



# THE ULTIMATE

# EXAM

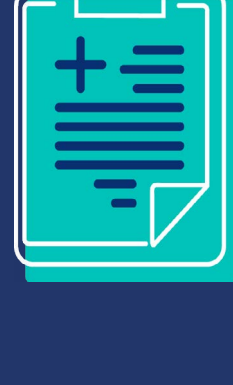
# CHECKLIST

Get ready for your medical school exams the right way

The countdown to your exams has begun. You'll have to take a lot of exams in medical school, and many different types as well — from practical skill examinations to written essays — each with its own set of requirements and demands. The pressure will inevitably start building, if it hasn't already, and you're sure to feel stressed or nervous, maybe even tempted to pull frequent all-nighters. But if you follow this complete checklist, you'll stay organised, focused and in control. Let's prepare for your exams like the experts.

## For every exam on your schedule, ask yourself...

- What type of exam is it?
- When and where will it take place?
- How much time will I have to complete it?
- What lectures will be covered in the exam?
- What material do you need to review?
- Is this topic one of your strengths or weaknesses?
- How long/often do you need to revise to feel confident?



## TIP:

If you don't know all the answers or feel unsure, get clarification from a faculty member as soon as possible. This step is vital to preparing for the exam season.

## Create a revision space

- Find a secluded room or quiet spot
- Get a desk or table
- Grab a comfy chair with back support
- Set up your laptop in the centre of focus
- Find a spot for a whiteboard or corkboard
- Adjust lighting for easy reading
- Use noise-cancelling headphones
- Choose a calming music playlist
- Turn off distractions or remove social apps
- Organise pens and papers to keep things tidy



## What to do before your exams

- Before you hit the books...
- Create a revision schedule
- Set up your revision space
- Choose a 'warm-up' activity
- Choose a 'break time' activity
- Choose your revision tools
- Try different revision methods
- Create your own revision guide
- Identify your weaknesses



## TIP:

Revise all the hot topics and core questions with the BMJ, including OnExamination products for Years 1, 2 and 3 — **40% off for all BMA members**

## When you get your timetable...

- Make a copy of it
- Map your exam locations
- Join a revision group if you can
- Start consistently using a revision method



## TIP:

For exams that test your practical skills, like the OSCEs, start practicing conducting examinations at least 2 weeks before your exam date.

## The week before...

- Focus on understanding the big ideas
- Make flashcards of details and weak points
- Practice explaining concepts aloud



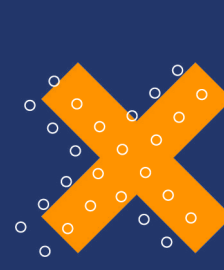
## The night before...

- Jot down only the top 5 'need-to-knows'
- Pack your backpack
- Review your exam timetable
- Eat **brain-power food** for dinner
- Choose an outfit you'll feel confident in
- Check that your watch is working
- Take a hot bath or shower
- Relax your mind with a book or creative activity
- Set your alarm
- Go to bed early



## On the day...

- Workout, stretch or meditate
- Eat brain-power food for breakfast
- Drink plenty of water
- Shower and get ready
- Dress for confidence



## TIP:

Don't try to revise everything the night before or the morning of! It'll only make you feel more stressed out and you may even confuse complex concepts. If you feel the need to, only revise 3-5 questions and answers (the big ones).

## Before you leave, make sure you have your...

- Timetable
- Student card or ID
- Extra pens and note paper
- Calculator
- Watch
- Water bottle



## TIP:

Staying hydrated throughout your exam is key to powering your brain and keeping your energy and mood up — even when the questions get tough.

## How to prepare for specific exams

### OSCEs: Objective Structured Clinical Examinations

Assessing how you apply and communicate your medical knowledge to the care of patients

## Before you start to revise, make sure you know

- How many stations you'll have to visit
- What tasks you'll have to do at each station
- How much time you'll be given at each station



## To hone your skills...

- Find a peer to act as a mock examiner
- Conduct a full respiratory or cardiovascular examination in under 8 minutes
- Practice doing physical examinations of different body parts
- Practice visual acuity and visual field examinations
- Practice asking open-ended questions and responding
- Practice listening and responding to feedback



## TIP:

Explore more ways to practice and prepare for your OSCEs in our **OSCE guide**.

## Multiple choice

- Testing your thought process around diagnosing ill patients
- Stay up to date with the latest news and **medical journals**
- Practice reading and understanding long patient cases
- Practice identifying key clinical evidence in each case



## TIP:

You'll be taking multiple choice exams a lot in medical school. Get in the habit of taking quality notes in lectures and use revision methods consistently.

## Written essays

- Revise English **grammar rules**
- Practice writing concepts in your own words
- Try summarising long journals and reports



Exam season can feel intimidating, but it doesn't have to be. If you stick to your handy BMA exam checklist, you're sure to feel confident and ready to smash each and every exam you'll face in medical school. For more revision tips and tricks, get the OSCE guide or explore more.

[Download it now](#)

