



# SYSTEMS SPECIALIST TECHNICIAN TEST (SST) TEST GUIDE

## WHY DO AT&T AND ITS AFFILIATES TEST?

At AT&T, we pride ourselves on matching the best jobs with the best people. To do this, we need to better understand your skills and abilities to make sure that you are indeed the right match for the job. Our ultimate goal is to set you up for success in your career at AT&T (that is, if AT&T is the right match for you). Research has shown that tests provide accurate measures of people's skills and abilities and, therefore, we use tests to identify people who are the best match for the job. Our philosophy is simple...if you succeed in your role, then we succeed as a company.

## WHAT IS THE SYSTEMS SPECIALIST TECHNICIAN TEST (SST)?

The SST is designed to measure your knowledge, skills, and abilities to apply concepts, terms, and principles associated with the Systems Specialist Technician position. Although the test contains some factual questions, it emphasizes your understanding of the subject and your ability to apply what you know, not just your memory of facts or formulas. Although there are no prerequisites for taking the SST, if you have no prior training or work experience in dealing with networking, diagnostics, troubleshooting, and windows interfacing, you probably will not do well on the test.

The SST consists of 57 multiple-choice questions. Each question has at least 4 possible answers to choose from. Some questions refer to figures, which will be provided. The scoring of the SST is based on the number of correct answers. There is no penalty for guessing, so it is to your advantage to try as many questions as possible. If you are unsure about the answer to a question, a careful guess should be made.

## WHAT CAN I EXPECT TO SEE ON THE TEST?

The SST covers 14 areas that are important to the job. A brief description of each area is provided. If you know and understand these things and can apply what you know, you should do well on the test.

### **MEDIA CONNECTORS**

Recognize and describe the uses of the following media connectors: RJ-11 (Registered Jack), RJ-45 (Registered Jack), and USB (Universal Serial Bus)

### **MEDIA TYPES**

Recognize the following media types and describe their uses: Category 3, 5, 5e, and 6; UTP (unshielded twisted pair)

### **NETWORK COMPONENTS**

Identify purposes, features and functions of the following network components: hubs, switches, bridges, routers, gateways, NICs (network interface cards), modems, and firewalls

### **OSI MODEL**

Knowledge of what the OSI model is; be able to name the seven layers in the right sequence

### **CLASSFUL IP RANGES**

Identify classful IP (Internet Protocol) ranges for Class A, B, and C and their subnet masks



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## **SUBNETTING**

Identify the purpose of subnetting

## **IP ADDRESSING METHODS**

Identify and differentiate among the following IP (Internet Protocol) addressing methods: static, dynamic, self-assigned (APIPA/Automatic Private Internet Protocol Addressing)

## **TCP/IP PROTOCOLS**

Define the function and uses of the following protocols used in the TCP/IP suite and how to configure connectivity to the Internet: TCP (Transmission Control Protocol), UDP (User Datagram Protocol), FTP (File Transfer Protocol), SMTP (Simple Mail Transfer Protocol), HTTP (Hypertext Transfer Protocol), HTTPS (Hypertext Transfer Protocol Secure), POP3/IMAP4, Telnet, SSH (Secure Shell), ICMP (Internet Control Message Protocol), ARP/RARP (Address Resolution Protocol/Reverse Address Resolution Protocol)

## **DNS AND SNMP PROTOCOLS**

Identify the purpose of network services and protocols DNS (Domain Name Service) and SNMP (Simple Network Management Protocol)

## **WORKSTATION NETWORKING**

Identify the basic capabilities (including media, network protocols, and peer-to-peer server services) needed for client workstations to connect to and use network resources

## **NETWORK DIAGNOSTIC UTILITIES**

Ability to use the appropriate network diagnostic utility given a troubleshooting scenario: Tracert/traceroute, Ping, Arp, Netstat, Nbtstat, Ipconfig/ifconfig, Nslookup

## **DIAGNOSTIC UTILITY OUTPUT**

Given output from one of the network diagnostic utilities listed above, identify the utility and interpret the output

## **TROUBLESHOOTING**

Given a network problem scenario, select an appropriate course of action based on a logical troubleshooting strategy which can include: identifying the symptoms and potential causes, identifying the affected area, establishing what has changed, and selecting the appropriate course of action

## **WINDOWS OS INTERFACES**

Ability to navigate/use the major Windows OS (operating system) interfaces (Windows Explorer, My Computer, Control Panel, computer Management Console, Accessories/System Tools, Command line, Network Neighborhood/My Network Places, Task Bar/systray, Start Menu, Device Menu) and be familiar with their functions



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## WHAT CAN I DO TO PREPARE FOR THE TEST?

At AT&T, our goal in testing is not to cause you to fail; rather, our intent is to set our employees up for success. Remember, we succeed when you succeed. The best way for you to succeed on a given test is to adequately prepare. As illustrated above, the SST requires specific knowledge. Acquiring this knowledge through coursework or independent study is the best way to prepare for this test. Keep in mind, however, that completion of coursework or independent study will not guarantee that you will pass the test.

### **TIPS FOR STUDYING ON YOUR OWN**

If you have some experience in this field or have already taken a course, perhaps some time ago, you should plan a study strategy.

1. Identify Your Weak Areas
  - Read through all the knowledge and skill areas listed.
  - Mark the areas in which you have no training or work experience.
2. Find a Textbook or Website
  - Look for books and websites that cover the subjects you need.
  - Books and websites that have practice problems and exercises to let you check your understanding are the best.
3. Study
  - Identify the sections you need to study.
  - Concentrate on one section at a time.
  - Work the problems and do the exercises.
  - If you have trouble with a topic, read the material again. If you still have trouble, find another source of information. A new explanation often helps.
4. Check Your Progress
  - Answer the review questions contained in your book or on a website to check your progress.

## HOW WILL THIS TEST BE ADMINISTERED?

A member of our Staffing team will provide you with the time and location for your testing session. Try to arrive at the location at least 15 minutes before your scheduled test time to give yourself time to relax before the test begins. You may want to bring a jacket or a sweater in case the temperature in the testing location is not to your liking. Feel free to ask questions before the test begins, and be sure you understand the format of the SST.



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## RETEST INTERVALS

If you do not qualify on the SST, do not be discouraged. Perhaps, this would indicate that this position is really not the best match for you. Who knows – perhaps a better, more closely matched opportunity awaits you. If you feel strongly that this is the right position for you, then your first retest opportunity is at six months. Subsequent retests are at one-year intervals. However, please note that test standards are periodically updated to reflect current abilities and skills required for our jobs. Therefore, it may be necessary to meet new test standards should they be introduced prior to your placement on the job.

## SUMMARY

When you succeed in your job, AT&T succeeds as a company! Successful completion of the SST qualifies you for possible placement into jobs requiring this test. Additional testing may be required for certain positions. See job briefs in your area for additional testing requirements for titles you are interested in.

**Thank you for your interest in starting (or expanding) your career at AT&T!**

**AT&T and its affiliates support and comply with the provisions of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and other Federal and State laws that specifically assist individuals with disabilities. If you have a limiting disability and need special testing arrangements, please ask your local Employment Office or Placement Bureau personnel for information about the testing accommodation process.**