

## Wu Study Plan for USMLE Step 2 CK

### Books You'll Need:

1. First Aid for the USMLE Step 2 CK (FA)—this book is probably a MUST, as it provides a very good review of all important subject areas tested, and in the back has a list of rated review books that you should try to get. (While you should use books that work best for you, try to get the most highly rated books, as the ratings represent a consensus among many students who took the test and know which books helped the most.)
2. Board and Wards (B&W), by Ayala and Spellberg—another important book to get. It is even higher yield than First Aid, and is perhaps the best review book for the CK. Read this book 5-6 times before the test and memorise everything in this book. It will help tremendously.
3. Crush Step 2: The Ultimate USMLE Step 2 Review, OR USMLE Step 2 Secrets, both books by Adam Brochert—these books are very helpful. They pretty much cover the exact same content, in different formats, although Secrets is slightly more detailed. Therefore, getting either one will suffice. However, if you happen to have both, by all means, use both. It will be similar to reading the same textbook twice, but in different forms, which is better because you are asked on the test to be able to apply what you know in various ways. So it helps to learn things from not one, but many perspectives.
4. Kaplan notes—these are pretty good, actually, but don't rely on them. Read them very fast to get a good overview and understanding of the material. I got free copies from a friend, but if you have to pay a lot to get them, it is probably not worth it, as the other resources will suffice.
5. UCVs—as for Step 1, UCVs are great for familiarising yourself with key medical conditions and buzzwords. Clinical vignettes are even more important for Step 2 than for Step 1.
6. For specific subjects, i.e. Medicine, Surgery, Ob/Gyn, Pediatrics, Psychiatry, just try to get the highest rated review books listed in the back of First Aid. If two review books have the same rating, just use the one you have, or can obtain at a cheaper price, or you like better. For Medicine, I used Step-Up and High-Yield. For Surgery, I used NMS Surgery Casebook. For Ob/Gyn, Peds, and Psych, I used Blueprints.

### Practice Questions:

1. You'll need to practice a lot of questions under exam conditions to get comfortable. The best rated Q Bank is USMLE World (the one I used). I think it's excellent. Make sure to do them under **exam conditions**—i.e. timed, random blocks of 46 (or is it 44 now??) Q's at a time, just like the real test.
2. Get the practice questions from the official USMLE Website here: <http://www.usmle.org/Examinations/step2/step2ck.html> Also ready everything on the website about the Step 2. These questions are free and are as close to the actual test as

you can possibly get. So do them closer to your test date to see whether you are ready or not.

3. NMS Review for USMLE Step 2 is also a great question source. I think the older edition is better (and you can get it for much cheaper too).

**Sample 4-Week Study Plan** (this was the one I used):

**Day 1+2. Psychiatry+Biostats+Ethics.** It is good to review from the most high-yield books to get an overview, then move on successively to the more detailed books to gain a deeper understanding, and finally back to one or two most high-yield books to really memorize key facts. The key idea is to read fast without losing comprehension, and learn the material from as many different sources as you can, because Step 2 test many, many different things, and that which one review book neglects, another review might fill the gap, and vice versa. You can read in order as listed in “Books You’ll Need”, or determine the order that works best for you. For example, you can start the day by reading FA, then B&W, then Crush/Secrets, then Kaplan notes, then subject-specific review books, then UCV, then back to FA or B&W to really memorize the things in it. Make a check-off list of books you need to read, the sections to read, the number of pages, and the amount time you plan to read each one. For example (the chapter and page numbers may not correspond to yours, as I probably used older editions):

Day 1.

7-8:30AM: FA-15 pages

8:30AM-12PM:B&W-Psych, Rad, and Appendix – 45pgs

12-12:30PM –Lunch

12:30-4PM-Crush- ch 16, 17, 32+Misc topics in Immuno (ch 13), Genetics (ch 14), Geri (ch 15), Pharm (ch 29), Rad (ch 30), Lab (ch 31), Photo (ch 33), Si&Sx (ch 34)

4-8PM (include time for Dinner)-Secrets ch. 1-8 (26 pgs), ch 21-25 (25 pgs), ch 37-41 (16 pgs)

8-10ish- USMLE World 46 random questions, timed. Then review all answers thoroughly

Day 2.

7AM-1PM-Kaplan notes and lunch

1-4PM- Blueprints Psych-read the whole book

4-6PM-UCV Psych, Dinner

6-8PM-Re-read FA and B&W

8-10PM-USMLE World 46 Q + review afterwards

**Day 3. IM-Endocrine.** Just repeat the drill. For example:

7-8:30AM- FA-10 pgs

8:30-9AM- B&W- 7 pgs

9-10AM- Crush – 27 pgs

10-11:30AM- Secrets- 33 pgs

11:30AM-1PM-Lunch, Kaplan Notes ch 2, 4 (36 pgs), Sec III (27 pgs)

1-2:30PM- Step Up ch 4 42 pgs

2:30-3:30PM- High Yield- ch 2- 26 pg  
3:30-5PM- FA Medicine-Endo section 36 pg  
5-6PM- UCV  
6-8PM- Re-read FA or B&W  
8-10- USMLE World 46 Q

**Day 4. Neuro+Ophtho.** Just do the same as before. You get the idea. Devise your own schedule for the day that you can keep. Read all the relevant sections in the general review books for the subject of the day, then read the subject-specific review books, and back to FA or B&W, then questions.

**Day 5. Cardio.**

**Day 6. Pulmonary**

**Day 7. Renal**

**Day 8. MSK = Rheum+Ortho**

**Day 9. Heme/Onc**

**Day 10. GI**

**Day 11. GI+ Catch-up (trust me, you will fall behind schedule)+ID**

**Day 12. ID**

**Day 13. ID+Derm**

**Day 14. Derm+Catch-up**

**Day 15. EM+Surgery**

**Day 16. EM+Surgery Catchup**

**Day 17. More catch-up+ OB/Gyn**

**Day 18. OB/Gyn**

**Day 19. OB/Gyn+Self-Test** (you can use 4-6 blocks of USMLE World, or the equivalent in another question bank/book)

**Day 20. Peds**

**Day 21. More Peds**

**Day 22. Full-length Test** (9 blocks) – try to simulate actual test condition as much as possible

**Day 23. Rapid Review of everything** in B&W+catchup+more practice questions if time permits

**Day 24. Another Full-length Test**

**Day 25. Cramming Day 1**-Re-read FA, B&W for Psych, Endo, Neuro, Cards, then practice Q's

**Day 26. Cramming Day 2**- Re-read FA, B&W for Pulm, Renal, MSK, Heme/Onc, GI, then practice Q's

**Day 27. Cramming Day 3**- Re-read FA, B&W for ID, Derm, Surg, EM, then practice Q's

**Day 28. Cramming Day 4**- Re-read FA, B&W for OB/Gyn, Peds, then practice Q's

**Day 29. Last Day of studying**- Finish all unfinished USMLE World question, if you haven't already (you should have). Try to skim through FA or B&W again. Relax, and have a good night's sleep.

**Day 30. Take the test.**

**Sample 2-wk Study Plan:**

If you only have two weeks to study, you need to use the most high-yield books. Forget all subject-specific review books now. Forget Kaplan notes (too much reading). Just use FA, B&W, and USMLE World, +/- Crush/Secrets/UCV.

For a sample schedule, just combine every 2 consecutive days in the 4-wk study plan above into 1, for example, Days 1 and 2 becomes Day 1, Days 3 and 4 becomes Day 2, etc.

Make sure to go through all of USMLE World, and all of FA and B&W. It is best to read FA and B&W at least 3 times to really get it down. Good luck.

### **Sample 6-wk Study Plan:**

With 6 wks, you have the luxury of more time for a more thorough review. Spread out the 4-wk study plan above, so that each Day in that schedule become a day and a half in your 6-wk schedule. You can use the extra time to read additional review books, re-read FA and B&W, or do more practice questions. Make sure to know FA and B&W really well, and read them 5-7 times each. Have fun.

### **Tips:**

1. Distractions are the worst enemy of efficient studying. Avoid them at all costs!! Stay far away from the computer except for using Q Banks. That includes emails as well. Just set up a vacation message in your email so others will understand. In your study period, especially towards the end, make sure you do nothing else except study, eat, drink, use bathroom, and sleep.
2. Set realistic goals. Do not set reading plans that you cannot possibly fulfill. Even then, you will inevitably fall behind at time. Let it not discourage you, but catch up as soon as you can. If you finish a task before schedule, great! Don't use that as excuse to do something fun, however. Instead, start doing the next item on the list immediately. Trust me, you will fall behind eventually, so you should get an early start to prepare for that.
3. Sometimes the questions in USMLE World can be tough. Be not dismayed, but rather use that as motivation to study even harder to overcome it.
4. With any review book you decide to use, please set your own schedule so you can eventually read all of it at least once before you take the exam. You don't want to be held accountable for knowing something on exam day that you did not read, but could have.