

Making Everything Easier!™

Firefighter Exam

FOR

DUMMIES®

Learn to:

- Master reading comprehension, math, principles of mechanics, tool usage and recognition, and more
- Score your highest on the Candidate Physical Ability Test (CPAT)
- Make the most of test time with six practice exams
- Conquer test anxiety and boost confidence

Tracey Biscontini



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Firefighter Exam For Dummies®

Visit

www.dummies.com/cheatsheet/firefighterexam to view this book's cheat sheet.

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Firefighter Exam For Dummies®

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About the Authors

Stacy L. Bell is the executive vice president and co-owner of Fire & Police Selection, Inc. (FPSI), a leading consulting firm that specializes in the development and validation of testing instruments used in the protective services industry. Stacy holds a bachelor's degree in psychology from California State University, Sacramento, and a master's degree in industrial/organizational psychology from Capella University.

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Northeast Editing, Inc., is located in a former rectory in Jenkins Township, nestled between Wilkes-Barre and Scranton in northeastern Pennsylvania. Tracey's company boasts a relaxed work environment that serves as her staff's home away from home. When they're not hard at work, the editors and writers at Northeast Editing, Inc., enjoy breaks in a large backyard and welcome hugs from Prince, a stray cat that showed up one day and never left. Tracey lives in Avoca, Pennsylvania, with her husband, Nick; son, Tyler; and daughter, Morgan.

Lindsay Rock is a former volunteer firefighter with the Mt. Zion Bicentennial Volunteer Fire Department (MZFD) in Harding, Pennsylvania. She earned a certificate of attainment in Pennsylvania Essentials of Firefighting and completed a structural burn session at the Schuylkill Fire Training Center in Frackville, Pennsylvania, in 2004. In addition to proudly serving her community through the fire department, Lindsay wanted to prove that she could "keep up with the boys" — a brother, Nick, and an uncle, Seth, who also were firefighters. She briefly served as president of MZFD in 2005.

Lindsay is the managing editor of Northeast Editing, Inc., where she has written and edited test-preparation and

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Lindsay currently resides in Exeter, Pennsylvania. She spends much of her free time continuing to prove that she can keep up with the boys. If she's not riding her bright yellow quad through the woods, you may find her on the golf course or watching Penn State and Pittsburgh Steelers football.

Dedication

To the men and women of the fire service — who put their lives on the line every day.

Authors' Acknowledgments

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Introduction

Chances are that if you're reading this book, you've thought about pursuing a career in the fire service. Good for you! Firefighting is an exhilarating career. Sure, it involves some risk, but for the most part, firefighters consider what they do honorable, rewarding, and essential for public safety. Firefighters rescue people from all manner of emergencies, including wildland fires, structure fires, floods, motor vehicle accidents, and more. They work to keep the public safe from harm.

Perhaps you want to become a firefighter because you like the thought of helping people each day. Maybe you like the idea of an ever-changing work environment or you want a job that keeps you active all the time. Whatever your reason, we applaud your choice and want to help you get hired.

The firefighter hiring process is unlike that of any other job. It's much more than a job application, a resume, and an interview. It involves numerous tests and evaluations designed to ensure that you're ready to begin training to become a firefighter. No need to worry. We wrote *Firefighter Exam For Dummies* for people just like you. Consider us the tour guides on your career path; we'll lead you from application to academy.

About This Book

The firefighter hiring process has many elements, including a number of exams, interviews, and evaluations, each pushing you one step closer to proving

that you have what it takes to begin firefighter training. *Firefighter Exam For Dummies* guides you through every step of the process with detailed descriptions and information.

This book begins with a general overview of what firefighters do and then moves on to the specifics of the exam process, including detailed chapters on each element of the written exam, the physical ability test, the oral interview, the medical exam, and the psychological evaluation. We provide four full-length practice tests to help you prepare for the written exam, as well as tips for interviewing and staying in shape.

Although this book is likely to catch the attention of career firefighter hopefuls, volunteers may benefit from the information, tips, and advice within its pages, too. Volunteers often have to undergo the same training as paid firefighters, and with the number of volunteer departments transitioning into paid fire companies on the rise, employment testing may change from “option” to “requirement.” We’re certain that if this occurs, *Firefighter Exam For Dummies* can help.

Conventions Used in This Book

The following conventions are used throughout the text to make things consistent and easy to understand:

- ✓ We use the term *applicant* to refer to a person who applies for a firefighting job by signing up to take the written exam. We use the term *candidate* to

refer to a person who has been screened as qualified and invited to participate in the recruitment process.

- ✓ All Web addresses appear in monofont.
- ✓ New terms appear in *italics* and are closely followed by easy-to-understand definitions.
- ✓ **Bold** is used to highlight keywords in bulleted lists and the action parts of numbered steps.

Foolish Assumptions

Everyone knows what happens when you assume, but while writing this book, we decided to live dangerously and make the following assumptions about you:

- ✓ You're interested in becoming a firefighter, and you want to know more about the job and the hiring process.
- ✓ You want to take some firefighter practice tests so you know what to expect and where to focus your studying.
- ✓ You want to prepare yourself for each step of the firefighter hiring process to help ensure your chances of overall success.
- ✓ You understand that successfully completing all exams, interviews, and evaluations means that you qualify to *begin* training to become a firefighter. You know that actually rushing into burning buildings doesn't occur until after you've received

extensive training at an academy or some other training program.

- ✓ You can read, speak, and understand the English language reasonably well. (Writers of firefighter exams assume this, too.) If you need to brush up on your vocabulary and grammar skills, you may want to review Chapter 5.

How This Book Is Organized

This book is divided into five parts and 24 chapters. The table of contents outlines the specifics, but the following is an overview of what you can expect to see.

Part I: So You Want to Be a Firefighter? Get Ready!

If you're curious to know exactly what firefighters do and where they work, or if you'd like to know more about the various exams you have to take to begin training to become a firefighter, turn to Part I. Chapter 1 explains a firefighter's typical duties and career path, and Chapters 2 and 3 describe the screening process and the exams.

Part II: Gearing Up to Take the Test: The Written Exam

If the written exam makes you a bit nervous, turn to Part II, where you find details about and practice questions for the various subject areas typically found on written firefighter exams.

Part III: Demonstrating Physical, Mental, and Emotional Fitness with Interactive Tests

If the physical ability test, oral interview, medical exam, or psychological evaluation has you stressed, open to Part III. Chapter 12 describes the elements of a physical ability test, Chapter 13 explains what to expect in the oral interview, and Chapter 14 presents an overview of the medical exam and psychological evaluation.

Part IV: Practice Firefighter Exams

Want to try your hand at taking a written firefighter exam? Part IV includes four practice exams, including two general exams, an exam based on the National Firefighter Selection Inventory test, and an exam based on the New York City Fire Department's written exam.

Part V: The Part of Tens

The Part of Tens is a standard element of *For Dummies* books. Chapter 23 contains some helpful tips for

succeeding on the various firefighter exams. Chapter 24 describes some things every firefighter (or future firefighter) should do.

Icons Used in This Book

To make this book easier to read and simpler to use, we include some icons that can help you find key ideas and information. Keep an eye out for them.



The Example icon draws your attention to sample questions and answers that help you understand the concept we're explaining.



This icon appears next to information that could benefit you during the various steps of the hiring process. This information can save you time and effort.



When you see this icon, you know the information that follows is especially important to the various firefighter exams.



This icon highlights information that could pose a threat to your success on the firefighter exams.

Where to Go from Here

The great thing about *For Dummies* books is that you can start wherever you want and still find complete information. Want to know how you'd perform on a written firefighter exam without any preparation? Open up to Chapter 15 and take a practice test. Then check your answers in Chapter 16 to see how well you did. Interested in what happens after you've passed the written test? Go to Chapters 12 to 14 to get the skinny on the non-written exams such as the oral interview and the physical ability test. The point is that you don't have to read this book from cover to cover. You can start wherever you think you need the most work.

If you're not sure where to start, we suggest Part I, which explains what firefighters do and where they work, along with a detailed description of the hiring process and an overview of the different exams.