

Personal USMLE Experience

I will be describing my USMLE experience from my point of view as many of my friends have been asking me and I thought of making a short document to be used by all who need it

My scores are:

Step1 score 252

Step 2CK score 262

I got interviews from 11 programs: 5 of them are university programs.

**Check our Step 1 and 2CK Notes at
www.drjamalusmle.com**

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USMLE exams may seem hard but it is not about what you study, it is about how you study. On the other hand, luck may play a huge role during the exam. The exam process including registration, payment and preparation need some good time before hand in addition to thorough thinking and planning.

Reserving an appointment for the exam day is by itself an important part, it puts you in a time frame and this should be the first thing to do even before you start studying for the exam. Your scores do not correlate with the amount of time you spent studying, but it does correlate the amount of time you spent analyzing how the exam will be like.

Tips for Step 1:

- Reading Kaplan books for Step 1 should be done while you are still in med school doing your basic years. If you are sitting for the exam after you graduate, you might want to skip this and save time by doing sth else.
- Kaplan videos are helpful, I have done them all for step1 but on fast forward speed X2.5. I took a general idea of everything and noticed that all the content is mentioned in First Aid step 1 book. It took me about 6 weeks to do it on this high speed.
- The only Kaplan videos that I found significantly helpful were behavioral sciences, ethics and biostatistics. Perhaps due to the fact that these subjects are not taken very seriously and thoroughly during your basic years. I recommend watching these videos.
- Pharmacology videos talking about sympathomimetics and parasympathomimetics, drugs and receptors are quite good and I recommend watching since they give you an idea about how to think when this kind of question shows up.

- First Aid Step1 book should be studied well, it took me 4 weeks of reading.
- The most appropriate step to do after you read step one book for 4 weeks is to start solving Qbanks directly. Yes, after 4 weeks, do not spend more than that because you will be seeing that questions are different than the way you think.
- I did uworld Qbank for 2 months and you learn from your mistakes. It is actually the best way to study for USMLE exams as the explanations they give would stick in your mind and is far better than reading core material. I also re-read the notes I have written just before going to the exam.
- Question ideas are very important so the more you solve, the better. I did a couple of NBME exams but didn't have much time. If time goes back, I would have done other Qbanks in addition to uworld like Kaplan Qbank or any other Qbank that will definitely give more new ideas.
- By the time you finish Qbanks, give about 4 weeks to revise your weaknesses in questions and do a fast revision to first aid and then go for the exam.

To summarize:

My advice is to give yourself good time to prepare using first aid book which is concise. Before starting the Qbank, read my notes and make sure you understand the points well. Do USMLE World Qbank at least once, better if twice. Just before the exam, read the notes and go to the exam.

Good Luck