Survey Results for students who took the USMLE Step 1 for the first time in June 2014.

193 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/Course</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
<th>Rating</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Online Qbank</td>
<td>63.7%</td>
<td>2.89</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Comprehensive Basic Science Exam</td>
<td>87.6%</td>
<td>3.29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Doctors in Training</td>
<td>34.2%</td>
<td>2.64</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Goljan</td>
<td>59.6%</td>
<td>3.49</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>USMLE World</td>
<td>98.9%</td>
<td>3.85</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>USMLE Rx</td>
<td>75.1%</td>
<td>3.11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kaplan Online</td>
<td>24.9%</td>
<td>2.42</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Falcon Live</td>
<td>.52%</td>
<td>1.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Falcon Online</td>
<td>.52%</td>
<td>4.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Falcon First Aid</td>
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<tr>
<td>First Aid</td>
<td>91.2%</td>
<td>3.73</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BRS</td>
<td>29.5%</td>
<td>2.68</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Osmosis</td>
<td>7.25%</td>
<td>1.75</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Picmonic</td>
<td>46.1%</td>
<td>3.30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rapid Review</td>
<td>18.7%</td>
<td>3.11</td>
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<tr>
<td>Pathoma</td>
<td>84.0%</td>
<td>3.81</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>.52%</td>
<td>2.00</td>
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</table>

How much Qbank did you do?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Percentage</th>
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</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>15.2%</td>
<td>None</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>29.8%</td>
<td>0-25%</td>
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<tr>
<td>19.1%</td>
<td>25-50%</td>
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<tr>
<td>10.7%</td>
<td>50-75%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25.3%</td>
<td>75-100%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

How much USMLE World did you do?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Percentage</th>
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</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>.5%</td>
<td>0-25%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.7%</td>
<td>25-50%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.2%</td>
<td>50-75%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>89.6%</td>
<td>75-100%</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

How much USMLE Rx did you do?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Percentage</th>
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</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>16.8%</td>
<td>None</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14.1%</td>
<td>0-25%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14.1%</td>
<td>25-50%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19.0%</td>
<td>50-75%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>35.9%</td>
<td>75-100%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Did you use Qbank for your MS 2 courses?
   25.4% Yes
   74.6% No

Did you use Qbank mainly after finals?
   29% Yes
   71% No

When did you start serious review/study for Step One?
   1.0% 1st Semester
   57.4% January
   33.2% Spring Break
   8.4% After finals

Did you take the practice exam at Prometrics?
   7.25% Yes
   92.75% No

If you took the practice exam at Prometrics, did you find it useful?
   5.2% Yes
   94.8% No

Testing Center Information

Arizona No comments recorded.
Austin, TX No comments recorded.
Beaumont No comments recorded.
Bedford No comments recorded.
Clear Lake No comments recorded.
Dallas, TX No comments recorded.
Denver, CO No comments recorded.
Diana Lane No comments recorded.
Euless, TX No comments recorded.
Greenspoint No comments recorded.
Greenville, SC No comments recorded.
Harwin No comments recorded.
Imperial Valley No comments recorded.
Lansing, MI No comments recorded.
NW Freeway No comments recorded.
San Antonio, TX No comments recorded.
Comments on Qbank

- Difficult format
- For specific topics only quiz
- Kaplan software has lots of bugs & glitches
- Kaplan sucked
- Questions are a bit too detailed
- Questions were not true USMLE style – my least favorite bank
- Seemed a bit harder than step
- Use first to get an idea of questions
- Lots of glitches, slow

Comments on CBSE

- Best way to get a sense of the test environment
- Do all the online NBME for practice
- Good for stamina and getting familiar with the test software
- Good prep for vignette style questions
- Good to check your testing stamina and following on sections
- Great for boosting confidence
- More challenging questions on real exam
- Not reflective of question style but was told it’s a good predictor of score
- Only helpful if you pay extra for extended feedback
- The questions weren’t representative of the exam
- Very accurate
- Wish it had extended feedback

Comments on Doctors in Training

- Did about 60-70% of it, finish First Aid first
- Good resource if no other resource available or a quick review
- Waste of money

Comments on Goljan

- Audio was great when driving, helps reinforce.
- Enjoyable videos allowed me to make it through a much needed final pass of First Aid.
- Goljan is gold. Listen to all of it.
- Good for driving during second year and Pathology review
- Good to listen to along with Pathology course
- Great at integrating concepts in a simple way
- Great explanations
- Listen whenever you can
- Love! Listened at the gym
- Puts it all together
- Really helped my Pathology score
- Used mainly for reference/clarifications
- Very good correlations to other copies

Comments on USMLE World
- #1 source, most similar style of questions to step
- Best for preparation
- Do this early on so you get through it all
- Fantastic!
- First study tool
- Good
- Great test bank, it was pretty representative of the test
- Huge, go through twice if you have time
- Really liked explanations
- Master resource
- Really good to get used to the step style questions
- Seemed a bit easier then dedicated time to finish
- Start early, read and understand
- Style of questions is right on with NBME
- The BEST resource
- Very high yield

Comments on USMLE Rx
- A bit biased toward First Aid information. I used it to gage my reading comprehension after reading a chapter, but not for general step 1 study
- Barely used
- Best for early studying
- Good accompaniment to First Aid
- Good for early study & classes
- Good to figure out how much of First Aid you’re retaining
- Helped me get a handle on First Aid
- Nice to have Rx instead of Kaplan
- Questions are too simple
- Use between Kaplan and UWorld

Comments on First Aid
- A must have
- Amazing, great resource
- Best review source!
- Boring but effective
- First Aid is solid. Memorize it.
- First Aid is good but be sure to get supplements.
- Go through this at least twice.
- Good but possible learning is not as efficient
• Good for overview, lacks details if not familiar
• Not enough by itself – an outline
• People need to understand that it is only 75%
• The step bible!
• Wish the Immunology section was better organized

Comments on BRS
• BRS Physiology is fantastic
• BRS Physiology to review relevant organ systems during MS2 is useful
• Good with classes Physiology/Anatomy/Biochemistry
• In depth, probably excessive for step
• Mostly Physiology
• Too long to get through
• Too long use for specific topics
• Wish I had more time to read during the year

My one best piece of advice for Step 1 preparation is:
• Annotate first aid and using other resources
• Be comfortable with a certain level at uncertainty. It's hard for everyone, not just you!
• Begin question banks at the start of second year and go by subject. By the time you start the second semester, you should do review questions of all previous subjects as well.
• Choose your study method early and don’t change it once you’re one month away from your test date (AND don’t try to compare yourself to your classmates
• Complete different question banks & review missed questions
• Constantly take practice exams to gauge your strengths and weaknesses. Review Qbank explanations in depth.
• Cram short-term memory stuff the day before
• Decide what resources you want to use and make a detailed study plan to map out how you will complete them.
• Do all of Uworld and expect crazy questions on the actual exam.
• Do all of Uworld at last once and do all of the NBME exams that you can. Buy the extended feedback!
• Do as many practice questions as possible from all sources.
• Do as many questions as possible, more importantly after finishing First Aid once. First Aid is very bare bones of what you need to know so that should be covered first.
• Try to complete all three Qbanks
• Don’t burn out!
• Do questions everyday starting early on.
• Do questions early or before finals.
• Do Qbank questions with classes. Firecracker started early and finished will force you to get a good score.
• Do not push back your test date. Set up your day, commit to it, and you will be fine.
• Do not rush through material. It is better to take the time to completely understand material before moving on. Go through step resources with class material to maximize exposure.
• Do not neglect yourself. Physical, emotional and mental well-being is important. Continue doing the things that make you happy. This will make the time spent studying easier.
• Do Pathoma, First Aid & UWorld. Study long term. Add other resources after mastering these.
• Do Rx during the year, UWorld for finals and after finals, and all the online NBMEs.
• Don’t freak out in January during MS3 panel, you have plenty of time to study during the year.
• Don’t get too stressed. Make schedule, exercise and sleep well. Practice waking up at the same time as you will on test day.
• Don’t panic, just study hard. It’ll be fine.
• Don’t use Qbank. Uworld is best!
• Don’t use too many resources. UWorld and First Aid complement each other. For each type of resource, exhaust each before beginning another.
• During your entire second year, ask “why” to every concept presented – this information will not always be clear but it is essential for the majority of step 1 questions. Also start studying a month before you think you need to.
• Find your learning style and what resources works best for you
• First Aid cases were great. UWorld was essential.
• Finish your first pass of First Aid as quick as possible.
• First Aid multiple times.
• Focus on UWorld, Golijan and any other sources for questions. Don’t waste time reading First Aid. First Aid should only be used as a resource.
• First Aid multiple times
• Get through all Qbanks
• Finish Qbanks & review your missed/marked questions
• First Aid/UWorld; take only 4 weeks + 2 weeks off!
• Get Pathoma and start using it throughout second year. Start at least light studying in January but don’t beat yourself up
• Give yourself time around your support systems and doing things for your own health.
• Go through UWorld twice.
• Golijan, Rapid Review, UWorld and First Aid
• Have a plan & use crammasters app if you don’t want to make a plan
• I started too late and never reached my goals & regretted not starting in January even though back then it felt like I had time
• If you are doing UWorld, try to do as many sets per day (after finals). Step is a marathon and this really helped. Study hard for shelf finals!
• If you don’t know what to do just do anything; it’s better than nothing.
• Just do questions
• Just try hard and work hard. You can’t know everything.
• Keep a positive attitude!
- Do timed question sets to practice timing.
- Know that First Aid is only half of the book; you have to put in the other half from other sources (UWorld or something)
- Learn First Aid, study hard for classes during second year. They do a great job in preparing you for the exam.
- Make a schedule and choose a limited number of resources and try to stick to that plan! It’s easy to get overwhelmed by your resources, classmates, etc. Try to close the door on that.
- Make sure to review content close to exam date and not just questions so that the material is fresh in your mind.
- Pace yourself! Set a goal, do a chunk every day and allow yourself breaks! Mental health is critically important.
- Pick your resources early, do NOT try to use too many resources. Understand everything in your first pass through the material then go back and memorize.
- Picmonic early during classes first and second year
- Practice NBME, UWorld
- Questions – do them; as many as possible
- Really try hard to keep learning actively and trying to solidify concept. No question bank encompasses all of the types of questions on step.
- Relax the day before! There really is nothing you can do the day before and the best thing to do is relax.
- Remember to breathe/take deep breaths when freaking out. Just remember it will be done at some point – but it’s worth it to put in as many hours as you can but relax in the end it’s just an exam
- Save a week after USMLE to relax and review First Aid again. Much easier after finishing USMLE World.
- Start before finals and take condensed notes for future reference.
- Start early and do a lot of practice questions.
- Start early, make a plan with some catch up days and stick to it. You must do questions and practice exams.
- Diagnose your weaknesses and work on those.
- Start seriously after spring break; do not move your test back; first read through work on Mneumonics and keep motivated.
- Start studying as soon as possible (go through First Aid as you go through particular topics in class)
- NBME 15 & 16 are close to the real thing.
- Start with the big concepts and then learn the details; test is very random
- Stay balanced – keep exercising, eating well, and having fun in small doses.
- Stay calm.
- Study all the time. It may not feel like enough but it is.
- Don’t just “dump” knowledge after block exams.
- Don’t feel discouraged if others have a different study plan.
- Take exams. Rest beforehand. NBME practice was more representative than UWorld
- Take it seriously early
• Take step early, I took it June 3rd and having studied for finals really helped me prepare
• Take it early after finals; studying for another week will NOT help you. But an extra
  week of vacation WILL help you.
• Use as many resources as possible.
• Use lots of practice questions
• Use Pathoma along with classes, it was amazing.
• Use UWORLD as a learning tool, not just question assessment. Read over explanations
  even in questions you get and all answer choices.
• Use UWORLD a lot! Study and answer explanations.
• UWORLD is more important than First Aid
• Work hard throughout second year, come up with a plan and stay focused. Remember
  to stay positive, it’s difficult at first but comes together at the end! Leave yourself some
  time off before third year.
• Work hard, UWORLD, First Aid, Pathoma is the best. Identify and work on your
  weaknesses
• You can’t know everything! So don’t try to and relax!