



# MSLAW Academic Support

## The Ten Commandments for Bar Exam Success:

1. **Know your black letter law!** Memorize the rules of law so you can quickly and routinely apply them during the exam. Use whatever tools work for you to study the black letter law, whether it's mnemonics, flash cards, flow charts, audio presentations, or outlines.
2. **Only start reviewing questions after you've built a solid foundation and have a thorough knowledge and understanding of the black letter law.** Otherwise, you may run the risk of learning the wrong rule of law or variation, by relying on a question you may have gotten right but not understanding fully why you chose the right answer.
3. **Know what's tested by the National Conference of Bar Examiners**—right down to the percentage of questions that you can expect on various sub-topics in each of the six major topics tested. You can find a detailed outline of what's tested on the Multistate Bar Exam on the [www.NCBEX.org](http://www.NCBEX.org) website.
4. **Also know what's tested by your state** on any essay, performance, or other exams that your state requires. You should be familiar not only with the format that your state uses, but also the substantive law it tests. In addition, you should familiarize yourself with your state's exam instructions, and learn to heed those instructions as you practice and prepare for the bar.



5. **Study proportionately to the return on your investment.** Understand which areas of the law are likely to be heavily tested, and study them diligently, spending less time on topics that come up less frequently. If the choice is between having a more thorough understanding of individual rights as opposed to mastering water rights, you should go with the heavily tested area of the former.

6. **Learn to think and analyze critically.** Also hone your writing skills. Practice, practice, practice: study your state's old essay exams, practice outlining and writing out answers, and look for common patterns in the questions.
7. **Learn to practice multiple choice questions strategically.** Eliminate bad choices that are incorrect statements of law or answers that inaccurately depict the facts—this will improve your odds, statistically, for choosing the correct answer.
8. **Move at a deliberate speed.** You only have approximately 1.8 minutes to spend on each multiple choice question on the Multistate Bar Exam; on essay exams and performance tests, your time is likewise limited. Time yourself and limit yourself to the allotted time as you practice both multiple choice and essay questions to get into the habit of taking timed exams.
9. **Take care of your well-being during bar preparation.** Eating, sleeping, and exercise help your mental health, intellectual alertness, and stamina. The diet and schedule of a law student aren't always conducive to physical and mental well-being, but staying in decent physical and mental shape is paramount to bar exam success.
10. **Recognize that bar exam success starts on the first day of law school.** Law school GPA directly correlates to the chances of passing the bar examination on the first try. If you haven't done well in law school, recognize that you should start your bar preparation earlier and you will need to work harder than others who started their preparation on the first day of law school.

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