

# **PolicePrep Comprehensive Guide to Canadian Police Officer Exams**

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# Observation and Memory

## Memory

Developing your memory is a skill like any other, and will improve the more you practice. There are several methods to go about doing this.

- 1) Practice as many of the RCMP practice tests as possible to become familiar with the methods used during the real exam.
- 2) Practice reading passages and pictures in newspapers and magazines. Focus on names, and test yourself 30 minutes later to see how you did.
- 3) Have a friend note the makes, colours, and license plates of a few cars in an area and test yourself 30 minutes later.
- 4) Form pictures or links in your mind to assist your memory. For example, if you see a mug shot of a person that reminds you of your friend, link that friend to the mug shot in order to memorize it. Here is an example using license plates.

954 PNY	- remember 954 <b>P</b> eople in <b>N</b> ew <b>Y</b> ork
651 ZTZ	- remember 651 <b>Z</b> ee <b>T</b> ea <b>Z</b> e (the tease)
421 PLM	- remember 421 <b>P</b> L <u>u<b>M</b>ber</u>

Do whatever works for you. (Psychologists have found that by making expressions graphic, people remember them more easily.)

## Observation

The goal of this exercise is to test your observation capabilities. When comparing the faces, focus on features that will not change (assume there is no plastic surgery involved). Focus on the shapes of the eyes, the size and appearance of the nose and the shape of the face. Ignore features that can be altered easily such as hairstyle, facial hair, clothing, glasses, etc.

Tips to improve your observation skills include:

- 1) Take the RCMP practice exams in this book (or on the website) to become familiar with the testing process.
- 2) Purchase "spot the difference" puzzles.
- 3) Do word find puzzles in local papers.

# Facial Visualization Questions

Facial visualization questions are common in entrance exams. They test your powers of observation and ability to spot similarities and differences between suspects that look alike. This is a necessary skill for a police officer, as you will be asked to locate suspects with vague descriptions, or you may be dealing with an old photo or need to visualize what a suspect would look like with glasses, facial hair, etc.

Assume that the suspect's facial appearance has not changed in any permanent way. For example, a suspect might comb his or her hair differently, put on glasses, wear a different hat or grow facial hair. Any changes to bone structure, weight or facial features that would require plastic surgery should be excluded.



Which of the following four suspects matches the man shown above?



You should focus on areas of the face that are difficult to change. As the circles demonstrate in the first and third photos, there seems to be an inconsistency with the cheek structure and general shape of the jaw. The jaw is too wide in the first photo and

too narrow in the third. The fourth photo is a close match but the nose is not the right shape.

Some of the tests will use actual photographs of suspects, while others will use cartoon drawings of suspects. The same principles apply. Focus on:

- Shape of the head
- Shape and placement of the eyes
- Shape of the nose
- Shape of the chin
- Shape of the cheeks

Try to overlook or disregard any easy changes that a suspect can make to his/her appearance, such as:

Change in hairstyle	Glasses	Jewellery
Change in facial hair	Hats	

**Eliminate as Many Choices as Possible, then Guess**

You will not be penalized if you guess incorrectly in these tests. Because there is a time limit, you must be efficient and use your time optimally. Don't waste too much time on one question. Look at your four options, eliminate as many as possible, and then guess which of the remaining ones is best. Remember, the questions will get more difficult throughout the test, so expect to spend more time on later questions than on the earlier ones.