Survey Results for students who took the USMLE Step 1 for the first time in June 2010.

183 Total Responses

Ratings listed in conjunction with the materials/courses used are based on a scale of:
1 = Poor; 2 = Fair; 3 = Good and 4 = Excellent. Respondents who indicated “Not applicable”
were not included in the calculation of the average score for any item.

Which USMLE Step One materials/courses did you use?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Material</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
<th>Rating</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Online Qbank</td>
<td>95.1%</td>
<td>3.21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Comprehensive Basic Science Exam</td>
<td>91.8%</td>
<td>3.05</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Doctors in Training (Live)</td>
<td>20.2%</td>
<td>3.16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Doctors in Training (Online)</td>
<td>59.0%</td>
<td>3.14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Goljan</td>
<td>71.2%</td>
<td>3.72</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>USMLE World</td>
<td>88.0%</td>
<td>3.85</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kaplan Live</td>
<td>1.1%</td>
<td>3.50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kaplan Online</td>
<td>4.9%</td>
<td>3.22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Falcon Live</td>
<td>1.1%</td>
<td>3.50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Falcon Online</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PASS Live</td>
<td>1.1%</td>
<td>3.50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>First Aid</td>
<td>97.3%</td>
<td>3.83</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BRS</td>
<td>36.6%</td>
<td>2.97</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>10.4%</td>
<td>3.42</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

How Much Qbank did you do?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Percentage</th>
<th>Rating</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.6%</td>
<td>None</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9.3%</td>
<td>0-25%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>23.5%</td>
<td>25-50%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>23.0%</td>
<td>50-75%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>43.7%</td>
<td>75-100%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

How Much USMLE World did you do?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Percentage</th>
<th>Rating</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>9.8%</td>
<td>None</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.7%</td>
<td>0-25%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12.0%</td>
<td>25-50%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19.1%</td>
<td>50-75%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>57.4%</td>
<td>75-100%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Did you use Qbank for your MS 2 courses?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Percentage</th>
<th>Answer</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>60.1%</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>35.5%</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Did you use Qbank mainly after finals?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Percentage</th>
<th>Answer</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>39.9%</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>23.0%</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
When did you start serious review/study for Step One?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Percentage</th>
<th>Time</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>0%</td>
<td>1st Semester</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>38.3%</td>
<td>January</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>36.1%</td>
<td>Spring Break</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>24.6%</td>
<td>After finals</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Did you take most Step 1 exam in the LRC?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Percentage</th>
<th>Answer</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>13.7%</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>86.9%</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

If you took the mock Step 1 exam in the LRC, did you find it useful?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Percentage</th>
<th>Answer</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>11%</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.2%</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Did you take the practice exam at Prometrics?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Percentage</th>
<th>Answer</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>12.6%</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>88.5%</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

If you took the practice exam at Prometrics, did you find it useful?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Percentage</th>
<th>Answer</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>8.7%</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0.5%</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Testing Center Information

- **Abilene**: No comments recorded.
- **Austin**: No comments recorded.
- **Burlington, MA**: No comments recorded.
- **Coit Rd, Dallas**: No comments recorded.
- **Diana Lane**: Awesome center!
- **Harwin**: No problems. Power went out twice. Computer system didn’t work at first, so the test started almost an hour late. My computer had problems with printing so it was questioned if I even took the test (after finishing it) because the confirmation page didn’t print. They called and cancelled my exam 2 days before I was scheduled to take it. Their reasoning was “technical difficulties”. Luckily they opened up a new testing center two days later with available exam. Maintenance began hammering on the floor above, but proctors rectified it quickly after I had the opportunity to notify them.
- **Imperial Valley**: The power went out. FYI, everything is saved.
- **Lakeforest, CA**: No comments recorded.
- **Lamar University**: No comments recorded.
- **New Haven, CT**: No comments recorded.
- **NW Freeway**: No comments recorded.
- **San Antonio**: No comments recorded.
Comments on Qbank
- Too detail oriented compared to step
- Too specific on many questions.
- Great but I preferred World which seemed more similar to the real exam
- Not my top choice.
- Qbank has good explanations – level of difficulty too much for some subjects
- Sometimes too obscure/detail-orientated
- Doing questions before the test is a MUST.
- Had good explanations
- Great to begin with
- More questions were poorly worded or wrong as compared to USMLE World
- Good during second year
- Not as representative of Step 1 as World

Comments on Comprehensive Basic Science exams
- Good assessment
- The test was short and the questions were easy.
- Good score predictor and good motivation to study more.
- I really liked being able to track my progress on the NBME exams. I also really appreciated getting a voucher from the school because taking it on the computer felt more like the test experience.
- Used the breakdown to focus on my weaknesses
- Helps you stimulate real exam in terms of questions and timing
- Would find it more beneficial if we took them on computers.
- Good to monitor progress.
- Pretty representative
- Questions seemed too easy when compared with Qbank and USMLE World
- Great practice.

Comments on Doctors in Training LIVE
- A good way to pace yourself
- Good but not amazing.
- Not sure that it is worth the money

Comments on Doctors in Training Online
- I watched 3 lectures before canceling. Goljan was better.
- Not necessary if you’ve gone through First Aid on your own.
- I did 2 days online and didn’t like it.
- He read the First Aid to you. I felt that was unnecessary. Listening to Goljan audio is much higher yield.
- It got me through the material
- Do not take. Boring. Just reads First Aid.
Because of DIT, I paid more attention to things I would have avoided.

Being able to get online was awesome. It’s useful if you’re worrying about not passing; otherwise, you probably won’t learn much.

Helped me manage my time more than anything else

Well organized

It is a rapid way to go through all First Aid and keep you on track but doesn’t really teach you anything new.

He goes through First Aid after finals. I thought it was great because I don’t think it would have been as productive for me to go through it by myself again.

He reads First Aid to you. He does add some extra good information that is not in First Aid. It took me much longer to view the videos online than I anticipated.

Good review – not enough though.

Fine for review. Kept me honest about reviewing everything.

Comments on Goljan

I only listened to a few hours but they were great.

Book and audio are very helpful!

Lectures on ipod.

Audio lectures are on xfiles; very important to use

Second best thing to do

Must listen

Audio files were wonderful.

Entertaining, good way to make you think

Great resource if you have time.

Good for review

Start in the fall

Amazing, so true to the test and helpful for 2nd year too.

Genius! Use for Pathology exams too.

Use for daily lectures

Very helpful for school and step. A must!

Most high yield of all.

Connects all subjects

Loved. I remembered his voice on test questions.
Comments on USMLE World

- Amazing; did all the questions and tests. Helped the most.
- Slightly too detail oriented
- Great questions
- World was extremely similar to the actual exam in terms of format and questions.
- Best thing to do
- If you don’t do anything else do this.
- BEST!
- Does not give First Aid page numbers in explanations
- Must do
- Questions were great and some of them showed up on my exam
- Program looks exactly like the exam
- Format identical to step. A must do!
- Best test resource, in my opinion
- Found this resource very helpful
- Best source out there

Comments on First Aid

- Invaluable.
- Very good to review.
- Low to high yield info
- Don’t use any other books besides First Aid.
- Although excellent, this book still leaves out a minimum 30% of testable material.
- Read through at least twice.
- Exceptional to use throughout second year
- Essential. Go through at least three times well.
- Main study source
- As boring as it was, it did teach me a lot.

Comments on BRS

- Physiology was great.
- Used sparingly.

Other Materials

High Yield Series

- Read through whole book. Didn’t have much neurology on step but felt very comfortable entering the test.
Rapid Review Pathology

- More or less the same information as First Aid

USMLE Rx

- >75%
- Very good for studying for board finals and just memorizing the information in First Aid. Not as good at getting used to tough question presentations live on the real test.
- Great for final exam studies

My one best piece of advice for Step 1 preparation is:

- Don’t rely too heavily on Qbank as a representation of what will be on the test.
- Start early. Do all the questions.
- Before anything else, make sure to fully memorize First Aid and USMLE World.
- Do USMLE World and use First Aid. Stay confident and you’ll do great.
- Relax. It’s totally doable.
- Use USMLE World!!!
- Do questions and learn the big take home message from your mistakes.
- Start early. Study for understanding, not memorization.
- Don’t freak out. The Qbanks are very representative of the real test.
- Use USMLE World, Kaplan Qbank and USMLE Rx!!! The more questions the better.
- Take a practice test at the testing center.
- Doctors in Training was *highly* useful, as was tutor mode on question banks.
- Do 100% of USMLE World because the questions are very similar to the real questions.
- Start reviewing First Aid early.
- Listen to Goljan audio with rapid review. He gives a general overview and then explains the processes behind the pain.
- Start early. It’s better to get toward the end and feel over-prepared than feeling like you didn’t have enough time to prepare. It’s better to move the test date up rather than pushing it against the start of third year.
- Start studying early in the semester by using First Aid as a guide for second year courses.
- Start studying early, read First Aid many times, actually memorizing it.
- Use Kaplan Qbank during the year.
- Do all the USMLE World. The format and questions were very similar to the actual exam.
- Study early and know the details not just the general aspects of condition/disease/system.
- Focus on doing the question banks.
• Do no listen to others about the exam. Focus on what you need to do to get the score you want.
• Read First Aid multiple times to make it stick. Goljan is great for integration of all you learn, listen to him. USMLE World is harder than Qbank but more real.
• Start early.
• Repeat…live, eat, breath USMLE. Focus on your weaknesses early on.
• Budget time to complete USMLE World and make sure to relax the night before.
• Do as many questions as possible and take USMLE World practice exams.
• Do what works for you and don’t get intimidated by how other people are doing things.
• Use World as a tool to learn, NOT as an assessment of where you stand.
• You don’t have to sit down and read First Aid.
• Start in January and try to do a little every day.
• Study over the whole year slowly, the first month cram is too intense.
• Correlate class material with First Aid as soon as possible to familiarize yourself.
• Do questions and understand Physiology well.
• Make sure you take care of MS II first.
• Start early. Go over and over and over the material.
• Do lots of questions-especially try to finish USMLE World & USMLE Rx. Read First Aid.
• Always start earlier and questions are more important than material when you need to choose.
• Do not freak out. There is no possible way to cover all testable material. Luckily, it doesn’t matter as the score is based on a standardized curve. An extra 2-3 days or even a week of studying will not improve your score. Take at least 2 weeks off before beginning 3rd year.
• Closer to the exam, I had greater difficulty concentrating and I wasn’t able to stick with my study plan of heavy preparing 2 days before, which upset me. I wish I had known to keep that in mind when making my schedule.
• Study more than you think you need to. Try to incorporate class study with step study. Relax and trust in your knowledge.
• First Aid and Goljan throughout second year. USMLE World right after finals.
• Study as you go along with classes.
• Listen to Goljan audio and read Rapid Review Pathology as you cover each section in class.
• Do not worry about what other people are doing to prepare for step 1. Trust yourself.
• Study more Biochemistry.
• You do not have to read/memorize First aid if you don’t like it. Just because everyone else says it’s great doesn’t mean it is for you. I learned the best by doing Qbank and wish I had spent more time doing questions than First Aid.
• USMLE World and First Aid are the best resources to use.
• Just do something. Try your best and relax knowing you did your best.
• First Aid and Goljan audio and USMLE World is sufficient to do really, really well on step 1.
• Listen to Goljan in fall semester. Learn don’t memorize!
• Don’t over look the details.
• Know First Aid.
• Do questions! USMLE World was very similar to the real test.
• Practice exams and online Qbanks are very useful.
• Do as many questions as you can. World is most similar to the exam. Rx is good for shelf exams.
• Use First Aid for annotation starting day 1 of 2nd year because the syllabi are a useful source for information not contained in the First Aid but will be on step 1.
• Start USMLE World not Qbank in January.
• Start early and do as many questions as possible. I completed World and Kaplan Qbank and some of Rx and that was infinitely more useful than DIT. Read First Aid actively and thoroughly several times.
• Remember Anatomy
• Learn the information well the first time. Step studying should be review. If you have a choice between continuing questions or reading a review book, then read the book. Questions will help you get the mindset but won’t help you understand the content.
• Don’t use too many resources.
• Start in January and put in at least 3 hours a day.
• Finish World and study with partners
• Relax the day before the exam. Start studying early (January).
• Do as many questions as possible before the test. When you finally get to the test day, you will have seen many of the questions. Also, it’s not necessary to study too early. Just begin relating your 2nd year courses to First Aid.
• Find time for friends and family.
• Start with questions as soon as the school gives you access to Kaplan Qbank. It is extremely useful in showing you how far you have come in your studying and how much more you need to do.
• Read questions and answers in Qbank and World. Incorrect and correct answer explanations.
• Diversity study methods
• Don’t get scared into signing up for DIT.
• Put in the time
• Start reading First Aid from day one.
• Take the exam as close to finals as you can.
• Review
• Read First Aid twice and do as many questions as possible
• Trust that you know the information. Study hard.
• Many students have the idea that step is totally removed from basic sciences and say “I’ll just study really hard and nail step.” Bad idea – study for the first two years and that will be a great jumping off point for the review
process prior to the test. Goljan is excellent. Start using his lectures at the beginning of second year. A good idea at the beginning of studying for step is to give some quality time to subjects you might not have enjoyed because realizing you have three weeks to re-learn neuroscience/anatomy with a month to go before step is not a good feeling. Everyone’s test is different and you will be frustrated that you studied some “4 star topic” with no questions on your test. There’s no way around it – study everything anyway.

- Listen to Goljan audio lectures. Read First Aid three times. Schedule your step 1-2 weeks after DIT.
- Be realistic about how much you can get done during the school year
- Listen to Goljan lectures and start early
- Create a schedule, stick to it; take the NBME practice exams.
- It’s not the time to change your study strategy from what has been working for you.
- Start early. Try to memorize information as you answer questions. And take your first two years seriously because the test has lots of random information.
- Go through all of Qbank.
- Practice questions.
- Become familiar with First Aid early.
- USMLE World combined with First Aid review and annotation was the main study regimen I used and I felt well prepared for my test.
- Use other resources besides First Aid and USMLE World.
- Start early with questions and use First Aid for 2nd year courses. Keep up!
- Read First Aid a few times.
- Find your study style and go with it. Don’t listen to others and start freaking out.
- Questions, do as many as possible
- Start listening to Goljan lectures in the car in January even if you don’t understand what he’s talking about. Use USMLE Rx for Pharmacology and Pathology finals but nothing else. If you are limited on time, use World over Qbank.
- Start doing Qbank questions early with classes so you can focus on reviewing after finals
- First Aid and Rapid Review and review questions (World & Qbank)
- Do all of one question bank and take DIT course
- Start using First Aid at the beginning of second year to study for classes that way you will be familiar with the book and will have already been through it at least once by second semester. Also start listening to Goljan to help prepare for medical school exams.
- Multiple reading of First Aid. Make sure to take notes in your First Aid.
- Do the entire USMLE World. Memorize First Aid.
- Start now. Have the bind cut off the First Aid book at Kinko’s and spiral bind it with vinyl covers.
- My boyfriend is a resident and was an amazing reference. I would recommend more sessions with senior students.