

# CompTIA Security+ (SYO-701) Certification: How to prepare for the exam & Tips and Tricks for passing the exam



By: Ryan Convery

# Exam Structure



- No more than 90 questions (variable amount)
- Exam is scored on a scale from 100-900
- Passing score is 750 (83.3%)
- Majority multiple choice questions
- Few Performance Based Questions (PBQ's)
- 90 minutes to complete

# Certification/Exam Overview



- Globally recognized entry level cybersecurity certification
- Validates baseline skills and knowledge of core security principles and functions
- New version comes out every couple years with updated content
- A mandatory certification for Department of Defense (DoD) IT personnel
- Vendor-neutral
- Covers 5 domains of cybersecurity topics

# The Five Domains (with exam weighting)



Domain 1: General security concepts (12%)

Domain 2: Threats, vulnerabilities, and mitigations (22%)

Domain 3: Security architecture (18%)

Domain 4: Security operations (28%)

Domain 5: Security program management and oversight (20%)

# Best Resources for Study Materials



- Professor Messer: Free online videos covering every topic in each domain, also has paid resources that are also helpful (ex: practice tests, lecture notes)
- LinkedIn Learning: Free practice tests
- Youtube:
  - Exam cram videos
  - Practice Performance Based Questions
  - Hearing about other people's experiences studying and taking the exam

# How to Prepare (Personal Opinion)



- Buy Professor Messer's lecture notes that go along with his free videos
- Watch the entire professor Messer course
- After finishing the course take practice exams on LinkedIn Learning and see which domains you are lacking in
- Review those domains till you feel ready to take another practice exam
- Finally take professor Messer's Practice exams and review your wrong questions
- Understanding why the other answers in a question are wrong will help you have the greatest chance of passing the exam (building the process of elimination muscle)

# Leveraging Artificial Intelligence



## GET CREATIVE!!!!

Ex: Using Claude to create a full \*Anki\* flashcard set with all of the acronyms and port numbers (I personally used this one)

- Ask AI questions on topics you struggle to understand
- Ask AI to make a schedule for you for effective time management
- NotebookLM: Created by Google, a AI tool that helps you study (based off of uploaded documents, notes, etc.)

\*open-source flashcard application designed to make memorization highly efficient through spaced repetition (SRS) algorithms\*

# Rider Cybersecurity/Computer Science courses with useful knowledge for the exam



**Get a Head Start!**

CYB-105: Intro to Cybersecurity

CYB-200: Operating Systems and Cybersecurity

CSC-200: Intro to Software Engineering

CSC-260: Computer Networks (\*Very Important\*)

CYB-220: Intro to Cryptography

CYB-240: Ethical Hacking and Penetration Testing

CYB-260: Network Defense and Countermeasure

CYB-300: Developing and Deploying Cybersecurity Programs

# Tips and Tricks for Exam Time



- Do NOT get stuck on PBQ's, skip them and come back after finishing multiple choice questions.
- Instead of having the mindset:
  - "I need to answer \_\_\_\_\_ amount of questions right in order to pass."
- The best mindset is to take **one question at a time** and **try to use process of elimination (If stuck)** to get the correct answer (passing score will figure itself out if you have this mindset)

## References

-[https://www.comptia.org/en/certifications/security/?gad\\_source=1&gad\\_campaignid=22893786717&gbraid=0AAAAAC1g7gxESU0ygnfz\\_k1usIA-ZxTDO&gclid=CjwKCAjwhqfPBhBWEiwAZo196ikNemTEImk4j8IY9WJtYgV9XLGtyUwpa-NWPCh5QNC\\_oBVZJvTC-hoCZwgQAvD\\_BwE#overview](https://www.comptia.org/en/certifications/security/?gad_source=1&gad_campaignid=22893786717&gbraid=0AAAAAC1g7gxESU0ygnfz_k1usIA-ZxTDO&gclid=CjwKCAjwhqfPBhBWEiwAZo196ikNemTEImk4j8IY9WJtYgV9XLGtyUwpa-NWPCh5QNC_oBVZJvTC-hoCZwgQAvD_BwE#overview)

