

USMLE Step 1 Tips

1. Study from just a few books (First Aid, Clinical Micro made simple, Boards and Wards) But really learn them well.
2. Use USMLE world for questions study first aid
3. As for your more likely concern in the near(er) future, Step 1: This test is a marathon. You have to study to do well. There is a lot of material, but you have to focus.
4. Advice: pick a few books, including one overview book
5. Once you have an overview book, supplement with a few topic books. I personally liked the BRS Physiology, Pathology, and Pharmacology books, plus there is a review book/book of questions/workbook by Robbins to "go along with" the massive Robbins textbook of pathology. I'm not (in any way) suggesting you read the Robbins textbook, but I found the book of questions (complete with explanations of the correct answers) to be quite helpful. That was all I used for books, and I think that worked out well. I tried to study topics together (one chapter from Step-Up plus related chapters in the physiology and pathology books), rather than working through each book individually. Add to that doing massive numbers of questions from Kaplan Q-Bank, and actually studying the explanations for the answers (very helpful), and you're set. Overall, it's not "fun," but it is manageable. If you can study for other tests, you can study for this one and do well. Make a plan, and stick to it.
6. Write notes in your main review book (1st Aid or Step Up)
7. If you're mostly studying on your own, make sure you find someone to meet up with periodically to compare notes and see if you're missing anything
8. Memorize the rapid review at the back of 1st Aid
9. Give yourself as much time as you think you need, even if it seems like other people are taking less time (or vice-versa)
10. Leave a couple days at the end to do a quick review
11. Do not study more than 3 - 3 ½ weeks regardless if you are going for a high score or just want to pass
12. Do not try to study while you are still in HGD
13. Make sure to keep your healthy lifestyle...eat regularly, sleep as usual-do not over study

14. Try to decrease your stress levels by driving to the test center before, planning alternate routes, prepare your food for that day ahead-this is especially important the day before the test.
15. Bring in ear plugs during the test to block any noise (keyboards, typing, coughing etc.)
16. Don't second guess yourself on the test...the test is self explanatory so don't trick yourself and go with what you know!
17. Questions asked in paragraphs- always read the question at the end of the paragraph first. That way you can look for the information you need in the paragraph and answer
18. Do take the time to read and answer Kaplan Online Q Bank questions
19. Use FIRST AID as your core resource and know its content VERY well.
20. Use other review books to supplement weaker areas. The back of FIRST AID has good reviews of these.
21. BEST Review Books: BRS Pathology and Physiology; Lippincott's Pharmacology and Biochemistry and their Pharmacology Flash Cards; Microbiology Made Ridiculously Simple; High Yield Behavioral Science and Neuroanatomy
22. BEST Questions: Q Bank –
 - a) take all sections timed to simulate exam
 - b) Do not worry if you do poorly these questions are harder and are good for that reason, because you will get the easy ones anyway!
 - c) READ all the explanations.
23. Robbins Review -- for intensive path questions.
 - a) NMS -- for more accurate portrayal of STEP 1 level of difficulty.
24. Make a schedule and stick to it. You do not have time to cover 2 years worth of material.
25. DO NOT study from your syllabi or core textbooks. You do not have sufficient time for this sort of review and this is LOW YIELD!
26. Primary Focus Area: 2nd year patho-physiology of all systems.
27. Secondary Focus Areas: pharmacology, behavioral science, physiology.
28. DO NOT study any more anatomy or embryology than is in FIRST AID.
29. Focus on your weakest areas.

30. Do not ignore Behavioral Sciences because this is a HIGH YIELD area where you can pick up easy points!

31. The gaps in our education for STEP 1 are largely around rare, metabolic and genetic diseases. FIRST AID covers this well.

32. Stay healthy, eat good food, maintain relationships, exercise and camaraderie!

Last but not least...GOOD LUCK! ☺