



2016 - 2017

LSAT PREP GUIDE

PREPARATION TIPS & RESOURCES

MICHIGAN STATE
UNIVERSITY
COLLEGE OF LAW

Top Tips from Three **SUCCESSFUL LSAT TAKERS**

Jennifer Elizabeth Adedeji
*University of Southern California,
English*

Take practice tests. Yes, more than one. They're an excellent gauge of your progress and problem areas and can help guide your study patterns. In fact, begin with a practice test in simulated test conditions to develop a baseline and chart improvement from there.

On the day of the test, don't panic. Even if a section seems particularly challenging, general test-taking strategies are still in play. Keep a cool head and you'll answer more questions with more accuracy than you would if you let nerves take hold.

Minimize stress and distractions. Get a good night of sleep the day before the test. Eat a good breakfast. Have your materials in order. Make sure you're comfortable in your seat – you'll be there for a while! Maximizing your physical and mental readiness means maximizing your score.

Ian Beck
*Arizona State University,
Business Law*

Identify weak areas. It's important to do this early on so you can focus on them.

Find friends to study with. Or they can at least commiserate along the way.

Don't study the day before the test. Use that day to relax both mentally and physically.

Jack Stout
*Bradley University,
Business Management*

Know what method of studying works best for you. If you are easily distracted and cannot focus studying on your own, spend the money and take a prep class. On the other hand, don't think that you have to take a prep course if you are confident you can make the time and can successfully study on your own.

Give yourself ample time to prepare for the LSAT. There is no set time that will guarantee success on the test. I needed a couple months to feel confident in my abilities but everyone has their own pace.

Do not rush yourself on the LSAT. On my first practice LSAT I went through the problems as fast as I could thinking I would have time to go back through my answers. My result was awful. Go at a pace that will be fast enough to get through the whole test, yet is comfortable enough to feel confident.

LSAT Prep and Application

TIMELINE



THIS CHART REPRESENTS how your LSAT prep schedule fits within the timeline of law school applications.

IF YOU ARE DISSATISFIED with your June LSAT results, this schedule allows you time to retake the LSAT exam in October. If you retake, you can either wait to apply to schools until your new LSAT scores are released, or (if the school's guidelines permit it) apply and request that review of your application be held until your new score is available.

Sample LSAT Study **TIMELINE**

Prior to studying, take an initial practice exam. The results will give you a baseline score to determine your starting point.

WEEK 1:
Develop a study schedule (e.g., 2-8 hours a week, twice a week). Make it easy to follow so you will not fall behind.

WEEK 4:
Take another practice exam under testing conditions. Analyze the results to determine your strengths and weaknesses.

WEEK 5:
Adjust your study schedule according to the practice exam results.

WEEK 8:
Take another practice exam under testing conditions, and analyze the results.

WEEK 9:
Adjust your study schedule according to the practice exam results. As Week 12 approaches, focus on practice questions and applying your LSAT techniques.

THE ABOVE SUGGESTED SCHEDULE for LSAT preparation is based on twelve weeks of studying. You should tailor the above to your own studying habits, time allotments, and potential involvement in commercial prep courses.

Law School Admission Test

PREPARATION TIPS

The following suggestions are provided by Michigan State University College of Law students who achieved a score of 158 or higher on the LSAT.

GENERAL ADVICE

- + You can learn the LSAT. At first it seems very intimidating, but once you find the patterns and know what to look for, it becomes easier and easier. The only way to learn the test is to set aside time to do it!
- + Be realistic! Some people are not able to get a 175+. After one or two pretests, set an achievable goal for yourself.
- + Start your preparation early. Spending a couple of hours each week for a few months is a lot less stressful than having a marathon study session right before the test.

STUDY METHODS

- + Don't assume that an expensive commercial prep course is a requirement for doing well on the LSAT. If you have the self-discipline to study on your own, you can create your own individual prep plan.
- + If you learn best from classroom study, enroll in a commercial prep course. They are expensive, but your LSAT score will determine your scholarship amount. A higher score can save you thousands.
- + Ignore what other people are doing to prepare. One of my friends took a practice exam a month before the LSAT, while I took three practice exams over the two months before the test, and we got the same score. There will always be someone working harder than you; don't let that person cause you to doubt yourself.
- + Figure out which study method is best for you. Understanding if you do better in group preparation or solo prep early can only help you tackle the content that much faster.
- + Before studying, take a full-length, timed practice test to establish your base score. Set your goal, find a strategy that works for you, then execute the strategy.

PREPARATION SUGGESTIONS

- + Start by learning about the test itself—the structure, different sections, and timing.
- + Work on both strengths and weaknesses. Strengths are where you should expect to gain points, so maximize your score on those questions.
- + Learn diagramming strategies for solving the logic games questions from a commercial test guide.
- + Practice in a higher-stress and higher-distraction environment than the actual test.
- + Take as many full-length, timed practice tests as you can!
- + Take your results with a grain of salt. Don't assume you're prepared enough just because you have one great practice test—do it consistently.
- + Don't let a low score on a practice test deflate you; use it as an opportunity to correct specific problems you're having.
- + Reach out to those in your network who've already tackled the LSAT. While everyone's experience is different, find the advice that works for you.
- + Reach out to your undergrad institution. Some pre-law clubs give out free LSAT prep materials and discounts on prep courses.

TIME MANAGEMENT

- + Long tests are like marathons. It takes time to build stamina.
- + Practicing for a relatively short amount of time on a regular basis beats spending large amounts of time studying for a month or less.
- + Working smart is more important than working fast; the speed will come later. Focus on mastering the material.
- + Move quickly, but do not neglect to double check answers and make sure any notes or information you write on your scrap paper is transcribed correctly.
- + Take a quick breather after every five questions or so.
- + Stay calm; it helps with retention and pacing.
- + Don't be afraid to skip a question you are unsure of. Time is valuable.

WEEKS BEFORE THE EXAM

- + Plan your diet and activity the morning of and the day before the test. Test day is not the day to start some new tradition; it is a day to stick to routine.
- + Make sure you understand the policies for actually taking the exam. The second time I took the exam, they enforced the rule of not being able to wear anything with a hood, and I was freezing the whole time, which proved to be very distracting. Small things can end up being important.
- + Take care of all administrative work well before the test date. Worrying about where to find the test site, what classroom the test is given in, or if your ticket is printed are all things that add unnecessary stress on test day.
- + Take full-length, timed practice tests, but don't cram.

DAYS BEFORE THE EXAM

- + Take a day or two off of work before the test. I was working two jobs when I was studying and that was a mistake.
- + Relax before the LSAT. Your performance will not improve by cramming the night before.
- + The night before the exam, take a hot bath, watch a movie, and leave the study guides behind. Get plenty of sleep!
- + Know where you are going! Even if your test location is a bit of a drive, it's worth it to map out your route and save some time on test day.

ON THE DAY OF THE EXAM

- + Do a logic game the morning of the test—it really helps to “wake up” your brain.
- + Bring water and a snack to the testing center for the break period.
- + Dress in layers—testing environments can be unpredictable and you don't want to be distracted by temperature discomfort.
- + Don't put life-or-death pressure on yourself on test day. If you do poorly, you can always retake it.
- + CALM DOWN. Life will go on after the LSAT. My first score reflected how nervous I was going into the exam. Take a deep breath before you go into the examining room and remind yourself that there are much more important things in life than the LSAT!

DURING THE EXAM

- + Bring altoids to keep you awake and focused.
- + Don't pay attention to the people next to you. They have a different exam. It doesn't matter how far others are in comparison to you.
- + Read everything on the exam very carefully. Details are incredibly important.
- + Be confident in your own preparation and don't get distracted during the test; there will always be someone tapping their pencil and the proctors moving about the room.
- + Don't let yourself get intimidated by a couple of tough questions. Simply move on and be productive with your time.
- + Once seated, make sure you're comfortable. Rectify wobbly tables quickly!

CANCELLING YOUR EXAM

- + It's normal to feel like you performed poorly when leaving the testing center. Take the night off before thinking about cancelling your score.
- + Many law students retake the LSAT. Almost all law schools will look at your highest score. Only cancel your exam if you're sure something went wrong during the exam (like getting ill or realizing that you mis-bubbled an entire section).

RETAKING THE EXAM

Plan to take the LSAT early enough so you can take it again if necessary. MSU Law students who decided to take the LSAT at least twice were able to improve their scores by:

- + Taking more timed official LSAT prep tests. With each prep test, I connected the similarities in the questions that I did not understand, which allowed me to decode particular language or question structures that were difficult.
- + Changing test sites. I had to drive 4 hours to take the first test.
- + Practicing less and just relaxing. I didn't stress out when I got to the actual exam.
- + Putting way less pressure on myself. The second time I took the test I felt much less nervous on test day.
- + Working less in the weeks immediately leading to the test day. I also did at least two logic game problems a day just to stay sharp on the different kinds of games.
- + Change how you prepare (prep books versus taking a course).
- + Take the day or two before off from studying. Try to do things that you find relaxing.

Law School Admission Test

PREPARATION PLAN INSIGHTS

MSU Law students who earned a 158 or higher have relied on many prep methods to prepare for the LSAT. The following chart provides insights into how these students prepared: how much time they devoted to studying, and how much money they invested in LSAT prep.

AMOUNT OF TIME AND MONEY RESPONDENTS COMMITTED TO LSAT PREPARATION

Weeks of LSAT Prep	# of Respondents	Time Devoted to LSAT Preparation	# of Respondents	Money Spent on LSAT Preparation	# of Respondents
0-4 weeks	5	0 to 49 hours	14	0 to \$49	14
5-6 weeks	8	50 to 99 hours	19	\$50 to \$99	11
7-8 weeks	14	100 to 149 hours	18	\$100 to \$499	29
9-12 weeks	26	150 to 199 hours	6	\$500 to \$999	5
13 + weeks	15	200 or more hours	11	\$1,000 or more	9

Law School Admission Test

PREPARATION RESOURCES

An effective plan can include self-study using free or low-cost materials, a commercial preparation course, or a combination of both methods. The following resources may serve as a helpful guide for prospective law school applicants as they develop an effective LSAT study plan.

While our students have successfully relied on the resources listed below, Michigan State University College of Law Office of Admissions does not endorse any one resource other than those provided by LSAC.

LSAT PREPARATION MATERIALS AVAILABLE FROM THE LAW SCHOOL ADMISSIONS COUNCIL (LSAC)

- + Free LSAT prep materials are available at www.lsac.org/JD/LSAT/lsat-prep-materials
- + The following materials and others may be purchased at www.lsac.org/jd/lsat/preptools
 - » *The Official LSAT Handbook™*
 - » *The Official LSAT SuperPrep® (I & II)*
 - » *10 Actual, Official LSAT PrepTests™ Series* (50 total – 5 books)
 - » *LSAT ItemWise™* (online LSAT familiarization tool)
 - » *Official LSAT PrepTests™*
 - » Online example of preptest available at: www.lsac.org/docs/default-source/jd-docs/sampleptjune.pdf

ADDITIONAL LSAT PRINT PREPARATION MATERIALS

- + *Barron's LSAT* (Jay B. Cutts, M.A.): Explains the LSAT's format, details a three-month study plan, and contains three model LSAT tests
- + *Kaplan LSAT Premier 2016-2017*: Provides practice problems, as well as a CD of materials with virtual learning options
- + *LSAT 2016* (Russ Falconer & Drew Johnson): Focuses on the fundamental concepts tested on the exam as well as the reasoning and analytical skills needed to avoid common traps (7 practice tests). Test planner app to set study schedules.
- + *LSAT For Dummies* and *Logic Games For Dummies* (Amy Hackney Blackwell): Gives readers the reasoning behind many of the logic puzzles and helps test-takers develop their LSAT strategies
- + *LSAT Logic Games Bible* (Powerscore founder–David M. Killoran): Features a detailed methodology focusing on the logic games portion of the LSAT, and covers diagramming and inferring correct answers in length
- + *LSAT Logical Reasoning Bible* (Powerscore founder–David M. Killoran): Focuses on the logical reasoning portions of the LSAT, and provides clues into every currently tested question type
- + *The LSAT Trainer: A Remarkable Self-Study Guide for the Self-Driven Student* (Mike Kim): Provides in-depth technique and strategy analysis for all sections of the LSAT
- + *Master the LSAT Prep Course Series* (Jeff Kolby): Includes LSAT problems with solutions, as well as a free online course and two official LSAT tests

COMMERCIAL LSAT PROVIDERS

Vendor, Courses	Cost	Hours	Features
blueprint www.blueprintlsat.com			
Classroom	\$1,499	112	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 16 lessons, 3 workshops, 3 clinics, 6 proctored exams, 3 textbooks, 15 practice exams, 7,500 questions • 1,800 pages of study materials + 88 hrs. online
Online	\$179/mo + \$200 for book	88	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 3 textbooks with 7,000+ test questions, 15 practice LSATs • High-quality streaming videos • Unlimited access to e-mail support
Tutoring	30 hr package: \$3,750 60 hr package: \$7,000		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Completely customizable • Flexible and convenient to student needs • Includes online enrollment
Kaplan www.kaptest.com/LSAT			
Classroom	All currently discounted Starting at \$1,399	100	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Live classroom instruction • 4 full-length practice exams • Personal attention in a group setting
Online	Starting at \$799	50	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Online video instruction • Available anywhere, at any time • Taught by certified Kaplan instructors
Live Online Classroom	Starting at \$1,199	100	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mix of online and live instruction hours • 4 full-length practice exams • Personal attention in a group setting
Tutoring	Starting at \$2,599	Varies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Available in 15, 25, and 35 hour packages • One-on-one instruction • Completely customizable to your study needs
NextStep www.nextsteptestprep.com/lSAT			
Tutoring	\$1,499 to \$3,399	16 to 40	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Exclusively focuses on tutoring individual students • Expert instructors with experience teaching the LSAT • Instruction that is tightly customized to the individual student
PowerScore www.powerscore.com/lSAT			
Classroom	\$1,395	125+	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Instructors who have scored in the 99th percentile • Thousands of pages of material • 16 proctored practice tests • Free LSAT homework hotline
Online	\$995	81	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 36 hours of live, online instruction • Instant access to recorded archive of lessons • Free headset for real-time communication
Accelerated Live Online	\$395	35+	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 16 live online lectures • 19+ hours of additional online lessons
Weekend/Accelerated Classroom	\$395	35	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Available both in class or virtual • Free e-mail assistance
Tutoring	\$150/hr 5 hr: \$625	Varies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Available in person, online, or telephonically • One-on-one instruction • Completely customizable to your study needs

The Princeton Review *currently discounted; base rates represented below*www.princetonreview.com/law/lSAT-test-prep

Classroom	80 hrs: \$1699 30 hrs: \$1199		<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Instructors who have scored in the 98th percentile• 6 full-length proctored LSATs (4 for 30 hour class)• 1,800 pages of study materials +130 hours online tools
Online	84 hrs: \$1399 30 hrs: \$899		<ul style="list-style-type: none">• 84 hour: 6 emails and phone access to instructor• 30 hour: 4 practice exams• Focused, customized learning• Drills and homework assignments based on class• Complete review of all LSAT subjects
Tutoring	\$150-\$400/hr depending on instructor	Varies	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Exceptional tutoring staff• Completely customizable• Flexible and convenient to student needs

7sagewww.7sage.com

Online	\$179 to \$799	50+	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Personalized study schedule to organize prep time• LSAT analytics to prep more effectively• Real LSAT questions as printable problem sets• Thousands of real LSAT questions individually explained in HD
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TestMasterswww.testmasters.net/lSAT-prep-courses

Classroom	\$1,550	60 live 60 online	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• 100 locations in the U.S.• High-scoring instructors in a group setting• Personal set of 7,000 LSAT questions• 5 books, diagnostics• online resource center for problem areas
Online	\$950	Varies (60 hrs)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Online instructional videos• Full access to written explanations, and diagnostic scoring• 3 hours of telephonic tutoring
In-Person Tutoring	\$150/hr	Varies	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Available in 10-hour, 25-hour, and full-length courses• One-on-one instruction• Completely customizable to your study needs
Telephone or Online Tutoring	\$100/hr	Varies	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Available in 10-hour, 25-hour, and full-length courses• One-on-one instruction• Completely customizable to your study needs

Manhattan Prepwww.manhattanprep.com/lSAT

Classroom	\$1,199 to \$1,499	66	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Online or in person
Online	\$375 to \$999	Varies	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• 50+ video lessons• Books• Online resources
Tutoring	\$245/hr	10+	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Online or in person

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Applying to law school can be expensive. Email admiss@law.msu.edu to request a fee waiver.

