2015 USMLE Step I Survey

1. **When did you start reviewing specifically for Step I? (n=108)**
   - During the first semester of M2 year: 7.4%
   - During the holiday break or prior to spring break M2 year: 6.5%
   - During or after spring break (before the last core ended): 15.7%
   - After the last core of the M2 year ended: 70.3%

2. **How did you plan your study schedule for Step I?**
   - 6 weeks total. First 5 weeks of study period = FIRST pass of First Aid/Pathoma/SketchyMicro/UWorld. Wanted to slowly digest the material and I made Anki cards for every pathogenesis/disease/symptoms/etc that I knew I would need to go over again. Anki allowed me to stay on schedule with new topics each day, while allowing for "spaced repetition" on my previously made high-yield flashcards. So essentially, I "went through" First Aid once but I had seen all of my forgettable items at least 6-8 times before the exam itself... spaced out so that I really could remember it. Last week was spent doing more UWorld questions (I only finished about 75% -- don't worry about finishing all of them), running through flashcards one more time, and honestly just taking it easy. Don't burn yourself out right before the exam! (last pitch about Anki -- I still run through daily clinically relevant flashcards so that I won't forget Step 1 material throughout third year (or life). an added benefit!)
   - 6.5 wks
   - Asked upperclassmen what their schedule was like. Made a calendar with my goals for all the days, which included DIT, UWORLD, First Aid, SketchyMicro & Pathoma. Do half day the day before the exam, relax & get a good night's sleep.
   - Based off of DIT study schedule and a schedule created by previous and current students studying for the exam
   - Based on Cram fighter for Pathos and First AID for dedicated review and a general question goal in UWORLD throughout the year.
   - Based on resources: I set a goal of # of pages I wanted to get through in First Aid, # of hours in Pathoma, # of questions in UWorld.
   - Based on the outline of first aid and pathoma
   - By trial and error!
   - Carefully. Asked classmates.
   - Cram Fighter (14 students listed only this)
   - Cram fighter ( for the first two weeks then I did my own thing)
   - Cram Fighter, but I planned on getting through First Aid once but ended up making it twice
   - Cramfighter and intuition, because Cramfighter kept giving me too many pages to read per day
   - Cramfighter was helpful to initially pace how much material I needed to cover each day. As I went through the study period, I didn't closely follow exactly what topics it had presented for me, but it was useful to get an idea of the workload I needed to cover each day.
   - Decided which materials I wanted to use within the time I had and tried to divide them up evenly
   - Discussed with classmates and upper classmen
   - DIT
   - DIT 21 day plan 6 days a week then review last week.
   - DIT videos in the morning, reviewing the same material in First Aid in the afternoon. 6 days a week. Usually 8-10 hours per day
   - Doctors in training
   - Doctors in Training planned out a schedule for me.
   - Excel spreadsheet focusing on dividing up UWWorld, FA, and Pathoma at least twice
   - Excel spreadsheet. Wrote out activity and topic for every day.
   - Followed DIT schedule
• Friends and colleagues advice
• Googled/talked to upperclassmen about resources then used cram fighter to organize my days
• Guesswork
• I based it on First Aid. I just gave myself a certain amount of timer per chapter and reviewed other sources and did focused UWorld questions.
• I broke the material up into sections, specific for organ system, biochemistry, cell bio/path/histo, and ICE information. I studied anatomy, physiology, embryology, pharmacology, and pathology for each system while I was in that section. I figured how many days I had to study and divided it amongst the subjects. Within each subject I took UWorld quizzes, studied First Aid, and reviewed my condensed notes from each core to fill in any gaps. I left some days closer to the test date to quickly review the information, especially the stuff I had studied first.
• I did dit, so I followed their schedule.
• I did doctors in training so i followed that schedule
• I didn’t.
• I divided the sections of DIT and First Aid to compete by 2 weeks out. I used the last 2 weeks to focus on my weak areas. I used u world throughout all of studying.
• I followed a video guided program for 18 days while completing question bank questions and then continued with questions and more reading for the remaining 22 days.
• I had a stressed out friend vent his stress to me and I developed my study plan from all the information he gathered and dropped on me during vent sessions. I also tend to read student doctor network and gained some insight through that.
• I just studied as much as I could everyday for 5 weeks.
• I just studied.
• I knew what resources I planned to use and just worked on what seemed interesting that day
• I planned it around DIT videos. Watched the videos in the recommended order, reviewed at the end of the day. In the last week, I reread first aid.
• I purchased a study advisor from DIT who made my schedule.
• I started doing the Part 1 of DIT during spring break and tried to do ten q bank questions a day. I used DITs 21 day plan and read the corresponding First Aid pages. I used Pathoma and sketchy micro as well and tried to review those videos that corresponded with my DIT lessons.
• I studied review material for 4 weeks, and did UWorld questions all day for the following 2 weeks. A calculator and best judgement was involved in my planning.
• I talked with people who had already taken it and been successful and got an idea for how much time I needed to take. Then I went through first aid and set up 2-3 days to spend reviewing each major section. That took about 3 weeks, then I took an assessment exam. Then I focused on the areas that I was struggling with and took a day to review each major section again. The last few days, I did a lot of practice questions and worked on memorizing the things that were rote memorization. I took a total of 6 weeks and thought I had just the right amount of time.
• I used a DIT schedule that was given to me by a student from the class above me
• I used Cram Fighter and just plugged in ally resources.
• I used CramFighter. My schedule meant that I finished Doctors in Training by June 6th (basically 4 weeks) during which I tried to do 44 UWORLD questions daily and annotated DIT and relevant information into my First Aid. the last 8 days I spent reviewing First Aid. I was unable to finish my second pass in the 7 days I had allotted so I would recommend either 10 days for a final pass, or relevant information 1st. Another helpful hint is keeping a sheet with 5 star, 4 star, and 3 star topics nearby. On that sheet, put the "high yield" topics under their respective star category with their FA page number. Spend 2 hours each night running through those specific topics.
• I used CramFighter. I sorted it by books; so I went through all of First Aid, followed by all of Pathoma. I also did the SketchyMedical series and 70+ UWorld questions per day.
• I used doctors in training and finished that course in 2.5 weeks. I then worked through first aid 3 more times in my last 3 weeks. I did all Uworld questions and then redid all of the questions I missed. I took 2 NBME practice exams.
- I used Doctors in Training and followed their schedule.
- I used doctors in training.
- I used the Cram Fighter app, and stuck to that about 80% of the time.
- I used the cram fighter app.
- I used the Cramfighter app to figure out the best schedule for myself.
- I used whatever Heidi came up with since we were taking it on the same day.
- I utilized the DIT schedule to watch the videos for the course. I then used CramFigther to plan my second pass at material.
- It doesn't matter because I didn't follow it. I basically just went through First Aid front to back.
- just took a piece of paper and wrote down a schedule week for week, based on the organization of the DIT
- Light study during the last part of classes. Then straight through DIT after Core ended and then went through my notes in First aid and Pathoma for the last few weeks.
- Limited my resources to the most high yield (Pathoma, First Aid, Sketchy...) and used CramFighter to organize it all for me.
- Listen to upperclassmen and modify their advice to a study schedule I was comfortable with
- Looked through first aid sections
- Looking at examples online
- Made my own schedule based on input from past students
- Mostly talking with M3s and talking with classmates. I bought Cramfighter for the 5.5 weeks of studying but ended up straying from it a lot as I realized what I needed to spend more and less time on.
- No strict plan to start. Gauged how long it would take to memorize sketchy micro, get through uworld, and get through Lange flash cards then made a loose schedule based on doing some of each every day.
- Online samples
- Planned to get through First Aid twice, UWorld, and SketchyMicro
- Pretty much just figured out what I wanted to use and how many times I wanted to get through them.
- Read first aid during year to correlate with class materials; did 30 questions q wk throughout 2nd year (just winged it essentially)
- Sat down and used the Doctors in Training Study schedule and scheduled my FirstAid review and Pathoma review around it.
- set a fixed test date (6weeks out) and planned to cover First Aid, Uworld, and pathoma along with Doctors in Training to get me prepared for exam.
- Spent 2-3 days for each system. UWORLD questions every day. Total of 4 practice tests (2 NBME, 2 UWORLD Self-assessments).
- Spoke to upperclassmen. CramFighter.
- Study First Aid
- talked to an M3 and made my own schedule using first aid, pathos, and Uworld
- Talked to M3s and modified their plans to fit my schedule
- Talked to upperclassmen and factored in my other activities and commitments during second semester of M2 year. I decided on what resources I wanted to use and made a calendar that fit everything in the allotted time.
- Talking to ‘M4 friend
- Took what I knew I needed to get done during the study period and divided it evenly amongst the days I had to study. I also bounced ideas off some of my classmates that have similar study habits.
- Upper class men advice
- Used a calendar from an upper classman
- Used DIT, talked to upperclassmen
- Used DIT’s 30- day schedule and the corresponding First Aid pages.
• Using Cramfighter to space out resources and create a set schedule
• With advice from students who took it the year before and according to DiT recommendations

3. Did you feel the M1 Comprehensive Exam was useful in preparing for Step I?
12 of 108 (11.1%) (9.18%) felt it was useful.

4. Did you take the M1 Comprehensive Exam a second time before starting the M2 year?
6 of 108 (5.6%) did take it a second time.
For those who did not, they commented:
• Honestly, I just wanted a couple extra days off from school
• I was out of town for a wedding and missed it for that reason
• The comprehensive exam is tailored towards the material covered during M1 year and the questions are not indicative of board style questions nor do they accurately reflect the information covered on Step 1.
• Didn’t feel necessary at the time.
• I feel like the Step 1 is a beast of its own. I felt like I knew my strengths and weaknesses. I felt like year 2 material was much more important and I needed a full review of year 1 material regardless.
• Was not an accurate depiction of questions or even material that was on Step 1
• I was making my wife’s engagement ring in Denver at the time.
• I wasn’t in town.
• Nobody took any time to actually study and try to do well on the comprehensive. It wasn’t at all comparable to Step 1.
• It was very easy
• I didn’t want to come in for it.
• I don’t really remember them, but I’m sure they are way too easy
• I didn’t feel it would help me.
• I didn’t take it
• Low yield
• Was out of town
• I thought it was a fine exam but I don’t think I took anything away from it in setting my preparation for boards
• I think I had a scheduling conflict.
• The questions are not like USMLE questions at all and it’s too far from the test date to be useful.
• Was busy at that time
• Hadn’t studied yet
• I had other scheduled obligations during that time
• I didn’t know it was offered
• I did not feel it was necessary
• Didn’t want to take the time and didn’t think it would be too helpful
• I don’t remember taking this or not.
• Did not know it was available
• I was out of town for part of that week before school started
• It was optional
• It wasn’t required
• I did not take the Comprehensive Exam a second time because I had not reviewed much over the summer.
• The types of questions and difficulty may have been similar, but was not helpful to me personally
• I didn’t feel like it was worth the time to take it again
• I really don’t remember any of the M1 comp, so it wasn’t helpful in that regard.
• Why would I?!!
The tests are a year apart so it doesn't really help.
The test just confirmed that I didn't know/remember what I supposed I didn't know/remember.
Time
I honestly don't remember it being an option.
Not helpful
It was optional and I had a time conflict.
I wasn't going to specifically study for it, so I don't know how taking an exam would do anything except assess my retention.
It was worthless to be quite honest. In part, there wasn't a pathological emphasis in 1sr year. The basic science was worthless when it came to Step I.
I felt it was too far in advance of step 1 to be of use.
Out of the state
Wasn't in Omaha at the time
I don't believe the comprehensive helped me prepare at all
I did not feel that the first time was helpful or a good baseline due to circumstances
Exams that do not explain correct answers & wrong answers are not especially helpful.
There is not preparation for the M1 comp’s, so the way Step1 has, and going to a test setting I didn't prepare for is more stressful than helpful to me.
To far away from real studying
Out of town
I was out of town.
Out of town!
I don't think the questions are indicative of the questions on the actual exam.
I felt it would be unnecessary
We weren't required to
I didn't prepare for the exam and didn't take a whole lot of time going through it.
I didn't want any more stress about the exam

5. Of the following resources from the COM, which did you use? (n=108)

- Exam review sessions: 32.4%
- Exam reports from the Office of Med Educ: 6.5%
- Comprehensive exam reports from the Office of Med Educ: 14.8%
- Other resources from the Office of Med Educ: 1.9%
- USMLE Q-bank purchased by the College of Medicine: 76.9%

Comments about “Other Resources” from the Office of Medical Education
- 10000 foot overviews from Talmon.
- None of the above.
- I did not utilize any of these more than once throughout my M2 year
- I don't think the score reports helped me identify problem areas, I had a good grasp on those already

Comments related to the COM subscription
- Please do this again. Those questions were hard, but taught me a lot of fundamental ideas that I saw multiple times on test day.
- It was the most helpful study tool for the Step one. MOST HELPFUL.
- I did not utilize the World subscription purchased by the COM because I had already purchased my own during the fall semester. I would have utilized it had I known sooner that it would be provided for our class. It may be helpful in the future to inform the class at the beginning of the school year so that students do not buy their own subscription.
• Very useful and I would recommend the same for next year
• Yes, though encourage them to start the QBank earlier rather than later.
• Absolutely, the best resource for Step 1 hands down. Get a subscription early and encourage them to use it throughout the year.
• Get this every year. It is a must have for Step 1 studying
• Absolutely continue this. This was single-handedly the most helpful resource and did the best job of preparing you for the Step 1.
• It is helpful to use, but I had already bought a year subscription.
• Uworld is arguably the most valuable resource for studying for boards. I think almost everyone uses it so it makes a lot of sense for the COM to purchase it.
• It is invaluable. Everyone should use it
• I had previously purchased access to the qbank. I suggest that the college purchase 6 month access for their students.
• This was great, and such a huge help. Both financially, and then in simply in getting one of the most high-yield study resources.
• Yes this was very helpful, I think it should continue to be a resource for future years
• AWESOME
• You should continue this.
• YES! Thank you for doing this :)
• Many people buy the year long subscription, so it would be helpful to tell us at the beginning of the year to tell us that the subscription is coming so we can take advantage. I was unable to use it because I had already purchased the year long subscription.
• USMLE QBank is super helpful!
• very helpful
• I did not use the subscription because I had already purchased a one year subscription to USMLE Qbank. I used the qbank right when I bought it in October and throughout the school year. I thought it was very annoying that the school decided to offer to purchase it for us in January. I think it should be offered at the beginning of the year, or give all students a discount in tuition so it is fair for students who already purchased a one year subscription. I hope this issue will be remedied for our Step 2 subscriptions.
• I had already purchased a year subscription.
• This was extremely helpful. The best single tool for studying
• YES!!!! this was the most helpful thing you could have done for us! If possible please continue doing this for Step2
• VERY helpful
• Yes, I used it -- and yes, please keep doing it!
• Yes very helpful
• It was really helpful because I was going to buy it anyway and it saved me some money.
• EXTREMELY. I think Uworld is the best environment to prepare for the real thing, and having a subscription provided was a great gesture to the students.
• This was very helpful and should be purchased for the M2s.
• absolutely necessary, but I think the subscription is too short. I started doing questions with my cores after Christmas break and my core grades improved. I think a 6 month subscription would be more beneficial
• I had already bought a subscription for the year, otherwise I would have used it. Very helpful!
• Extremely helpful! This was my main study tool (other resources supplemented and were helpful, but this is how I made my schedule and what guided the topics I studied on a particular day). I was very grateful to have the cost of this resource covered!
• This was extremely helpful and saved many of us money we definitely would have spent.
• Yes, continue purchasing Uworld- exam master was not nearly as polished and representative
Uworld was very helpful. UsmlRX was sort of helpful. Exam master was least helpful
Definitely! I had already purchased tho before I heard about it so make an announcement right away at the beginning of year.
YES! Continue to help M2’s acquire this, as it was an invaluable tool for studying.
I used the UWorld Qbank, and yes it was helpful and I think it should be continued
Absolutely helpful and should be continued to be used in future in my opinion
YES! The test alone was enough to break the bank, let alone all of the other study materials. Free Qbank was a savior.
Yes!
Very helpful! Did not use until after last core though.
The Qbank was extremely helpful because it made you synthesize material together and then explained not only how to get to the correct answer but why the other answer choices were wrong.
Very helpful! The best way to prepare.
It was very helpful. You should absolutely continue to get it for M2s and M3s (for step 2)
Yes, I got through about 83% of the questions. It was a great way to review and help you learn the material!
Very helpful - academically and financially
This was probably the best resource I had. Definitely purchase for every M2 future class!
Yes
Yes, it was helpful and you should continue to do it.
This was super helpful! Consider a full year
Yes and You should get this in the future, also consider getting student First Aid
Uworld was the single best resource I used. The questions were very similar to the real exam and helped prepare me for the kinds of questions that I would see. There were very few surprises as far as tricks on the exam, thanks in large part to Uworld. The explanations provided in the questions on Uworld actually provide a lot of learning. I usually remember things well if I get it wrong and then learn the right answer. This happened time and again on Uworld and helped me tremendously. I definitely recommend for all M2s.
Yes, the Qbank is absolutely essential for Step 1. I felt reasonably prepared and knew the answer to a lot of questions specifically because of the Qbank.
This resource is NECESSARY for success on this exam. I am very happy that this was provided to us and is something that definitely needs to continue to upcoming classes if funds allow.
Very helpful, it was top resource for questions
Absolutely. Probably the most valuable resource next to first aid.
Very helpful!
VERY HELPFUL!!!
Yes and yes
Absolutely essential resource.
Absolutely. Please do this for this for next years students.
Extremely helpful, should absolutely purchase again
This was a great resource and ensuring that every student has access to it is a great use of UNMC's funds.
Very very very helpful!!!!
YES!
This was absolutely a big help. The QBank was the biggest help in preparing for step one
Yes, it was the best source I used for studying.
UWorld was very helpful for preparation & I would highly encourage it to be purchased for other classes. Its nearly universally used by students & is a very good simulation of the real test as well as a great study tool.
I think it is! It is a fantastic resource AND shows support to the students.
This was a great resource and should be continued
- SO HELPFUL! Probably the most useful tool in studying for step 1.
- The most helpful resource by far
- This should be continued. However, the fact that this subscription was going to be purchased should be better communicated. I didn’t use it because I bought the year-long subscription thinking that would be the most economical qbank to use. If I had known the 3 month subscription would be available, I would have used it and purchased another (cheaper) option to use during the year.
- YES. This is very helpful. Everybody will end up purchasing it anyway and it definitely helped my budget as buying study materials gets very expensive.
- Absolutely. This was maybe the most helpful thing so I would recommend it for everyone.
- YES!!!!!!! very helpful. Best resource.
- Very helpful and very much appreciated! Thank you!
- Critical to prepping for the test
- YES! CONTINUE TO DO THIS!
- YES but PLEASE tell students you will be purchasing the Qbank for them at the very beginning of the M2 year. Otherwise some students miss out on the wonderful financial opportunity.

6. Please indicate which item(s) you used that were most helpful and which were least useful
   (Items are in descending order of Most Helpful percentage of respondents):

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<tr>
<th>Item</th>
<th>Count</th>
<th>Did not use</th>
<th>Least Helpful</th>
<th>Most Helpful</th>
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Additional Resources

- BRS
- BRS review books. They are most helpful. They are great during the school year and so reading them during dedicated step one time, takes only a few hours and it really clarifies concepts that are abbreviated in First Aid.
- Lange flashcards (pharm and anatomy)
- Picmonic-most useful, SketchyMedical-most useful
• Quizlet was helpful
• Sketchy Medical
• Sketchy Medical - Most useful
• Sketchy medical website
• Sketchy Micro
• Sketchy micro - most useful
• Sketchy micro - most useful
• Sketchy Micro and Picmonic were extremely helpful for micro and pharm
• Sketchy Micro helped me a lot!
• Sketchy Micro is a life saver. It makes the micro questions a breeze. I also found the Lange biochem and genetics flashcards very helpful.
• Sketchy Micro is absolutely necessary. Most Useful.
• SKETCHY MICRO IS THE BEES KNEES
• Sketchy Micro- very useful
• Sketchy Micro was great for microbio review throughout the year and on the Step 1 USMLE exam
• Sketchy Micro, most useful
• Sketchy Micro: The most useful resource I own as far as the highest yield for the least amount of time, and the best retention of material. If only it was for more than just Micro.
• Sketchy Micro: Most Useful
• Sketchy Micro: Most useful
• Sketchy Micro--most useful; Lange Biochemistry and Genetics Flashcards--most useful; Deja Review Pharmacology--most useful
• SketchyMedical
• SketchyMedical was awesome for bacteria, fungi, viri, and parasites. I would highly recommend it for Step 1 and the Core 1 material in M2 year.
• SketchyMicro - most useful
• Step1 secrets: helpful for thinking about things in the context of a clinical situation, also helpful for studying with friends

7. For review books or websites you used, please comment why particular resources were most useful.
• DIT was helpful because it gave a good schedule to follow and was organized to help focus your studying. First aid and pathoma were food supplements to DIT. Sketchy medical is really helpful for micro.
• Doctors in Training were useful and gave direction to the study schedule.
• FA is very complete. UWORLD was useful but easier than the real exam.
• FA was more than enough for my exam, but you need to do questions to get comfortable applying the information in there. UW & Usmle RX were both really good for this, but UW is better.
• First aid and pathoma were both concise and pointed out high yield information. They prevented me from getting down in the weeds, which is easy to do in board study
• First Aid and the Pathology review were good because they gave coverage of the subjects tested with enough detail to be useful but not so much that it couldn’t be managed or overwhelming.
• First Aid- concise and easy to ready through. Pathoma- helpful memory hooks, lots of thorough explanations, lots of images Sketchy micro- an entertaining way to learn and remember microbes and how to treat them
• First aid condensed everything as much as possible and made my studying more effective.
• First aid contained essentially all necessary knowledge base, Goljan lectures tied the concepts together, Uworld q-bank was a must have and Kaplan q-bank filled in the gaps with more granular knowledge(but not necessary)
• First Aid covers an incredible amount of information very succinctly. Pathoma is also an invaluable source of path information. Sketchy Micro really helped me memorize bacteria, viruses, etc. Biochem
and pharm were both areas that I was concerned about, but the flashcards and book listed above were both good ways to get in some extra review.

- First Aid had pretty useful mnemonics and was pretty comprehensive. Pathoma was a great summary and helped solidify the material from First Aid.
- First Aid is a given --- this was the basis of all of my studying, while using Pathoma and UWorld to tie any loose ends. If you don’t understand something in First Aid, honestly just google it to refresh your memory. Be time efficient--there is a lot of material to go through.
- First aid is a good review and resource.
- First Aid is an absolute must have and probably the best book to use. While there are obviously topics on Step 1 not covered in First Aid, nearly 90%+ of the exam is covered in First Aid. Besides Pathoma, I'd say First Aid is the only book you need for Step 1. SketchyMicro was incredibly useful to learn microbiology both during the school year during the first core and during boards studying after the school year ended. The creators use clever drawings as memory devices to learn an otherwise daunting subject.
- First Aid is jam packed with high yield info and is a great source to organize your schedule around. Pathoma makes the pathology simple and easy to understand/remember and is very useful explanations. Sketchy Micro makes micro so much easier and more tolerable
- First aid is most comprehensive. DIT made my first few weeks less stressful but is not comprehensive - might have learned more just by reading first aid. Uworld is important for learning how to think through questions - make good use of the explanations. Pathoma is extremely useful for both boards and core. Worth buying and using for the entire year.
- First Aid is obviously the most useful because it is the most comprehensive textbook for all material covered on Step 1.
- First Aid is somewhat obvious. Pathoma breaks concepts down and REALLY EXPLAINS material
- First aid is the Step 1 Bible
- First Aid literally has all the little facts that you will see on the test
- First Aid- need to use this. 95% is high yield/testable stuff. USMLE-Rx- crappy questions but helps learn FA, don’t put too much weight on trick questions. UWorld- vital. Test-like. Pathoma- vital big picture ideas. NBME practice tests- do a few of the most recent ones. Great trial run for the real thing.
- First Aid supposedly had enough in it get a passing score if you knew it thoroughly, so I stuck with that.
- First Aid was a good resource and outline for organizing studying and covering all major concepts and most minor concepts.
- First aid was a good resource for narrowing down the wide range of material, Pathoma was great for pathology for step 1 and throughout the year because of the way Dr. Sattar frames his lectures in a way tailored to M2 study
- First Aid was comprehensive and precise.
- First Aid was helpful because it had a bullet point style review of the most high yield subjects.
- First aid was the best overview of he material and I used this heavily. Pathoma review and lectures helped with the detail that was missing from First aid
- First AID was the best source for a comprehensive review of test material
- First aid was the most thorough and well organized
- First Aid was very helpful. I used it during the school year for core and in studying for Step 1. It correlated well with Doctors in Training also.
- First Aid was very useful and I liked that DIT went through First Aid with you, as if you were hearing it once and reading it once (at least) to engage different senses and hopefully remember things more in that way. I also used picmonic and sketchymedical a lot because I am a visual learner and these were invaluable in helping me remember microbiology, pathology and pharmacology topics.
- First aid was very well mapped out and has most of the information contained in the questions on the test.
• First Aid: Good review of almost everything  Pathoma: Makes pathology easy to understand and remember  Sketchy Micro: Puts bacteria and virus information into cartoon format, good memory tricks
• First AID: provided a condensed yet comprehensive overview of material from both first and second year
• First Aid--most information, well organized, easy to read  Pathoma--teaches pertinent pathology. Also useful to use during the year.
• First and foremost, First Aid should be your bible. Study it, have lunch with it, have dinner with it, and sleep with it. It is your primary source of information to succeed on Step I along with UWorld. However, it’s important to understand how to use First Aid. Every word in First Aid was written because it’s important. For instance, if you are learning about lupus, there’s CH50 level written in it. If you don’t know what it means, go look it up!! And understand why we use it! This is how Step I tests your understanding of the material. Or First Aid might talk about hemochromatosis in a particular section, but guess what? There’s also an association between hemochromatosis and pseudogout. It’s all in the bible. It takes a lot of work to understand it. Be patient. Learn it well and you will be fine.
• Goljan audio was great for going to and from school and lunch breaks or walks.
• Goljan lectures and review books were very useful. He definitely has an understanding of how the USMLE asks questions and wants students to think. Listening to the lectures taught me mostly how to think about questions and how to work through the tricks that USMLE likes to throw at us. His book offers simple explanations to almost everything we need to know. I thought it was more complete than First Aid as far as the information in each section. I think the only thing it lacks is psychiatry.
• Goljan was a great resource for making connections that you may not have realized before. Pathoma is a must. Sketchy is also one of the best resources we had.
• I appreciated the way DIT was broken up and that it was a different organization than FA so I was able to mix the two and hit multiple topics during a day
• I enjoyed Uworlds feedback and the comprehension nature of first aid
• I learn well from text, so First Aid was great. It is well organized, comprehensive and can be studied page-by-page. I also found that after studying from FA all day, I’d immediately be able to answer more UWorld questions. UWorld was great for format. My second time through First Aid was influenced by UWorld; UWorld helped me to think about certain details or from different angles.
• I thought DIT was helpful and it kept me on a schedule and walked me through First Aid. I need organization and order, so I thought DIT was a perfect fit for me.
• I used mostly DIT, First Aid, and UWORLD.
• Pathoma
• Pathoma
• Pathoma is a must use, I will say. It hits a high note for every possible pathology and physiology subject necessary for the boards. But my #1 advice is learn things well during the school year.
• Pathoma is high yield lectures presented in a easy way to remember content.
• Pathoma is like a Robbins that doesn’t suck. First aid is great except for micro, where sketchy dominates (fa formatting impossible to focus on. ) u world is the bank of choice - read the wrong answers too!
• Pathoma seemed to be a perfect balance of the high yield topics for each organ system. It wasn’t an overwhelming amount of material such as Robbins, but still enough to present the main ideas for each disease or process.
• Pathoma was far and away the best resource for Step I and classroom material. It was tremendously beneficial. DIT can feel more like a check list that you have to avoid just "Crossing off" everyday and make sure that you understand the material, even if you reviewed the appropriate number of videos. For UWorld, needs to be used as a resource and not as an assessment. The questions are harder on the actual test and longer so don’t think that a high UWorld percent will translate on exam day.
• pathoma was very useful as was sketchy micro.
• Pathoma, First Aid
• Patronage - provided a review of important topics and explained it in an easy to understand manner. First Aid - covers the majority of the topics but doesn't explain the topics, so it is necessary to have some background knowledge about it already. Sketchy micro - provides visual mnemonics to remember things that are not memorable when just reading from a list.
• Sketchy Medical - most bang for your buck of any study resource, in my opinion. Takes about 15 hours to get through, but once done, you can be completely confident in bacteria, viruses, fungi, and parasites. First Aid - obviously a necessity. Limited in it's depth of detail, but gets you through all the information you need to know.
• Sketchy micro
• Sketchy micro - made microbiology very easy
• Sketchy micro was most useful
• Sketchy micro was very useful for microbiology
• Sketchy micro/medical to review microbiology.
• SketchyMedical made learning microbiology much more manageable. Their pictures are still embedded in my mind and will be useful for rounds as well.
• SketchyMicro is the best.
• SketchyMicro presents material in a way that you will definitely remember it.
• Sketchymicro takes the very detailed topic of clinical microbiology and places it in memory spaces which makes grouping of information very easy. I would highly recommend this resource to any second year medical student.
• The first aid review book is a nice overview that pretty much everyone uses. Its not super in depth but I didn't feel like it needed to be. I wouldn't use it as my only resource but it nice so figure out what topics you understand well and what ones need to be studied harder. I used pathoma for more in depth pathology studying. I had made it through the entire thing to study from during the year. I had intentions of rewatching the whole thing while studying for boards but ran out of time so only reviewed the ones that i wasn't as strong at. Those are the only two books I really used. Occasionally I would look for a youtube video if a need clarification on a specific topic but there was no one youtube site that i would look at consistently
• The Qbank was most useful because it covered things not in DIT and First Aid that were on the exam.
• The resources I used were focused and direct - there was minimal extra information. They were broad enough to help me understand the topics rather than memorize facts, but they didn't present information that was not centrally necessary.
• UFAP seemed to cover about 95% of material on my test in an organized and well presented fashion
• Uworld was best handsdown
• Uworld was the best overall for review and practice what you've learned. Dit was a good review in video form so that you aren't constantly reading.

8. For board review courses (either live or online), please comment why the course was most useful.
• DIT
• DIT - expensive, but probably worth it (still waiting on getting my scores back). Do a great job of really focusing on what is highly tested throughout First Aid, and give lots of very memorable mnemonics that helped me at several points throughout my test. Goljan lectures - perfect to listen to during car rides, working out, cooking, etc. Adds a nice/new perspective to the material, and it helps to have the info reinforced via auditory learning.
• DIT does a good job of giving a helpful first pass of the material in First AID. I suggest another pass through First AID as well after the course is finished
• DIT had great instructors and lots of repetition to help remember important concepts. I appreciated the end of session quizzes and warm up questions before each lecture. It also helped me with pacing the use of my other resources.
• DIT helped me to get through the material in an organized fashion. It prompted me to review information along the way that was already covered.
• DIT makes it easy to get through first aid and the quizzes included really aid long term retention
• DIT really does just read FA to you. If you can stay motivated and can get through FA on your own, then I would not get DIT. There are also other programs out there that read FA to you (see usmleRX).
• DIT- very in-depth review, with constant reviewing of past material and a focus on high yield material.
• DIT was great for keeping to a schedule as that can be an issue for me.
• DIT was helpful because it integrated information. You switched between topics, which helped me not forget about cardio because I was doing neuro. The pre and post quizzes were also helpful for similar reasons.
• DIT was helpful to learn the material in the early stages of boards studying.
• DIT was most useful. Great pace and repetition.
• DIT was super helpful. I couldn’t just sit down and read First Aid. DIT made First Aid make more sense.
• DIT was useful because it covered things not in First Aid and had some good memory devices.
• DIT. It adds good structure to effectively get through first aid for the first time
• DIT: While it took longer than I originally anticipated, DIT provided a structure for my studying. The instructors also provided occasional comic relief which helped to relieve some of the tension I developed while studying. Lastly, the review questions at the beginning of every video also reinforced important concepts. Pathoma: It was a good review with pictures of important pathological concepts. Goljan review lectures: The lectures were very well done and something I extra I could do while running.
• Doctors in Training did a great job of covering a vast majority of First Aid material and fast-paced, easy to watch videos. They had warm-up and post-lecture questions that helped to recap and review material. Watching these videos and following along and writing notes in First Aid was the best way to initially go through First Aid.
• Doctors in training gave me the structure that I needed. I needed a steady schedule everyday
• Doctors in training had a good format to allow me to recall past information I had been taught at UNMC. It was very easy to learn and recall using this program and I am glad that I purchased it.
• Doctors in training. It was a good way to review first aid in a short period of time.
• Doctors in Training--useful if you learn better by listening to others. If you learn better by reading, this might not be super helpful.
• I did doctors in training and thought the money was well worth it. Its biggest strength is the amount of review you do from previous videos. You are constantly being quizzed over the high yield topics you learned about previously. The repetition is key to memorizing facts. The videos for the most part do a good job in trying to keep you entertained. I thought is was the single most important resource I used to study for boards.
• I enjoyed DiT because of the structure. I am not very self-motivated (remembering my MCAT studies) so I knew I needed guidance to cover the material in a timely fashion.
• I liked that there was a structure built into DIT
• I really appreciated the DIT questions before and after for each video to gauge where I was at and how much I was retaining. I think the spaced repetition helped me prepare well
• I really liked the DIT review. When considering using this resource, I would give yourself a little longer than the standard 5-6 weeks to study. I think I underestimated the time it would take to thoroughly complete.
• I used Doctors in Training (DIT). I am definitely glad I did DIT because I learned some great mnemonics and tips but I don't think it is the end all be all. I really hated watching the videos and thought a lot of the "jokes" were a waste of my time and rather annoying. I don't think they covered a lot of topics well, especially pathology which is why I rewatched pathoma videos while studying for boards.
• I used Doctors in Training. In retrospect, I wish I had just done it on my own. Or finished it in 2.5 weeks instead of 3.5. The most important thing is to have active learning. You have to learn and memorize all of First Aid and UWorld.
- It's easy to just sit back and watch the dit lectures.
- Kept you on pace and gave a general idea of where we wanted to be everyday. Also helps avoid passively reading review books.
- Pathoma
- Pathoma was fantastic for the organized teaching and another repetition with the material but not in the same fashion as it’s taught by other resources.
- Pathoma was my single most valuable resource I think. Great explanations of topics.
- Pathoma. Like Goljan, Sattar knows how to explain things in ways that medical students understand and he is able to recognize topics that are often glazed over by instructors but which cause a lot of confusion. He spends a lot of time explaining the "why." On the surface his course seems like just a lot of memorization, especially because of his obsessive use of the term "high-yield," but if you can get over that many of his explanations are incredibly helpful.
- Sketchy Micro was great because it helped with recall.
- Summarized the info and gave me a good framework to then attack first aid

9. For question banks, please comment why the question bank was most useful.
- A lot of the exam was familiarizing yourself with the layout and doing a lot of practice questions helped.
- Covers all topics and makes you aware of the questioners' tricks and ways they want you to think.
- Gave detailed feedback for each question
- Gave me a feel for how the questions would be worded during the exam
- Gave real test style questions and great feedback so you were learning while you were checking your understanding
- good explanations.
- great learning tool, helped me learn difficult concepts by hitting them from multiple angles.
- Helped provide "icing on the cake" for learning material. It is one to be able to understand pathology and medicine, but being able to apply the information is a different beast.
- Highlighted pertinent material. Simulated test environment.
- I believe questions are the key
- I did some of the USMLE Rx bank through the school year, which was helpful as it linked the tested question directly to a snapshot of first aid for me to review. However, Uworld was much more useful during the dedicated time as it presented more challenging questions with longer question stems that more closely resembled the real exam.
- I liked the question bank because it gave me a way to quiz myself and find my areas of weakness. I also learn best when I get something wrong and then learn from mistakes.
- I only used USMLE world qbank which I thought was very helpful.
- I pretty much only used UWORLD once I started studying for boards. I used the libraries exam master for questions while I studied for core classes during the year and saved all my UWORLD questions till end of April. I like that I saved my questions since they are quick a bit harder than you are used to. I only had time to go through UWORLD once but I was ok with that since you have so much memory of previous questions repeating previous questions a bunch didn't seem to be the best use of my time.
- It was excellent practice for reviewing high yield material and getting a feel for what USMLE questions would look like.
- It was the only one I used and covered every topic. The explanations were great for figuring out why the right answer was correct and why the wrong ones were distractors.
- It went through the right answer, why it was right, why the other answers were wrong, and was good practice for reading questions in general.
- qbank was very useful because of their thorough explanations.
- Question banks were helpful for "hands on" experience and detailed answers.
- Question style is very similar to the real exam, so surprises are minimized on exam day.
- Really get a feel of what questions will be like
The feedback/review information was the most useful part of the question banks (which is why U World was more helpful than NBME) and was really helpful for me to use in studying instead of just answering questions. The review info helped me train myself to reason through the questions and know what info to focus on.

The Uworld question bank is by far the most useful tool to not only test your knowledge, but also a great way to learn the material.

The UWorld question bank was useful because it helped practice not only knowledge but also getting comfortable with the style of questions.

To get you in the mode of the exam. There’s a balance here: you need to know the information well before you can answer questions. Yet, you also need to do questions to reinforce what you learned.

U world

U world gave a lot of great practice for board style questions.

U world had the best questions and explanations

U World questions were very similar to the test

USMLE Rx is particularly good to use during the year in conjunction with coursework. Uworld is a pretty time-consuming, but very useful question bank for focused studying.

USMLE Rx, is useful to be used during the school year not during dedicated boards studying. UWORLD Q Bank is a must have. It mirrors the exam perfectly, by style and everything. It directs your learning and tells you what you should refocus on

USMLE WORLD is great because it is a true representation of what you will see on the test

USMLE World is very useful because each question comes with a detailed explanation. Even if the question was easy, there were things in the explanations that is new. Learning occurs with every second when using this resource.

USMLE World question bank answer explanations present the material in unique ways and go further into depth into certain high-yield topics. Supplementing the information in First Aid and Pathoma with UWorld explanations was the most beneficial part of my preparation.

USMLE World was a great question bank but it takes quite a while to get through.

USMLE World’s questions were similar to those seen on Step 1. The explanations were fantastic

USMLE World--tons of questions. Good feedback info.

USMLE: The questions and the feedback for the questions helped to solidify concepts I was seeing while studying. NBME: It helped to see questions presented in a slightly different way than USMLE

USMLE-Rx- crappy questions but helps learn FA, don’t put too much weight on trick questions.

UWorld- vital. Test-like. NBME practice tests- do a few of the most recent ones. Great trial run for the real thing.

USMLE-Rx was most useful during the school year while studying for the core exams. The questions are easier than Step 1 but it allows you to familiarize yourself with board style questions and learn some of the high yield topics covered on the exam. Furthermore, USMLE-Rx correlates with First Aid and helps one learn the details of First Aid during the first pass through.

UW explanations are MONEY! But there is so much information in there that it easy to get overwhelmed.

Uworld

Uworld

UWorld - a must have. The best way to make associations and bring all your knowledge together.

Uworld - the explanations to the questions cover a lot of material that you might not see elsewhere; just make sure to spend a lot of time in the explanations, even on questions that you got right.

UWorld had board-style questions so it was helpful in getting a feel for how the test would be.

UWORLD had challenging questions and very thorough explanations for each question. I also liked that it’s formatted like the exam.

UWORLD had great questions with great explanations. It was good prep for the test.

UWorld has in depth explanations and clearly teach you the things you should know.

UWORLD is basically a directed text book review in question format, read everything!
• UWorld is basically a textbook in question format and can be used as a learning tool as well as a way to evaluate your understanding
• UWorld is great practice to track where you are at.
• UWORLD is great. I used it after the last core and made it through only once, but took the time to go through each question well. USMLERx is okay. I used it during the year to supplement core studying, but it is much more surface level compared to UWORLD and the actual exam.
• Uworld is nice because there are so many questions and the explanations to every question are awesome
• UWorld is similar in set up to the real deal. It’s very challenging and thus motivating for studying
• Uworld questions are very close to step 1 questions and provide great explanations that teach you.
• UWorld was a very accurate representation of questions/material/difficulty/format/etc. of Step 1.
• Uworld was able to provide tough and representative questions that provided amazing feedback on the right answers as well as reasonings for why the wrong answers are wrong.
• Uworld was good for explanations of questions and concepts that you were missing.
• UWorld was great for format. My second time through First Aid was influenced by UWorld; UWorld helped me to think about certain details or from different angles.
• U-World was helpful and the explanations helped to figure out where you are going wrong or making sure your reasoning for the correct answer was on point.
• Uworld was most like exam
• Uworld was really helpful to get the format. The usmle questions were helpful to understand the format, but simpler than the actual exam.
• UWorld was the highest yield of any if he resources I used. I am glad I saved it for the dedicated study period because it was the best resource by far. USMLE Rx was helpful for a QBank to use during the year and help with class studying
• Uworld was useful because of the detailed explanations and the questions were representative of many on the test.
• UWorld, while not necessarily helpful for my specific exam, was wonderful to just get your feet wet with how boards-style questions are asked. How to sift through the paragraphs and paragraphs of questioning, only to find out that they are asking about a drug’s side effects. I waited about a week into my studying to start UWORLD -- wanted to get through at least 3-4 systems in First Aid/Pathoma before I started looking at questions. Set the questions to ask about those specific systems (so it wasn’t completely random -- but random enough that you didn’t know EXACTLY which system they were asking about). Eventually, about 3-4 weeks in, I set it to completely random. This allowed me to never miss a UWorld question because I "simply didn’t cover it yet."
• UWorld. Gives you the testing skills while teaching you and also evaluating your weaknesses. The answer explanations are gold. And you learn twice as much from getting answers wrong!
• UWORLD. Environment was just like the real exam. Ability to time yourself. Gives great feedback and score/question reporting.
• Uworld. See my comments on 5.
• UWorld: Good practice questions with extensive explanation for each question
• UWORLD: take the time to read the explanation for each answer to all the questions!
• UWorld's explanations are so thorough
• Very beneficial to practice seeing difficult questions and UWORLD questions and in particular, the explanations, help reinforce material very well.
• Worlds was great throughout the year and a wonderful study tool to use during concentrated board prep. It is very important to read everything in the explanation and take notes on things you did not understand/did not know.

10. How did you decide on a date range to take the exam?
• 5 weeks is perfect. No more
• 5 weeks of studying. 2 weeks off before school started.
• 5 weeks post M2 year
• 5 weeks seemed like the average according to the M3’s I asked.
• 5 weeks. I almost wish I would have done it slightly earlier. Lost focus the last few days and didn’t study as well.
• 5-6 weeks of study time
• 5-6 weeks of studying
• 5-6 weeks was recommended by most upperclassmen.
• 6 week mark
• 6 weeks of studying
• 6 weeks of studying.
• advice from older students
• Approx 5 weeks out, per advice from previous students
• approximately 5 weeks from the end of school.
• arbitrary value.
• As much time as possible after I moved and before J term
• Asking M3s how long they studied and planned my schedule off of them
• Based on feedback from M4s.
• Based on my peers and what upperclassmen suggested
• Based on talking with upperclassmen and attending exam info sessions, it seemed that 5-6 weeks was the ideal amount, so I chose 5.5 weeks. In hindsight, I would have probably taken the exam a little bit earlier, at 5 weeks.
• Based on the M2 schedule and how much free time I wanted after step 1
• Based on what I thought would allow me to be most efficient, get more than one pass through First Aid, finish UWORLD qbank, and have a little over a week for vacation time after the exam
• Based on what M3 told me. They all thought 5 weeks was just about right.
• Because I wanted to make it out to the camps that I work at every summer & have time for vacation with my family.
• Counted for how long my study plan would take me to get through pathoma, u world, and first aid
• Dartboard
• Every person said 5 and a half weeks is the magic amount of time to take to study. So I took my exam exactly 5.5 weeks starting the monday after the last core exam.
• Gave myself at least 6 weeks, then picked my favorite day of the week.
• Gave myself the most time to study I could.
• Had a conference June 4th - wanted to take it before that. Also knew that 5 weeks of studying would be too much time.
• I asked a handful of students in the class above us to get their feedback on the study period, and found that most thought 5-6 weeks was the right amount of time.
• I asked several M3’s how long they took, and I knew I wanted at least 2 weeks of break before J-Term
• I chose a date I thought I would be reasonably prepared by and would be able to get through most of the material I wanted to get through by that time.
• I chose just over 5 weeks because I figured I wouldn’t be rushed, nor anxious to get it over with. It seemed like a nice mid-range timeframe.
• I counted 35 days out from the beginning of my study period, accounting for time in which I would not be able do study.
• I decided on a date based on my pace. I pushed my exam forward because I was slower than I thought in grasping some concepts
• I decided to schedule the test on a date that would give me 6 weeks to study. I knew that if I had begun studying before the last core was over, I would forget what I studied long before Step 1 and would compromise my scores in the last core.
• I gave myself 5 weeks to study with about 2 weeks off before the start of J-term. I didn’t know if this would be adequate or not but I felt my motivation falling towards the end of the 5th week.
• I gave myself a little over 5 weeks, and took it before a weekend, so I would have 3 full weekends off before J-term.
• I gave myself a week of relaxed review of some things I didn’t feel I remembered well, then 5 weeks to do DIT, and a final week to do a final review of first aid and try to finish up the u world questions.
• I had a wedding in early June, so decided a few weeks after that would be good.
• I had heard from upper classmen that between 35-40 days of studying was the right amount.
• I had heard that 4 - 6 weeks is best time frame: any longer and you get burned out, but not enough time if any shorter. Since I like more study time than my peers, I chose 6 weeks. I was going crazy by the end of my study period, so I am glad I chose that time frame and did not push the exam back, even though I wasn’t feeling ready for it. You will never feel ready for the exam.
• I heard 5-6 weeks was normal and I also wanted a couple of weeks off afterwards.
• I heard from other students that 5-6 weeks was ample time to study. I also scheduled a vacation (with non-refundable flights) right after my exam which I was glad I did because if I hadn’t, I am certain I would have pushed my test back and the extra time really wouldn’t have helped me. I am glad I took it when I did and I am very glad I scheduled a trip right after.
• I just guessed six weeks then decided to move it up when I felt comfortable.
• I just wanted about six weeks.
• I knew I needed more time than some people yet I needed at least a week to relax afterwards.
• I picked one that seemed like it gave me enough time to study and some free time after before third year started.
• I spoke with M3 that said they wish they would have taken it sooner. I am the type of person that likes to buckle down and get studying out of the way. I knew if I had too much time to study I could procrastinate and start losing knowledge. 5 weeks is how long I gave myself. I think I could have done 4.5.
• I took a few days off after the last core ended and then took exactly six weeks with a couple days off in there. I should have taken it sooner, the last few days were worthless, but I think everybody’s last few days are worthless.
• I took six weeks, because I’m generally a slower studier, and I also knew I’d be home for my brother’s graduation for a few days, and wouldn’t get much studying done there. 6 weeks ended up feeling perfect for me.
• I used the standard recommendation of 5-6 weeks.
• I wanted 3 weeks of vacation.
• I wanted a good break before 3rd year and had a trip planned, which narrowed down my test date. I also talked to upperclassmen and used their experience and advice to pick a range.
• I wanted an adequate amount of time to not be overly stressed about cramming for the exam. Also, I allowed myself to have more time for unplanned events that arise in your schedule. Therefore, I chose June 21st which was about 7 weeks.
• I wanted around 5.5 weeks.
• I wanted at least a two week summer break so I figured I would take the exam earlier rather than later, especially because I knew I would be burned out if I took too long of a dedicated study period. My five week study period was maybe still even one week too long, I could have got away with 4 weeks.
• I wanted at least five weeks to study but at least two weeks off.
• I wanted to give myself 5.5-6 weeks of full time studying, then scheduled my exam for after that.
• I wanted to have as much time I can have, so I can be comfortable walking into it. So, I took 7 weeks.
• I wanted to take it on the later end in order to have sufficient time to study and I wanted some kind of break before 3rd year. I took it June 17th.
• I was told 6 weeks is adequate time so I gave myself 6 weeks and a couple days. I feel like 5 weeks would been better because by the 6th week I was just going crazy.
• Input from older students.
Kind of followed what I heard my fellow peers were doing. I studied for 5.5 weeks and took some
days off (ie for my birthday and some other random days)

Listening to other students

Most people I talked to suggested about 5-6 weeks. I wanted 2 full weeks off so I went for 5.5 weeks.
I could not have studied a single more day. With that said, trust yourself more than you trust what
everyone else is doing. You know how you study best.

Moved it back bc I felt I needed more time. Had to get through all the material I felt necessary.

Necessity. It needed to be done by a certain time for me.

Needed as much time as possible.

Older students said study for 5 to 6 weeks, so I studied for 6 weeks.

Past students

recommendations from third years.

Recommendations from upper class men.

Sounded good at the time

Spoke to multiple M3s and found that after 6 weeks you normally are burnt out so I schedule mine at
5.5 weeks and was still slightly burnt out.

Started studying and after a week made an accurate estimate. Changed my date forward 10 days.

talked to other M3s to see when they took it and took the advice of the academic office when they
said most students took it after about 6 weeks of studying

Talking to upper classmen

they suggest 5 weeks and I gave myself pretty much exactly 5 weeks. I wanted a nice long break after
boards.

Third years said six weeks was a good amount of time

Time to complete study materials

Travel schedule + average time. I wanted to give myself a little more than 5 weeks (aimed for 5 weeks
and a couple days for flexibility in case something came up.)

Wanted at least 6 weeks after the end of school to prepare.

Wanted six weeks to study and two more weeks for vacation.

Wanted to be about 5 weeks out from end of semester since most people tend to burn out much past
that.

Wanted to take one week off; gave myself ~5.5 weeks to study.

10a. Did you have difficulty getting your preferred examination date?
Yes: 5 No: 101

- so early like February
- Late January
- Jan 6th
- As soon as we were able to get our permits. I believe it was late December or early January
- January? But changed it in April.
- Early February

10b. Please estimate the amount of time (in hours) that you studied

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<th>Small Group</th>
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11. Did you feel prepared for Step I?
Yes: 78 No: 29
If No, the following comments were made:

- I ended up spending 3 weeks straight on DIT and although there were some parts of DIT that were nice, I wish that I’d not done it and spent more time with QBank and my other study materials because it was very much like I’d heard from a few older students, that they just end up reading First Aid to you.
- I feel like it’s impossible to feel prepared for that exam...
- I don’t believe that at any point someone could say they were prepared for the exam, there is too much material. I will say that I was confident in my preparation and the work that I put in. I used all of my resources.
- I felt like I would pass, but it is a big test that is hard to be confident for.
- Difficult to feel prepared for an exam that has no set material to study.
- I don’t know that I would ever feel fully prepared. I thought I was decently prepared going into it, but after taking the exam I don’t know how well prepared I was or how I could have prepared a whole lot better. (maybe I will know more after I get my scores)
- I had several personal issues arise in the weeks leading up to the test.
- There is always something more you could know.
- I felt like I was as prepared as I could be. There will always be questions that you did not prepare for, but I feel like I put in as much time and effort as I could have, while still focusing on courses throughout the school year.
- Does anyone ever feel fully prepared for it? It's hard and there's so much to know!
- Does anyone?
- While overall I felt prepared, I think I still could have studied for another week to feel fully prepared. There were some things that I wanted to get done, but didn’t have time to in the end.
- It felt like an overwhelming amount of material, and though I had been going over things repeatedly for the last 2 years, it seemed as if the more things I went over, the more I lost from my studying earlier. I know it is likely that it is simply anxiety due to not knowing how I did.
- I started off trying to use too many resources, so I was trying to get through material the first time way too close to my exam date. I just felt like I didn’t have enough review days.
- Nobody will ever feel prepared
- Because I do not know how anyone could ever be prepared for 2 years worth of material in 8 hours ?
- I think I could have used one more week to study and feel a little more confident (I gave myself 5.5 weeks)
- I felt as prepared as I could be but the test was much more difficult than I imagined based on my standing in UWorld.
- There is literally no way anybody can feel prepared. I was fairly confident, but there are going to be ridiculous anatomy questions that are nowhere in first aid or uworld and other similar questions that you cannot prepare for no matter how much time you study.
- Not enough to time. Didn’t feel prepared after curriculum.
- As much as possible I suppose, it was just a hard exam.
- I don’t know yet. I don’t know if any student will ever feel prepared for this test. Everyone will have questions they have never seen or heard of. 3/4ths of the test is manageable. 1/4th of the test are questions you have never seen. But, that’s ok. Everyone else feels the same way.
- By the end, I felt like information was falling out faster than I was putting it in. Overall, just the general pressure of feeling like I had to do well and the amount of information I felt like I would never be prepared
- More clinical pictures of diagnoses during the year. Better application and retention of pharm is a must. Biochemistry was too molecular focused and not enough metabolic focused. 1st year endocrinology needs to be streamlined to clinical application--there was too much of a research focus. Virology section of microbiology was disorganized and far less was presented than what we needed.
• It is hard to ever feel prepared for such a large test! I felt unprepared because it was hard to get practice doing the 8 hour exam and it was not totally clear what type of questions would be on the exam-- some older students claimed the questions mimicked UWorld style, other students claimed it mimicked NBME practice question style. I didn't know how many Xrays would be useful to study... I could have used more direction in how to target and tailor my study plan.
• I don't know if it is possible to feel prepared.
• I think there's significant amounts of biochem (vitamins) that could be reviewed and systems review sessions that could've happened or lectures that could've been recorded and put online
• I never feel fully prepared for any exam that I take, even in undergrad. There is always something more I feel I should study. When you take on the amount of material required to know for Step 1, well of course I didn't feel prepared despite the many hours of study. I was definitely ready to be done with the nightmare, but I didn't feel fully prepared.

12. Please make additional comments about the preparation and examination process that would be helpful to next year’s students.
• After clicking the last question on the real step 1 exam, all I could think of as advice for upcoming M2s was “LEARN THINGS WELL DURING THE SCHOOL YEAR.” If not, it might hunt you later no matter how much time you designate for your Step One study time after May
• Read First Aid throughout the school year as you cover the topics during the respective core. Use SketchyMicro to learn microbiology, incredibly useful and micro is fairly high yield. Read Pathoma throughout the school year to learn high yield pathology. Not necessarily needed during dedicated board studying time. Use USMLE-Rx during the school year when you have time. You probably won't be able to get through all of the 2000+ questions during the school year but even getting through 25-50% of them is a good foundation. There is probably not enough time to use USMLE-Rx during dedicated board studying time and the questions are not as good as UWorld. Use UWorld during the dedicated board studying time. There are 2200+ questions and the questions take much much longer to get through than you would expect due to the long explanations after each question. Try to read the explanation after each question regardless of whether you got the question right or wrong, However, try not to spend too much time reading the explanations as you will not have enough time to finish all of the questions. I’d recommend 50-150 questions per day. Purchase and use the 2 UWorld self-assessments. Each assessment has four 44 question testlets that are similar to the actual exam. The assessments give you a three digit Step 1 score that allows you to assess your performance and may indicate your actual score. However, the scoring may be slightly inflated. Purchase and see the NBME self-assessment exams on the NBME website. These were extremely helpful and I’d say a must. There are a total of 6 self-assessments, each contain four 50 question testlets. The questions are actual board questions written by the same people who make Step 1. I actually had 2-3 questions on my Step 1 exam that were nearly verbatim from the self-assessment exams. After completing each assessment you get a three digit score and a breakdown of your performance in the various subjects. These scores are probably the best indicator of your actual score and it allows you to track your performance and find your strengths and weaknesses. Although some people may recommend taking one the first week of your dedicated board studying as a baseline, I’d recommend waiting 1-2 weeks after you have done some studying. If you take an exam too soon your score will likely be much lower than you’d like and you’ll probably end up guessing on many of the questions because you have not had enough time to study yet. I’d recommend trying to get through all 8 self-assessments (2 UWorld and 6 NBME) by taking 1-2 assessments per week. Do not be discouraged if your first assessment if lower than you’d like, your scores will likely improve overtime with studying. Take 2 assessments back-to-back closer to your test date to simulate the actual 8 hour exam.
• Finish all the U World and make sure you make time for review throughout your study period to work on learning the material you know you struggle with.
• Skip DIT. Start working through QBank as soon as you can.
• Don't overload your materials. Less is more. I chose DIT because FA was too dry to tackle without some help. DIT (although expensive) gets you through First Aid the first time and helps connect the
pieces in a way that make sense. Once you’ve made it through DIT (and therefore FA) everything else is ancillary. SketchyMicro is a must! And UWORLD is a must! Try to get through a minimum of 44 questions a day for UWORLD and spend time reading the explanations. I only made it through half the Qbank, but found that it takes around 3-3.5 hours to complete 44 questions and read the explanations. I wish I made it through Pathoma, but I'm not sure in the end if it would have helped much more. (This is why I say minimal resources) Master the high yield facts of First Aid and use other resources as needed to help with your understanding of FA material.

- Some cores or portions of cores I felt were unhelpful in terms of being poor preparation for board exams. All teachers and core directors should go through a boards review book, preferably first aid, before teaching their section.
- Do not postpone the exam. Get it over with in early June. Concentrated studying at the end of the year can only get you so far with a test like this and if you try to study too long, you will have diminished returns on your studying and decreased motivation.
- Absolutely find a way to use First Aid, UWORLD, and Pathoma. Take a couple of NBMEs over your study period but be patient because it takes a while to see major results. Beyond that, trust yourself and trust that what has worked for you the past two years will work for boards. Don't try to drastically change your study strategies. If you didn't get anything out of watching lectures before, buying DIT and watching lectures all day while studying is probably not going to help. Think about your work areas and find concise review sources in those areas that you can look at a little each day.
- Do whatever you need to prevent yourself from getting stressed by what others around you are doing/studying. I started off studying at school, and while I liked seeing people, I found that the level of comparison among people with what they were studying, what they knew, how fast they were getting through material, etc, acted more as a stressor than anything else. So I ended up doing most of my studying at home or at coffee shops. There's literally hundreds of review resources out there, so people will be all over the place with where they are at with studying. Do what works best for you, work your butt off, and forget about everything else.
- It's impossible to know everything for this exam and it's easy to feel overwhelmed at times. Just take it one day at a time and keep on chugging along, it'll be over before you know it! Also, don't think you have to study throughout the year. I didn't and many others don't. If you put in the time during the first two years, it will pay off! Finally, don't believe everything you read online (such as on Student Doctor Network). Good luck!
- I wish I would have used picmonic throughout the year. Also, sketchy medical was only sketchy micro when we were in micro and didn't have parasites or viruses when we took it so I saw all of those videos for the first time three weeks before my boards. I think that in order for these visual tools to be useful, they must be committed to long term memory and be viewed multiple times throughout the year. If this is how they are studied, I think they can be an invaluable resource.
- Study throughout the year using multiple sources. UNMC curriculum does not highlight the yield information and is not as organized as a good review book.
- Don't try to reinvent the wheel.
- I felt like 5 weeks was all I wanted or needed to study. After taking the test I don't feel like I was super weak in any one area. The only way I think I would have done better would be to spend more time reviewing all topics in a more in depth fashion. I also know that I couldn't keep that level of studying up for more weeks i was getting pretty burnt out and I felt like i was adequately prepared to get the score I hoping for. During the school year i didn't do any dedicated board review until after spring and then it was only 1hr a day till school was out.
- Just know that there will ALWAYS be questions that the makers of Step 1 want to separate the women and men from the girls and boys with. There is no way to know everything, because they will likely test you on something you have not seen in any of your resources or even first two years of medical school. Just do your best, prepare as efficiently as possible, and go in knowing that "you know more than you think you know."
- Use FA throughout the year. Don't slack on pharm.
- Get a strong hold on sketchy micro and pathoma as much as you can before school is out
• Allow time on your study schedule for "catch up" and review in case you fall behind in your schedule.
• There are a lot of resources out there for Step 1 but don't try to study more than a few. There are simply not enough hours in the day to be able to get through it all or remember information from many sources. Study hard, but don't let anxiety over the desire to know everything overwhelm you because you can't possibly know everything.
• Form your plan and stick to it, generally. Don't be super worried if you have to adjust your plan/schedule a bit. Finish UWORLD, I found it helpful to make 2 or more passes through First AID because repetition is helpful for me when studying. Sketchy Micro was also very helpful for micro and its topics. Trust in the process and hopefully everything works out well! Good luck!
• Don't try to tackle too many resources!!!
• Save memorization heavy topics for later
• Just embrace the fact that you have to do it. Treat it like a job: put in 8/+ hours per day for 6 days per week and make that your sole focus. Use the evenings to relax.
• Make sure to stay healthy mentally. Don't be afraid to go talk to dr carver or student health if you are feeling burned out. I talked to lots of friends who were struggling mentally after studying so much. I would also take some time off between end of hem/onc and starting prep to recharge.
• Everyone studies differently, some students will stress you out so avoid them and make sure to try and stay calm throughout the process. Limit yourself to a few resources based on whatever works best and know those resources, you cannot know everything.
• Don't let your classmates intimidate you. Determine a study schedule that works well for you. People will try to brag about how much they are studying to feel better than you, say they are memorizing First Aid front to back (ok seriously that is not even possible) and will stay at Sorrell until obscene hours in the night like...don't be like that person. You can study efficiently and sleep and go to the gym and eat healthy etc. Yeah, this test is hard, but with efficient studying and focus anyone can conquer it. Take some time for yourself. See your family, watch a movie, listen to music. At first you'll think that 5-6 weeks or whatever is not that long but it is a LONG time. To use that very cliche phrase: this is a marathon, not a sprint. You will burn out, the goal is to burn out later than earlier. Start doing questions during the year. USMLE style questions are FAR different than the questions UNMC uses to test you. They are long clinical vignettes with 3rd order answers - compared to UNMC's typical first order question style. The more questions you do, the better you will perform on the test.
• It’s manageable. Don’t freak out. Take time off. Study your tail off.
• Uworld, do all of it and read the explanations thoroughly
• Integration of First Aid, Pathoma, and UWORLD into the curriculum would provide substantial help for board preparation. Also, some sort of review sessions over first year material during second year would be nice. A 1 hour lecture per unit or core covering relevant anatomy/physiology/biochemistry would be helpful to retain information from the first year.
• Do as much as you can, but stick to your resources. Good sleep, diet and exercise kept my brain fresh for 7 days a week x 5 + weeks.
• UFAP and a strict study schedule are best. Take a deep breath before your first testlet...that was the worst part of the exam for me.
• Sketchy micro
• Get First Aid and study with it alongside your cores. Use Pathoma for core studying and to review throughout the year.
• I would avoid USMLE-RX during dedicated time, I spent a week on it and felt it was wasted time that would have been better spent on other resources. It has merit for preparation during the school year and learning First Aid.
• Given that I haven’t received my score yet, I’m not entirely sure if my study methods paid off or not. Regardless, looking back, I’m fairly satisfied with the resources I used and don’t feel that I would have added anything else. I do recommend taking some of the NBME practice exams. I felt they were very similar to the actual exam questions, more so than Uworld.
• More snacks.
• If you’re someone that likes to have a little more guided studying and appreciates lectures and the value of a good teacher I would highly recommend DIT. I also kept a list of topics I was weakest on and a document of random quick facts I had trouble remembering.
• Start Uworld after spring break and do 10 questions a day
• Make choices about the exam date and study materials that will be best for YOU despite what your friends are doing. You know yourself best.