



LSU HEALTH NEW ORLEANS
SCHOOL OF MEDICINE
OFFICE OF STUDENT AFFAIRS
USMLE Resource Guide

Prepared by:
Dr. Jade J. O'Dell, LSU School of Medicine, Learning Specialist

USMLE PREPARATION RESOURCES

Please be aware that we are not endorsing one product over another. A high price does not equal high quality. The list is made up of popular resources that have helped students see success; this list should be used as a guide. Each online resource is linked to its website. Remember that using more resources does not guarantee better results. More often than not, too many resources will prevent you from truly focusing on the material and preparation process. **We suggest you choose 2 – 3 resources.** Keep in mind: every resource you have used during your coursework is just as useful as any of the resources on this list. Consider your textbooks, lectures/PPTs used by faculty, resources shared with you by faculty, and so on.

CONTENT REVIEW - ONLINE RESOURCES

Pathoma: Good for high-yield pathology (Recommended by peers!)

- **PathomaFree** version is **FREE**; does not include the textbook or all videos
- **PathomaPro** starts at **\$84.95** and offers the textbook, and 3-, 12-, or 21-month subscriptions to videos for every chapter of the book
- Pathoma offers a Step 1 review, which covers **high-yield pathology** material for all organ systems in shorter videos
 - Prefer reading? The **Pathoma textbook** may be faster than reviewing the videos; textbook has many color images like those on Step 1 and 2

SketchyMedical: Good for microbiology, pathology, and pharmacology

- **\$299.99 for 6 months; \$399.99 for 12 months; \$599.99 for 24 months**
- A visual mnemonic series for microbiology, pathology, and pharmacology
- Sketches “help you create a memory palace by associating medical topics with memorable visual elements”

Boards & Beyond

- Subscriptions range from **\$24 for one week to \$399 for 2 years**
- Step 1 resource includes 447 videos, PDF copies of the slides, and Qbank of 2,300 questions
- Covers content review and Qbank with one subscription

Anki Flashcards: Digital flashcards; good for quick repetition of factoids

- Android and Mac version: free; iPhone app version: **\$25**
- Some students use flashcards extensively, and others never use them
- If you benefit from flashcards (e.g., a quick review (15-20 minute intervals of time) of material prior to bedtime or first thing in the morning) this is a popular option
- Zanki offers a Step 1 specific deck using First Aid prompts
- Quizlet (similar to Anki) is also a useful tool
 - Check this out! 100 Most Important Development and Gross Anatomy Concepts



Goljan Pathology Lectures

- Offered as **FREE Audio lectures** on the web (YouTube link above) or Spotify Podcast as “Daddy Goljan Lectures”
- This resource provides a comprehensive pathology review in a way that integrates multiple disciplines. It has become one of the most popular resources for concept connection and crucial for review throughout the year
- Keep in mind, this is a series of audio podcasts, it can be listened to during commutes, while running errands, or even during exercise – strategically use your time (the Learning Specialist can help you with this!)

AMBOSS Good for Step 1 & 2 preparation

- Full Qbank access is in addition to the monthly membership: **\$149 for 1 month, \$189 for 3 months, \$229 for 6 months, \$299 for 12 months**
- Includes the following:
 - Content review using unlimited library access, Anki add-on and smart study tools, as well as interactive medical imaging with overlays
 - “Phrasionary, table quizzes, charts, radiological images with overlays, videos, SmartZoom samples and other images that illustrate key points on different topics” all on a digital platform
 - 2,700+ Step 1 questions
 - With your subscription you also have access to 3,200+ Step 2 questions, 3,700 Shelf questions, and 2,000+ Step 3 questions

Pixorize

- Pricing: **\$185.00 for 6 months, \$249.00 for 1 year, (Biochemistry \$150 for 1 year)**
- A visual mnemonic series for **biochemistry, microbiology, immunology, and pharmacology**
- Recommended primarily for useful mnemonics on biochemistry as a long-term memory tool

Kaplan

- **On Demand (\$1,999), Live Online (\$4,399), New York In-Center (\$9,999)**
- On Demand: Over 1,700+ videos with over 330 hours of lecture, 3,100 quiz questions, 7 volumes of lecture notes in print and eBook, and 2 full length practice tests
- Live Online: Adds 270+ hours of interactive live online lectures by physicians + membership to private Facebook group
- New York: Access to facility and staff at New York Kaplan Medical Center. 1:1 medical advising and weekly workshops
- See Question Bank Resources section (below!) for additional Kaplan Step 1 offerings

Dirty Medicine

- Offered as **FREE** YouTube videos
- Conceptual review of two concepts that are similar and helps you discern the ways in which they are different with mnemonics. Known for excellent biochemistry videos



Divine Intervention Podcast – Good for Step 1 & Step 2CK preparation - **FREE**

- Focuses on high yield concepts
- This podcast allows you to choose specific topics to supplement learning deficits. Because it is a podcast, it can be listened to during commutes, while running errands, or even during exercise.

HyGuru

- USMLE Step 1 Course: **\$196**
- Focuses on integrated organ systems. “HyGuru's comprehensive USMLE Step 1 course augments the pathophysiology in the free NBME Top Concepts with the relevant physiology and pharmacology. Integrated with immunology and biochemistry, this course provides a high-yield, integrative overview of each organ system.”

Firecracker by Lippincott

- For the full MD Firecracker deck: **2 months for \$99; 6 months for \$149; 12 months for \$199**
- Offers several “bundles” for Step 1 review which include various additional (and more expensive) options, the most popular of which includes First Aid citations and a collection of topics, flashcards, and test questions which reference material from Pathoma and SketchyMedical

USMLE-Scholar-Rx – Good for Step 1 & Step 2CK preparation

- **Step 1 QMax** (2300 questions, 2 comprehensive, 160-item self-assessment exams): **1 month (\$129); 3 months (\$159); 6 months (\$249); 12 months (\$299); 24 months (\$349)**
- **Step 2CK QMax** (2300 questions, customized practice exams): **1 month (\$129); 3 months (\$159); 6 months (\$249); 12 months (\$299); 24 months (\$349)**
- Step 1 Qmax (2300 questions) & Step 2 CK QMax (2300 questions) bundle – **6 months (\$149.40), 12 months (\$179.40), 24 months (\$209.40), 36 months (\$239.40)**
 - Question banks for Step 1 & Step 2CK
- USMLE Scholar Rx has five different resources in one—Rx bricks, Step 1 Qmax, Flash Facts, Express Videos, and Digital First Aid

PHYSE Biochemistry Map

- Offered as a **FREE** resource; analyze biochemistry questions using the visual to conceptualize the biochemistry map
- [Biochemistry Map.pdf](#)

CONTENT REVIEW - BOOK RESOURCES

If you prefer print rather than digital/online resource, check out these resources. Pricing varies by book seller.

First Aid for the USMLE Step 1: A good choice (not as a stand-alone resource); works well with UWorld; more than just a guide for content

- Approximately **\$25 to rent; \$50 to buy** (try [Amazon](#) or [Alibris](#))



- First Aid is available for **FREE** when a student becomes a member of American Medical Association (AMA) which costs \$20 a year or \$68 for 4 years. You will also get the [FREIDA](#) residency database and other wellness tools
- First Aid is separated into the following sections:
 - Section 1: Guide to Efficient Exam Preparation
 - Section 2: High Yield General Principles
 - Section 3: High-Yield Organ Systems
 - Section 4: Top-Rated Review Resources
- Students often read relevant sections of First Aid throughout the first three years (especially second year)
- Many students make notes directly into First Aid; others may remove pages and place them in a binder, combining class notes and high yield information gleaned from UWorld questions into one source
- As valuable as it is, First Aid is not recommended as a stand-alone resource. It is great for a high-level, high-yield overview of target areas for review

Lippincott Illustrated Reviews Medical Series

- Pricing varies – starting at **\$55-\$85 per book**
- Features clear, effective writing and hundreds of illustrations
- Good for quick review and understanding complex information
- Sequential images detail mechanisms of action & provide a visual understanding of how drugs work
- Series covers various topics, including pharmacology, physiology, biochemistry, and more.

Board Review Series (BRS)

- Paperback & digital versions available, **\$60-\$70**
- Multiple subjects are available
- BRS Physiology and BRS Biochemistry are the most popular

Appleton-Lange Series – Good for Step 1 & 2 preparation

- Paperback versions available - **\$45 and up**
- Multiple subjects are available, including Appleton & Lange Review for the USMLE Step 1 and Appleton & Lange Review for the USMLE Step 2
- Microbiology/immunology and pharmacology are the most popular.

Ridiculously Simple Series

- Prices range from **\$27-\$45 per book**
- Multiple subjects are available – some are silly, but helpful, mnemonics – some specific to USMLE preparation
- Clinical Microbiology Made Ridiculously Simple is the most popular

High Yield Series

- Prices range from **\$5-\$80 per series**
- Multiple subjects are available



- High Yield Neuroanatomy, High Yield Embryology, High Yield Gross Anatomy, and High Yield Behavioral Science are the most popular
- These books distill the content to a complex minimum

Rapid Review Series (RRS)

- Prices range from **\$30-\$70 per series**
- Multiple subjects are available
- Pathology RRS (Edward F. Goljan) and Biochemistry RRS are the most popular for their images (Pathology) and diagrams (Biochemistry)

QUESTION BANK (QBANKS) RESOURCES

UWorld – Good for Step 1 & Step 2CK preparation (#1 recommended!)

- LSU School of Medicine provides a discount on a UWorld Step 1 subscription at the beginning of your 2nd year
- **Step 1 QBank subscriptions: 30-day (\$319), 90-day (\$439), 180-day (\$479) or 360-day (\$559)**
 - 3,600+ questions at or above exam-level difficulty
- **Step 2CK QBank subscriptions: 30-day (\$319), 90-day (\$439), 180-day (\$479) or 360-day (\$559)**
 - 4,250+ Step 2 and shelf exam questions
- Questions based on real-life clinical scenarios & paired with in-depth, visual answer explanations
- Tested in an exam-like software interface
- Organized to track your performance by subject and system
- **You should activate UWorld and use it throughout the year as a learning tool** (in tutor mode, by topic area you are covering in class during coursework; non-tutor mode, timed during Step prep)
- Set a goal to get through 50% of UWorld Qbank before Step 1 dedicated

AMBOSS – Good for Step 1 and Step 2CK preparation

- Full Qbank access is in addition to the monthly membership
- Subscription pricing: **\$14.99 billed monthly, or \$10.75 month, billed yearly, about \$129 per year**
- Membership includes: Unlimited library access, Anki add-on & smart study tools, free mobile app use, interactive medical imaging with overlays, highly-rated customer support
- 5-day Free trial

Kaplan Good for Step 1 & Step 2CK Preparation

- **QBank Step 1:** 1 month (\$159), 3 months (\$199), 6 months (\$299), 12 months (\$399), 18 months (\$449), 24 months (\$499)
- **QBank Step 2:** 1 month (\$159), 3 months (\$199), 6 months (\$299), 12 months (\$399)

Board Vitals - Good for Step 1 & Step 2CK Preparation



- **Step 1 subscriptions: \$169 for 1 month; \$259 for 3 months; \$449 for 6 months**
 - You can also add a full-length practice exam for \$15-\$20 depending on your subscription
 - Access to question banks and practice tests. 3,250+ Step 1 questions available
- **Step 2CK subscriptions: \$159 for 1 month; \$219 for 3 months; \$259 for 6 months**
 - You can also add a full-length practice exam for \$15-\$20 depending on your subscription
 - Access to question banks and practice tests; 1400+ Step 2CK questions available

USMLE-Scholar-Rx – Good for Step 1 & Step 2CK preparation

- **Step 1 QMax** (2300 questions, 2 comprehensive, 160-item self-assessment exams): **1 month (\$129); 3 months (\$159); 6 months (\$249); 12 months (\$299); 24 months (\$349)**
- **Step 2CK QMax** (2300 questions, customized practice exams): **1 month (\$129); 3 months (\$159); 6 months (\$249); 12 months (\$299); 24 months (\$349)**
- **Step 1 Qmax (2300 questions) & Step 2 CK QMax (2300 questions) bundle – 6 months (\$149.40), 12 months (\$179.40), 24 months (\$209.40), 36 months (\$239.40)**
 - Question banks for Step 1 & Step 2CK
- USMLE Scholar Rx has five different resources in one—Rx bricks, Step 1 Qmax, Flash Facts, Express Videos, and Digital First Aid