BAR EXAM STUDY ADVICE:

From Recent New York Law School Graduates who Passed the Bar Exam
FROM ANNE MALY ’18 (TWO YEAR HONORS PROGRAM):

Future bar examinees, congratulations on graduating from law school, and welcome to the next couple of months of bar prep! Buckle up and get ready to grind like it is 1L first semester all over again. Except unlike your first semester, you have completed six semesters of law school and now know your studying style, your stamina, and what helps you to learn and remember. Here are a few tips for you to keep in mind as you do your bar prep.

Do not blindly follow the bar prep course. Do what makes you perform best.

The first two weeks of bar prep, I blindly followed the course, filled in the blank on the worksheets they gave me for the lectures, read the outlines, and went out with my family to celebrate the holiday. Then, week three came along, and I didn’t remember a single thing that I had learned in the lectures because it wasn’t my style to passively review information and then fill in the blank. So I had to revamp my routine and start learning the way I knew worked best for me. Do what I didn’t, and start from day one with what works best for you to work through the required material that is on your schedule.

If you are thinking, “I don’t know myself. I don’t know what works and what doesn’t work,” I have been there, too. Think back to the worst grade in a substantive course in the past three semesters, what did you do to prepare for the final? Now think to the best grade in a substantive course in the past three semesters, what did you do to prepare for the final, and how does that contrast to your worst grade? Thinking about what worked and what didn’t work leading up to those grades helps you to find what routine made you learn, remember, and deliver on exam day. Once you know that, then make the bar prep course yours so that you can remember the law and deliver on the exam days.

Have a bar prep friend to check-in with or study with a group.

I left New York to study for the bar, and I left my main support group in New York. It was isolating to study alone, to see my mediocre scores on MBE practice, and be alone with my worst fears and thoughts. After the fifth week, I started reaching out to another friend that left New York for bar prep and we had weekly chats about our progress, problems with the prep, and comparing lecture tips from our different bar courses. It really helped to have someone else to talk to and to express my doubts and fears, and know that the other person was in the same spot. It also helped me to remember the material and learn different acronyms or ways of remembering the law. I know that other people had a good study group and they were able to talk out the concepts and study together. That was what worked for them throughout law school and what helped them the most.

Take the odd personal day, if you know it will be productive.

In the course of my 10 weeks of bar prep, I got two sinus infections and the flu. I tried to push through and continue in my bar prep course, but sometimes I just thought, “I don’t think I can do this.” And then I would get 35 percent or 40 percent on my practice questions. So, the next time I sat there thinking “I don’t think I can do this…” I took the day off to be a normal human and unwind a bit. I think taking the days off when I knew that it wouldn’t be productive helped me to stay sane and be more productive overall.
Be ready to have doubts of "am I doing enough" or "what if I don’t pass?"

I think about halfway through, every time I stopped my work for the day I thought, “Is this really enough or should I be doing more?” And every time I closed my eyes to go to sleep I thought “What if I don’t pass?”

I can confidently say that if you show up to do the work and get more than 80 percent of your bar prep course meaningfully completed, then you will be able to pass. I did 90 percent of my course, had about seven weeks of full preparation, and enough practice to make the bar exam test days just feel like a more intense version of my regular routine.

Get into a routine quickly and find a way to eliminate distractions.

I studied 8:30 a.m.–5:30 p.m., six days a week and a few hours on Sundays. In the last few weeks of prep, I tried to make my study and practice hours 8:00 a.m.–12:00 p.m. and 1:00 p.m.–5:00 p.m. to help me gauge my stamina for the actual test days. Sometimes when I couldn’t sleep, I would read an outline or read through the critical pass flash cards to help me feel like I was at a good stopping point to go to sleep. Having a routine helped me to stay on track with my bar prep course, and have time to stop in the evening.

As for distractions, I was studying at my parents’ house and quite often, my mom would often drop in with a “quick question” that usually happened to be in the middle of a simulated exam question and wasn’t quickly answered. So I had to tell her when I was starting simulated exam questions and make an “Exam in Progress” sign to eliminate the temptation to ask a quick question. I also set my phone on airplane mode when I was working through the material. If you can eliminate distractions, it will help you to stay on track and not feel as stressed about your progress.

If you feel like you are treading water in the middle of the ocean, contact NYLS professors, friends, or alumni for help.

There was a point when I felt like my routine wasn’t going to help me pass the bar and that there was something fundamentally lacking from my bar prep course. So I turned to the Internet for bar prep, studying techniques, and ways to improve your efficiency. Looking back, I wasted way too much time reading blogs. If you feel over your head, reach out to your bar prep support, the NYLS bar prep mentors, or someone who just took the bar. They can help you more than a blog post, which is more than likely going to inspire you to buy another tool to help you prepare.

There are many tools and programs out there, but you really only need to consistently practice and understand how to improve for the next practice session.

You have likely already spent a lot of money on a commercial bar prep course, and it will be tempting to read a blog or a testimonial about this new and improved tool that will help you prepare the best for the bar exam. I would say that you do not need to spend any more money unless you know that the way you perform best is not being addressed by your prep course. At the end of the day, continuous, consistent practice with essays, MPTs, and MBE questions is what will best prepare you for the exam, but always remember: do what makes you perform best.
Be prepared for what to do when you get to the bar exam, read the hypo, and completely blank on the law.

I have yet to meet a person who took the bar and knew the law for every single essay. I completely blanked on the law for half of the essays. Having to write an essay or two a day as part of my bar prep helped me to get into a routine where I was able to spin something from nothing and move on without a complete panic attack. If you worry about your ability to perform under pressure, ask your bar prep support about ways to earn points on essays even when you do not know the law.

Be a normal human and make some time each day to unwind or do what makes you happy.

Bar prep was an emotional, stressful roller coaster for me. It feels good to accomplish the required tasks for the day, but it is demoralizing and stressful to see your performance is below passing or just at passing. I wanted a good buffer zone where I could be confident in passing, but there was never a day when I saw that happen. So I really needed those times to do what made me happy, what let me escape the stress and be free for the time that I wasn’t working on bar prep. So, I encourage you to have a schedule that allows you to do the same. You don’t want to burn out and you don’t want to have to do it all over again if you can avoid it.

Think of the happiest moment in your life or the happiest feeling you will have when you get your passing results before you start each section

There have been many studies that show exam performance is stronger when the student thinks of a happiest moment or envisions the positive result just before taking the exam. I envisioned a letter notifying me of a passing result with a score of 275. It helped me to calm down and clear my mind right before each section to be cool and confident with my answers. Even when I completely blanked, I thought of a passing result, took a deep breath, and started typing some answer in IRAC form. Even not knowing the specific law, I was able to get a strong essay score. So remember to reflect on your happiest moment or envision your end goal, and you will find the strength to pass!

Ultimately, you want to be sitting for the bar exam and feel like it is just an intense day in your routine. You know yourself and what makes you stay motivated and engaged, so make a plan, get into a routine, and gain the confidence to take on the bar and pass!

FROM EROIDE ALPHONSE ’17 (EVENING):

• Take as much time off as your employer would permit to prepare for the exam.
• Let your friends and family know ahead of time that you aren’t available unless it is important.
  – It is very helpful if family/friends can assist with childcare and other responsibilities.
• Create and stick to a study schedule (i.e., morning session for MBE questions; evening sessions for MEE/MPT essays)
  – If you fall behind in your schedule, determine which tasks have priority over others.
• Do the practice questions under exam day time constraints, and do this as soon and as often as you can!
  – Read the explanations of the MBE answers for each question you take—even when you answered correctly.
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- Review and take as many practice essays for each area of law for the MEE:
  - This is very time consuming and if you can’t write out the essays due to timing, outline the hypo to identify the issue, write rules and exceptions in the margins (practice writing the rules from memorization)
  - Reading the model answers and the above average answers are extremely helpful
- Use your lunch break to study and do practice questions—and keep a pair of ear plugs handy!
- It may be helpful to alternate your locations of study. In addition to the Mendik Library, access law libraries near your home, or visit cafés. Just remember to keep a pair of ear plugs handy!
  - A change of scenery may get you out of a study slump, but you know yourself best. If you are easily distracted a café, it won’t work for you.
- Schedule your breaks for family engagements, workouts, TV shows, etc.
- Stick to the study habits and methods that work best for you.
  - There are plenty of study materials shared between groups, classmates, etc.—you won’t have to time to review them all.
- Try to use mobile apps so that you can practice on your commute, such as Bar Prep Hero.
- Try to keep your phone in another room or out of sight to avoid distractions. In fact, turn off notifications for social media and/or enable the “Do Not Disturb” feature on your phone.
- Attend the practice exams and workshops that the school or your bar prep company hosts.

FROM DORICHEL RODRIGUEZ ’17:

My Bar Exam Experience

Disclaimer No. 1: This is what I did for the bar. It is not a step-by-step instruction on what you should do. Use this as a guide to help you think through some things like how to study, where to study, and keeping sane. I am by no means an expert on bar prep, but talking about the process may help you sort some things out before you’re way too deep into studying.

Disclaimer No. 2: AGAIN, you don’t have to follow everything I say in here. I have to say it twice because the most important thing you should do is figure out what will work for you!

Now let’s get to the good stuff:

Breathe

The bar exam is a long process that will test you in ways you didn’t think you could be tested. While knowing all the law is great (but impossible), the bar exam requires good time management, confidence, determination, and lots of practice. The first thing I did for bar prep was to find my happy place—my ideal, most comfortable, stress-free state of mind to tackle the roller coaster ride I was embarking on. I found my it by planning and preparing my home, my daily schedule, my social media, and daily interactions to foster an environment where I could focus and feel empowered.

I made my living quarters as comfortable as possible.
I did some serious spring cleaning before starting bar prep. I decluttered and cleaned my room. In fact, if it did not have to do with the bar courses or with my career goals, it had to go. I also purchased items that would help me keep it clean and organized for the next two months. I asked my sister to buy me Bath & Body Works Stress Relief products, including the candle—it smells amazing! I also organized my desk and put my bar prep books in a specific spot. I bought an aloe plant after researching plants that help with oxygen flow for my room and promote quality sleep.

These steps are not necessary, but I am a believer that a clean, organized home helps foster a great learning and relaxing environment. If you don’t believe me, try studying for finals in a messy room versus a clean room that smells like lavender or eucalyptus.

**Learning the Law**

You will not learn all the law before the bar exam.

The goal is to know enough and be able to answer as many questions right to get enough points to pass. You need 266 for New York, but a 280-plus score is good for all jurisdictions so aim high!

Practice is key Practice, however, does not mean you need to do one million MBEs and MEEs and MPTs. It means that between the start and end of bar prep, you have seen and done enough questions covering as many scenarios as possible, you understand what you’re being asked to do, can do the majority of what you’re asked to do, and have worked on areas that are not your strongest.

You will be told that you need to do 2,000-plus MBEs. That is a good goal, but it was not for me. I did not want to count how many I did, and I preferred to focus on improving my stats. I focused on going from 40 percent correct, then 60 percent, and then to 70 percent. You can do 2000-plus questions but if you’re not improving your scores, you’re not helping yourself. Same thing for MEE/MPTs. If your scores are below the average needed in June, you should aim at being past the average score by the end of July. For example, on a scale of 1-6, if you’re getting 3-4s in June, aim to get 4-5s by mid-July.

**Work On Your Weaknesses**

This is not the time to hide from the hard questions. But note that even if you finish bar prep with scores below the average needed to pass, this does not mean you can't pass the bar. Improving your scores above the average is just a good goal in general, but don’t stress yourself out if you are not there by the time the bar comes. You never know what may happen.

**Making a Schedule**

I had an idea of what I wanted my schedule to be but I did not set anything in stone until I got my bar classes schedule. First, I made sure to put all deadlines for practice exams and essays on my calendar to keep track of them. My classes were Monday–Friday, 5:30 p.m.–9:40 p.m. with some weekend classes. I made sure these were also on my calendar. Since I had evening classes, most of my independent work was done during the day. I’m not a morning person so I knew trying to wake up at 7:00 a.m. to start studying by 9:00 a.m. was not healthy for me.
Don’t Lose Sleep

Sleep is still necessary to ensure that your brain is properly functioning! I knew that I was better off starting at 11:00 a.m., so I would wake up by 9:00 a.m., get ready, skip the rush hour commute, and have a good train ride with minimal delays and annoyances. (In general, do whatever you can to avoid distractions and everyday annoyances.) I arrived to school by 11:00 a.m. with coffee or tea and started whatever work I needed to do that day.

I determined what I had to do that day based on my bar prep course schedule and what I knew would work for me. My schedule asked for me to do 20 multiple choice questions and read MEE/MPTs almost every day, as well as do MEE/MPTs to turn in for grading. I followed the schedule 70 percent of the time. Here is why: I have issues with being told what to do and how to do it. So, I followed my own schedule. I realized that doing the multiple choice questions every day was too much to do if I looked at how much time I was using to do the questions and then review them. Instead, I specified days where I worked solely on MBE and solely on MEE and solely on MPTs. I did more MBE days at first than MEE and MPTs based on the fact that I sucked at multiple choice questions and was getting good grades on the practice MEEs and MPTs I was turning in.

Try to take timed practice questions. You should do all practice questions based on the time you will have at the bar. This helps with your time management.

MBE

The way I studied for this was to do sets of questions, then review, then another set, then review. Reviewing the questions is more important than doing one million questions. If you don’t understand why you answered a question correctly or incorrectly, you’re not learning!

Strategy: For longer questions, I read the call of the question first and then the paragraphs. I did this because since there is a time constraint, I wanted to read with an intent rather than reading blind and waiting till the end to figure out what I was supposed to answer. For shorter questions, I read from the beginning as there is less information to sort through.

I tried to do 45 questions timed based on the following timing:

- 15 minutes – nine questions completed
- 30 minutes – 18 questions completed
- 45 minutes – 27 questions completed
- 60 minutes – 36 questions completed
- 75 minutes – 45 questions completed***
- 90 minutes – 54 questions completed
- 105 minutes – 63 questions completed
- 120 minutes – 72 questions completed
- 135 minutes – 81 questions completed
- 150 minutes – 90 questions completed
- 165 minutes – 99 question completed

(Then you have about 10-15 minutes to spare or catch up! I found this particularly helpful because some questions may take longer than others.)

I followed this timing religiously. During the actual bar, time will be flying by and you do not want to be struggling with answering all the questions. In general, you would be told to take 1.8 minutes answering one question. This, however, will have you answering the last question with only 1.8 minutes left on the exam. You don’t want this! Work on your timing—it can save you!
Once I graded the questions, I read the explanations for all the questions I got wrong and wrote down the rules in those explanations in my separate MBE notebook. **This step was very important.** It helped me remember the rules. I would review that notebook more than I reviewed my class notes. I made sure to label the topic of the rule to keep it in order. Your brain needs to get used to jumping from one subject to another in every question.

This process, by the way, takes a big chunk of time if you have a lot of questions to review, which would probably be the case at least 90 percent of the time. MBE is hard. If you are not great at doing these questions, the best way to get better is to practice and review.

Reading your outline isn’t going to do much if you can’t apply the concepts to a four-sentence fact pattern with four choices where two of them look like the right answer. Practice!

**MEE**

Similar to the MBE, I did a lot of practice for these, but a different type of practice. I was doing pretty well on the graded essays so what I did was to review my outline for a subject and then go through three to four MEE questions. I hated doing practice essays, so I would instead outline the answers. I then would look at the bar examiners answer sheet to identify what I got right and what I got wrong.

I did not try to score myself on these because I still don’t understand their scoring. I would, however, write all the rules as written in the answer sheets in a separate word document and created an outline based on the subject and the subtopic/scenario of that subject. The reason why this was not done in a notebook is that the rules without an outline structure made no sense to me.

See the attached outline for an example of what I did. I went through all MEEs in my review book, plus all the MEEs on my course's website.

Each MEE should take 30 minutes. My personal goal was 28 minutes so I could review, add, and edit it.

*Strategy:* the questions first. Since you only have 30 minutes and several sentences to sort through, I wanted to read with intent. Reading the questions first helped me focus on what I needed to look for. In essence, each sentence had a place in what the questions were asking for. As I read, I would figure out where each sentence belongs. I did not outline too much as I generally can work through things in my head, but I would make notes along the fact pattern to help me know what information went where.

**MPT**

I followed the same method as MEE, except no rules were written down because there is no substantive knowledge that you can use there.

Every MPT is in its own universe. The key here was the timing, organization, and doing the task you were asked to do.

As for timing, I used the 45/45 rule. I spent 45 minutes reviewing the packet plus outlining, and 45 minutes writing the answer. Stick to this! MPT is often overlooked because it doesn’t require memorizing rules. Don’t do this!

Read and practice MPTs. I suggest going through 1-2 different types of MPTs (memos, letters, contract drafts, wills draft, etc.) before the actual exam. You need to know the format for each type. To this end, go to Burkhalter’s MPT supplemental workshop or ask him to give you the
packet he gave us last year with examples on how to organize each MPT answer. **This is crucial!!!** The last thing you want to do in the MPT is miss points because you forgot how to do a heading for a proper letter or spend 10 minutes trying to do the damn heading! You get points for minor things. That one point for a heading could be the difference between a 265 and a 266.

**Strategy:** I read the task memo first, then I went to the library. In the library, I focused on finding the rule for each case (and wrote RULE next to it) and kept in mind the statutes, if any. Once I was done with the library, I went into the file. I highlighted, underlined, or noted any facts that matched the rules I found from the cases or any statutes. I approached the MPT as a puzzle. The Task (question to be answered) was the big picture, the Rules were the border pieces (the pieces with straight sides) of the puzzle, and the facts were the inside. As I read, I was putting the pieces together until I completed the whole big picture aka the task!

**Sample Schedule for June**

(I took a lot of 5-10 mins breaks in between depending on how I felt)

**WEEKDAYS**

9:00 a.m.–11:00 a.m.: Wake up, get ready, eat breakfast, and travel to school.

11:00 a.m.–2:00 p.m.: Work on MBE 45 questions and review as many as possible OR work on MEE/MPTs. (It depended on what assignment I had due for the course.)

2:00 p.m.–3:00 p.m.: Lunch

3:00 p.m.–5:00 p.m.: Second set of MBE (OR MEE/MPTs) or work on any assignments due if there was any midweek.

5:00 p.m.–5:30 p.m.: Break

5:30 p.m.–9:40 p.m.: Class

9:40 p.m. till the next morning: Do nothing (sleep, watch a show, take a bubble bath).

**WEEKENDS** (including days with no class)

12:00 p.m.–2:00 p.m.: Work on assignments due

2:00 p.m.–4:00 p.m.: Lunch/Break

4:00 p.m.–7:00 p.m.: Work on MBE/MEE/MPT—it all depends your course schedule and where you are on your own personal checklist.

7:00 p.m.–11:00 p.m.: Take a mini practice test (such as two MEEs or 50 MBEs with breaks and dinner)

**Sample July Schedule**

(no classes)

**EVERY DAY:** DESIGNATE FOR MBES OR MEE/MPTS

11:00 p.m.–2:00 p.m.: Practice mini test for 1.5 hours and review for 1.5 hours

2:00 p.m.–3:00 p.m.: Lunch
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3:00 p.m.–5:00 p.m.: Finish review of answers, go through notes or outline book for problem subjects

5:00 p.m.–6:00 p.m.: Dinner

6:00 p.m.–8:00 p.m.: Practice mini test for 1.5 hours and review for 1.5 hours

8:00 p.m.–8:30 p.m.: Break

8:30 p.m.–10:00 p.m./11:00 p.m.: Finish review of answers, go through notes or outline book for subjects that I kept getting wrong

Weekly Goals
(Adjust based on what you think is best for you)

• MBE practice four days a week (this was heavier than MEE and MPT because it was my weakness)
• MEE practice two days a week
• MPT practice one day a week

For variation on the weekly goals, consider this:

Monday: Half MBE/Half MEE
Tuesday: Half MBE/ Half MPT
Wednesday: Half MEE/ Half MBE
Thursday: Full MBE
Friday: Full MEE
Saturday: Half MPT/Half MBE
Sunday: Full MBE

Note: I took three full practice MBE exams. These simulated the actual exam day. After the exam, I took a break to eat and then reviewed the questions I got wrong that day. The reviews are long so don’t wait till the next day to do them. I also did one full MEE/MPT practice exam, which I had to turn in and was graded by the bar review.

Also, I attended Professor Burkhalter’s classes and adjusted my schedule for those. I attended a few of the classes with Professor Kipiniak (MBEs) as well. Please attend these classes. You don’t have to go to all of them, but you should go to a few because they provide extra help that you may need.

Social Media

If you’re addicted to it, get it together now! You will not have time to be on Instagram, Snapchat, Facebook, Groupme, and whatever else for hours each day. However, this does not mean you have to delete everything and go cold turkey. Just do it in moderation. And most importantly, limit what you see! The world may be coming to an end, but you don’t have the time to care about that. Nothing exists other than the bar! The mute and unfollow buttons are your friend. You will have plenty of time to catch up on things after killing it at the bar!
Interactions

The stress of bar prep is intense. Everyone around me was also stressed, especially in July. I made sure to stay away from people that were not bringing in positive vibes to my life. This included EVERYONE! If your attitude, presence, and energy did not make me feel good, you had to go! If you were making me more anxious than I already was, you had to go! No one was safe! Let those in your life...especially non-bar taking friends and love ones, know that you need to be drama-free and stress-free for these 2 months.

Once Classes Are Over

Reassess your schedule once your classes are over. You will have two to three weeks before the bar where you will have no classes. During that time, I was studying for 10–12 hours every day including the weekends. I would come in at 11:00 a.m. and leave at 11:00 p.m. However, out of those 10–12 hours, I was actually doing work for seven to eight hours if you exclude food, breaks, mental breakdowns, and unavoidable distractions. In those seven-eight hours of actual work, make sure to set up a plan and goals to achieve each day and week. Focus on what you’re struggling but take time to look at everything.

Last Week Before The Bar

Avoid school if you can because the energy will be crazy. Everyone is exhausted and freaking out at this point. I stayed at home this last week. I tweaked my schedule to go a little lighter. At that point I knew that putting in crazy hours will only make it worse. I focused on the subjects and areas I still felt uneasy. I moved away from large outlines and focused on short one-sheet outlines. I meditated, ate well, and took breaks. I limited my interactions and focused on staying confident. I prepared my two zip lock bags for each bar day and what I would wear. I made sure I had my bar ticket and my computer was working properly.

Two Days Before The Bar

I double checked that I had everything I needed! I stopped doing questions and focused on just reviewing one-sheets.

Day Before The Bar

_Breathe._ I did not look at anything bar related! I ate the best food ever, washed my hair, cleaned my room, watched movies, and meditated. I went to sleep early and made sure I had five alarms plus my mother to wake me up.

During The Bar

_Breathe._ Focus on you and you alone. Lunch time is not for socializing because those freaking out will be projecting that on you. Eat your food and recharge!
**Last Notes**

*Summer is basically canceled, especially in July.* You can do some things in June but please don’t be in someone’s club each weekend—you can’t study if you’re tired and sleepy from the night before! You can have all the fun you want next summer as a licensed attorney and the day after the bar.

*Take breaks.* You’re not a machine. You’re human. Get a massage, watch a movie. I took Friday night off as I always did in law school. Do something to remind yourself that you’re still alive. But do this in moderation as time is limited. Don’t use breaks as a way procrastinate!

Plan your meals. Don’t spend time trying to figure out what you want every day or walking around Tribeca aimlessly looking for a place to eat. Also, save some money by bringing food from home if possible!

*Go off schedule.* Some days you’re just not that into it. If you’re not getting it, walk away and get some fresh air or just go home!

*Find a study spot.* The best places offer the least distractions and the most comfort. Don’t sit by the red chairs if you’re going to talk to everyone that walks by you. I moved around as the weeks went by. I ended up in the library, which wasn’t a place I studied during law school. However, I liked the long tables on L1 because I had so many books to spread out. It was also easy to walk to Starbucks and the restroom without taking a whole trip to do so. I brought a blanket, snacks, headphones, and enjoyed watching people walk by, but not having to talk to them because they were outside the glass!

*Motivate yourself.* This is all you! You got this! You can do this! It doesn’t matter how much someone else believes in and roots for you if you’re not confident in your ability. This will be tested every single day, and every day you have to tell yourself that you’re smart, independent, and strong, and you will not let some test get the best of you.

*Get financially prepared.* Rent still has to get paid. You will most likely spend a lot of money getting delivery and coffee. Make arrangements to cover your bills and expenses.

**Resources**

- **Excellence in Law School**
  Offer several services, including one-sheets—these are gold!

- **Critical Pass**
  MBE Flashcards—I did not personally use this but it is very popular.

- **Smart Bar Prep**
  Offer essay outlines and tell you how frequently a rule has been tested in prior bar exams.
  [https://www.smartbarprep.com/](https://www.smartbarprep.com/)

- **Emanuel’s Strategies and Tactics for the MBE**
  This book breaks down each MBE topics first and how it is tested. The explanations for the questions are thorough and easy to understand. All of their questions are previously used MBE questions.

- **Bar Examiner Resources**
  Offers free downloadable questions (and others for purchase). I only used their free questions because most bar prep companies have purchased those questions for their course. It also provides outlines on what topics they test on.
FROM SAMUEL MALEBRANCHE ’18 (TWO YEAR HONORS PROGRAM)

- Go through your notes. But don’t spend an insane amount of time on them!

- Multiple choice on top of multiple choice. Try to get around 1,750-plus questions in. For every 30 minutes you spend ~ 20 questions, spend 45 minutes reviewing them!

- Practice writing essays. Many people don’t feel comfortable writing them early on because they want to spend more time with notes. Don’t be like them. Just do it! Even if you screw an essay up, you won’t make the same mistake twice. Plus, you’ll obviously want to get used to time conditions.

- Outline essays. Even if you don’t feel like actually doing them, it’s enough to go over the fact pattern, brainstorm, and outline the sample answers. Honestly, a lot of your MEE prep time should be spent doing this, especially near the end of prep.

- Don’t slack on the MPT. Get some done and outline a few others. Do like 5-8 of em under time conditions and outline a few more. Get enough exposure to each type of MPT, especially the obscure ones.

- Critical pass flash cards are amazing. Great for commutes. If you buy them, you get access to their app.

- Take care of yourself. I managed to get three to five lifts in per week, Netflix, and I even read a book. A few of my more outgoing classmates even made time to grab lunch or whatever. Keep that to a minimum though, if at all. But seriously, if you can’t stay somewhat sane, you’ll fall apart!

Good luck with bar prep! It’s not that bad. It comes down to figuring out how to internalize the material and making sure to get some practice in. Also, when it gets close to the end and you’re still confused about a bunch of stuff, spend most of the time trying to make sure that whatever you do know, you know it cold. Spend a little bit of time trying to figure a few things out, but remember that you’re only shooting for above 60 percent. Give yourself a little cushion, but don’t lose your mind over it.

FROM ALEKSANDR BARDIN ’18:

Pieper uses dictation (which works very well for some but not others); books and outlines did not correspond to the taught materials; feedback was nominal and superficial; still offered a lot of useful materials including substantive law and test-specific approaches

AdaptiBar includes licensed real MBE questions from previously administered exams (except for CivPro which has been recently added to the MBE and none of the real questions have been released, which essentially places everyone in the same boat); some students disliked the fact that it is only available in electronic format

Barbri has been around for longest, but the videos are long and time-consuming.

Themis was the most user friendly, and the videos were shorter.
Understanding the exam

MBE 50 percent; MEE 30 percent; MPT 20 percent

• There is no minimum passing score for any section and only an aggregate score matters but every point counts

• While the maximum score one the MPT equals to 34 correct multiple-choice answers, the MPT is the least practiced portion

• The exam is curved and scaled

MEE

• Immediately zoom in on the narrow issue

• Follow IRAC format for each narrow issue

• Annotate while reading through the prompt

• Reflect for a minute or two and start writing

• State the narrow issue on the which the problem turns

• State the narrow rule of law governing the particular legal issue

• Apply the rule to the facts

• Conclude

• Copy and paste the conclusion up top and move on to the next issue.

• If time permits, return to the “Rule” section and start working backwards from narrow to broader rules of law until you run out of time, and then move on to the next essay.

• However counterintuitive taking a rest felt, rest was paramount

• Find a partner for practice, filling in any gaps, and moral support

• First four weeks should be primarily used to attain full understanding of the fifteen subjects. In the subsequent five weeks the focus should be placed on practice proportional to the weight assigned to sections of the exam. During the last three weeks, the daily load should be 100 questions, three MEEs, and one MPT.