO GUESS

There is no penalty for guessing. If you guess the right answer to a question, you will be given the full credit. However, if you do not answer a question, you will be given no credit for it. You should, therefore, mark an answer to every question even if you are not absolutely sure that it is correct. Do not fill in more than one answer to a question. If you do, your answer will be marked wrong.

TOUGH QUESTIONS

You may find some questions very difficult. Don't spend too much time if you have trouble figuring out the answer to a tough question. It is usually wiser to skip a hard question (and skip the space on the answer sheet), and go ahead and answer the rest of the questions. Then go back and answer the tough questions which you skipped earlier.

The test will not contain trick questions. However, a question may seem tricky to someone who does not know the answer. Read the question carefully and select the one choice (A,B,C,or D) that answers it best.

If you spend too much time on tough questions, you may have to hurry or you may not have enough time to answer all the questions (possibly including some easier ones that appear later in the test).

REVIEWING AND CHANGING YOUR ANSWER

If you have time after you answer all the questions, it is advisable to go back and review your answer paper to make sure that you answer every question and that you have put your answers in the right places.

Do not change any answer unless you are absolutely sure that the answer you chose originally is wrong, or that you made a mistake in marking your answer on the answer sheet.

Budget your time. You may be allowed about 3 or 3 1/2 hours to finish the test. Suppose you have 3 hours from the second signal to the third signal. When the second signal is given (time to start), write down the time on your question booklet. Try to leave yourself 30 minutes for checking your answers, transferring your answers for your own record, fingerprinting, short rest periods and anything unexpected. That would give you 2 1/2 hours to try to answer every question on the examination. Try to answer at least half the questions in half of the time. If the whole examination offers 100 questions, try to answer at least 50 within the first 75 minutes and the other 50 in the next 75 minutes. Then use the final 30 minutes to make sure that you marked the answers on the answer sheet that you wanted to make, that you didn't skip any questions, to make a record of your answers. Use your best judgment about how you should use your time. Since some questions are easier than others, you may finish more than 1/2 the examination in 1/2 your planned time, but you may need that extra time for the more difficult questions.

