

Attention Second Year MD Students: Tips to Help Prepare for Step 1



The Learning Center is here to help you achieve success on your USMLE Step 1 exam. Follow the steps below to get moving on that road to success:

1 Pick your test day and sign up.

2 Choose your resources; limit yourself to six including UWorld & First Aid.

3 Organize your topics.

- Rate each topic/subject area on a scale of 1-3.
- Using your rating system, order the topics mixing up hard and less hard.
- Allocate 1-3 days/topic for review depending on difficulty level.

4 Decide how to manage your days. We recommend keeping your days relatively consistent so you don't have to think too much about it. One suggestion is to have 3 blocks/day, each 2-4 hours long. For example, Week 1 might look like this...

- Block 1 (8am-11) – 40 UWorld questions in timed mode/mixed topics & review.
- Break 11am-12pm.
- Block 2 (12pm-3pm) – topic review based on your rating system from #3 above.
- Break 3pm-4pm.
- Block 3 (4pm-7) – continue to practice information retrieval (flash cards, making charts or concept maps, studying with a partner, etc.).

5 By week 2 you will likely want to increase to 2 blocks of Uworld questions for at least some of the time. By week three, you should be up to 2 blocks a day on most days. By week four you can build in some, but not all, 3-block days if you feel up to it.

6 Breaks.

- Build in short breaks during the day at the rate of about 10 mins/hour.
- Build in at least one, but preferably two, longer breaks into each study day.
- Pick a time to stop each day and be resolute about stopping! Make it early enough to give yourself time to wind down before bed.
- Take one full day off each week. You need time to recharge!

7 Practice Exams.

- About once every 7-10 days take a practice exam. This will likely take most of the day. Spend the next day reviewing your answers. Keep in mind that it will take time to see significant improvement.
- Take at least 3-4 practice exams over the course of your dedicated study time.
- Take your last practice exam 7-10 days before Test Day.

8 Some more tips -

- Build in time to take care of yourself everyday (exercise, eating healthy, etc.).
- Form a study group with 1 or 2 other people and try to meet up once a week.
- Mix up your study locations.
- Check out your testing site ahead of time to get a lay of the land.
- The day before Test Day - Relax!

9 Take care of yourself as you go! Try your best to get enough sleep, exercise, healthy food, and hydrate. Build in some down time every day. Enlist your family and friends for support. We need each other to get through hard things.

Studying for this exam is hard. It's exhausting, isolating, and can be discouraging. We are here to support you in this process. Call our office or email us today to make an appointment with an Academic Success Coach.