



Mid-South Search & Rescue Dog Association

Serving Tennessee, Mississippi, Arkansas and surrounding states

Looking for Adventure with a Purpose? Become a Search & Rescue Volunteer

Your help is needed!

When people are lost or missing—whether hunters, hikers, children, or Alzheimer’s/dementia patients—a search is organized by your local law enforcement or emergency services agency. Trained volunteers to support and assist in the search effort are usually needed and welcomed.

Be Part of the Solution, Not Part of the Problem

The more knowledge and experience you gain, the more valuable you are as a searcher—and the less likely to get lost yourself!

Effective searchers are knowledgeable—due to their education, experience, or both—concerning these subjects:

- *Basic survival
- *SAR ready pack
- *SAR resources
- *Handling evidence
- *The NIMS Incident Command System
- *SAR clothing
- *Environmental hazards & first aid
- *Personal equipment
- *Land navigation & orienteering
- *Search philosophy
- *Ropes and rescue equipment
- *Clue consciousness
- *Legal concerns for searchers
- *Improvising
- *Travel skills
- *Search tactics
- *Tracking

The National Association for Search & Rescue (NASAR) recommends that any person who functions on SAR missions as a field searcher should be knowledgeable in the above areas and demonstrate their knowledge by passing certification evaluations at the SAR Tech II (or intermediate) level, administered by an approved NASAR evaluator. They offer guidelines for self-training and a course (“The Fundamentals of Search & Rescue”) and a textbook (The FunSAR Book).

Challenging the SAR Tech II Exam:

I. What is it? The SAR Tech II examination consists of

A. A written exam of 145 questions about SAR. A score of 70% (102 correct answers) is required to pass

B. A five-station practical exam:

- **Station #1:** Land Navigation: Use of topographic maps and compass. Candidates complete a course over terrain commonly encountered in the operations area in a specified time frame.
- **Station #2:** Tracking: Candidates identify and mark a footprint track left by the evaluator and follow the track to its end.
- **Station #3:** Rope Skills: Candidates demonstrate the ability to tie four basic knots and a harness with supplied rope and webbing.
- **Station #4:** Route Search: This station entails locating and labeling clues in a given area demonstrating the ability to detect 50% of the clues using a route search tactic.
- **Station #5:** Area Search: This station entails locating and labeling clues in a given area demonstrating the ability to detect 50% of the clues using an area search tactic.

II. How do I get help preparing for this exam? First, check the NASAR website home page (www.nasar.org) and click on “education” for a list of frequently asked questions which include the SAR Tech II Certification Criteria.

Then look for local opportunities to meet, work, and train with those in your area who have already successfully earned SAR Tech II certification, and can thus offer advice, assistance, and tips on preparing for the test.

In the Mid-South region, assistance and advice are available through the Mid-South Search & Rescue Dog Association (MSSARDA) (www.mssarda.org), which has adopted NASAR standards and sponsors training and certification opportunities for SAR Tech II candidates near the Memphis area. (*All MSSARDA K-9 teams must first earn SAR Tech II certification before they can qualify as mission-ready SAR K-9 teams.*)

III. Where and when is it offered? Testing opportunities nationwide are posted on the website at www.nasar.org.

NASAR SAR Tech II training and exam opportunities are now being scheduled in the Holly Springs, MS, area. Contact Judy Otto, MSSARDA Training Coordinator, for information, and to add your name to the list of those interested in participating.

**For more information and current updates re NASAR standards and educational opportunities, visit www.nasar.org and click on “Education”.*

**For information about training and serving with a SAR K9, visit www.mssarda.org or contact mssarda.unit@gmail.com.*