

THE BARBRI METHOD™

A RECOMMENDED APPROACH TO PASSING THE VIRGINIA BAR EXAM

I. OVERVIEW

Bar review is not law school. Studying for the Virginia Bar Exam is one of the most difficult tasks you will ever face during your legal career, short of taking the bar exam itself. BARBRI, the leader in bar exam preparation for more than 40 years, has designed a comprehensive program of outlines, lectures, workshops and testing to maximize your ability to pass the Virginia Bar Exam. The following advice is offered to introduce you to **THE BARBRI METHOD™** so that you can begin studying efficiently.

II. STUDY TIME

To digest the knowledge and master the skills necessary to pass the Virginia Bar Exam, a consistent investment of time is required. This means that if you are tempted to devote a minimal amount of study time during the course, and then attempt to make up the lost time by an intensive cram session shortly before the exam, you are seriously compromising your chances of passing the Virginia Bar Exam.

- You should spend 5 to 8 hours per day studying (not including time spent in lecture), five days per week.
- You should spend 10 to 12 hours total studying on weekends.

III. LECTURES & ASSIGNMENTS

A. Lectures

The lectures are the most important part of the BARBRI program. The function of each lecture is threefold: it explains the topic, it aids retention of the basic rules of law and it relates the law to typical bar exam type fact patterns. In short, each lecture contains illustrated black letter law with analysis of fact patterns and recent cases.

BARBRI believes that the best way to pass the bar exam is to follow your Paced Program™ as closely as possible. Just as you attended law school each day, free from distraction, you should **attend each lecture as scheduled**. You should carefully adhere to the course lecture schedule in order to fully prepare for the exam. If, however, you need to miss a class, you have the ability to make up any lectures online.

B. Daily Assignments – Found in Paced Program™

The Paced Program™ is your daily study and assignment schedule. Assignments listed in the Paced Program™ should be completed **after** each class. If you are pressed for time, you may skip assignments which are merely "suggested" (*i.e.*, last priority). These are indicated by [] on the Paced Program™.

1. **Review Class Notes**

After each class you should review your class notes. When you review a subject after class, you should **DIGEST (SUMMARIZE), NOT REWRITE, YOUR NOTES**, concentrating on the basic concepts presented. You should **NOT be expanding** your notes. If there is anything you do not understand, refer to the Multistate (MS) Volume or the Virginia (VA) Volume for clarification. **DO NOT GO PAST A SUBJECT OR IMPORTANT CONCEPT UNLESS YOU HAVE A BASIC UNDERSTANDING.** Do not initially try to memorize details and exceptions for the basic rules, but rather focus on getting a general understanding of the subject matter. **MEMORIZATION SHOULD START ON THE SECOND REVIEW.**

2. **Practice Multistate (MBE) Questions**

On specific dates you are assigned sets of MBE questions. Your goal is to complete 35 questions per hour; 18 questions per half hour. After answering each set of MBE questions, you should review the explanatory answers in at least the same amount of time as it took you to answer the questions. Even if you answered the question correctly, review the explanatory answer to be sure you got the correct answer for the right reason.

3. Practice Virginia Essay Questions

On specific dates you are assigned essay questions from the Virginia Testing (VAT) Volume. You should spend 15 minutes reading and outlining each essay question. When your outline is complete, you should review the model answer in at least the same amount of time. Also note that certain assignments indicate that you should write out your answers and submit them for grading on the date(s) specified in your Paced Program™. Those answers will be graded by Virginia attorneys and returned to you at the course location where you submitted your essay.

4. Practice Virginia Short Answer Questions

On

specific dates you are assigned sets of Virginia Short Answer Questions (SAQ). Your goal is to complete one question per minute. After answering each set of SAQ questions, you should review the explanatory answers in at least the same amount of time as it took you to answer the questions. Even if you answered the question correctly, review the explanatory answer to be sure you got the correct answer for the right reason.

5. Reading

Before each lecture, you should read the condensed outline in the Conviser Mini Review (CMR) Volume.

- YOU ARE NOT READING TO MEMORIZE, BUT RATHER, TO GET A GENERAL UNDERSTANDING OF THE CONCEPTS PRESENTED. THE BARBRI FACULTY WILL PRIORITIZE AND EXPLAIN THE SUBJECT FOR VIRGINIA BAR EXAM PURPOSES.
- NOTE: If the subject is particularly intricate (e.g., Virginia Practice, Wills, Trusts, Domestic Relations or Constitutional Law [for LLMs]), or you never had the subject in law school, you should consider reading the full outline in the MS or VA Volume rather than the condensed outline in the CMR Volume. If, however, you are pressed for time or you have a good understanding of the subject, you should read the CMR Volume and refer to the MS or VA Volume only to clarify a particular issue.

SOME READINGS HAVE BEEN ASSIGNED SEVERAL DAYS PRIOR TO THE LECTURE TO ALLOW YOU MORE TIME FOR REVIEW AS THE COURSE PROGRESSES.

IV. OUTLINES

A. Get the big picture

When you are reading the outlines (the CMR, VA or MS), do not become bogged down in details or complicated concepts. The lecturer will guide you through the subject in a manner that is most conducive to emphasizing those rules which are pertinent to the Virginia Bar Exam.

B. The Multistate & Virginia Volumes

The **Multistate (MS) Volume** contains the law you must master for the second day of the Virginia Bar Exam - the Multistate Bar Exam (MBE). The MBE is a 200-question multiple choice exam covering the following six subjects:

1. Constitutional Law
2. Contracts (*including UCC Article 2*)
3. Criminal Law and Criminal Procedure
4. Evidence
5. Real Property (*including Future Interests & Mortgages*)
6. Torts

The **Virginia (VA) Volume** contains the law you must master for the first day of the Virginia Bar Exam. These "Virginia" subjects are the following:

1. Agency
2. Commercial Paper
3. Conflict of Laws
4. Corporations
5. Creditors' Rights
6. Domestic Relations
7. Equity
8. Federal Jurisdiction
9. Local Government Law
10. Mortgage & Liens
11. Partnership
12. Personal Property
13. Professional Responsibility
14. Secured Transactions
15. Suretyship
16. Taxation
17. Trusts
18. Wills

Please Note: *The Virginia local day of the bar exam* tests your knowledge of **both the Multistate and the Virginia subjects** listed above, with particular focus on Virginia law. The MBE tests *only the six Multistate subjects* listed above with no focus on Virginia law.

C. The Conviser Mini Review (CMR) Volume

The **Conviser Mini Review (CMR) Volume** condenses the material found in the MS and VA Volumes to only black letter law.

- The CMR Volume is arranged in two parts: the Virginia subjects are in the first half of the book and the Multistate subjects are in the last half of the book.
 - **FinePoints™:** located in the center of the CMR Volume immediately following the Virginia subject outlines are checklists for subjects most frequently tested on the essay section of the Virginia Bar Exam. *When the Virginia rule differs from the Multistate rule, it is set forth in italic type.* Reviewing the *FinePoints™* will help you outline and write essay answers. You should use them as a final study tool as well.
 - **Virginia Distinctions:** located in the center of the CMR Volume immediately following the *FinePoints™* are VA laws where they differ from Multistate rules. You must know the distinctions for the VA local day. The lecturer will explain which distinctions are most important for Virginia Bar Exam purposes. You should read the appropriate Virginia Distinctions **after** each lecture and incorporate the asterisked (*) distinctions into your summarized notes.

V. TESTING MATERIALS

The BARBRI testing program is carefully designed to train you to perform well under bar exam conditions. We cannot over-emphasize the importance of taking practice exams. Practice testing is absolutely essential for your success on the actual bar exam. Indeed, the adage that "practice makes perfect" is especially true here.

A. Virginia Testing (VAT) Volume

1. Essay Questions (54% of the total exam score)

The more than 200 essay questions in the Virginia Testing (VAT) Volume are modeled on past Virginia Bar Exam questions. The essay answers represent what the bar examiners would consider model answers. The answers analyze concisely only those issues fairly raised by the fact patterns and serve as a model for your own essay answers with respect to structure and accuracy.

Virginia essays are graded on a 0-10 point scale, with a score of 7 generally considered acceptable. The essay answers have point values assigned to each of the subparts to enable you to evaluate whether you have covered "target" issues. The questions and answers are neither designed nor assigned as tools for review of the substantive law. Rather, their chief value is to improve your reading, issue-spotting and analytical skills. **HOWEVER, YOU MAY FIND QUESTIONS THAT REFER TO A POINT OF LAW NOT COVERED IN DETAIL IN EITHER THE LECTURE OR THE BOOKS. THESE QUESTIONS ARE PROVIDED INTENTIONALLY TO GET YOU TO THINK ON YOUR FEET.**

- **Essays** that are **not assigned for grading** may be self-graded by comparing your answer to the BARBRI model answers in the VAT. We suggest that you spend at least 10-15 minutes reading and outlining each question carefully and spend at least the same amount of time reviewing the model answer.
- **Essays** that are **assigned for grading** are designated on your Paced Program™. For each of these questions you should allot 36 minutes per essay. We suggest that you spend 10-15 minutes reading and outlining the question and 15-20 minutes writing your answer. The procedures for essay submission are detailed on your Paced Program™.

- **If you miss a submission date for an essay assigned for grading**, you may ONLY submit that essay on the last submission date of the course (indicated in the Paced Program™). You must staple a self addressed, stamped envelope to each late essay submitted.
2. **Virginia Short Answer Questions (6% of the total exam score)**
Also included in the VAT Volume are more than 200 Virginia multiple choice questions together with detailed explanatory answers. **A passing candidate typically answers 10 or more questions correct.** The most effective use of these questions is to utilize them after you have completely finished your review of all the substantive law. These questions serve as important self-diagnostic practice questions to prepare you for the multiple choice questions on the bar exam.

C. Multistate Practice Question (MPQ1 & MPQ2) Volumes

Multistate Questions (40% of the total exam score)

On the actual bar exam you are given 200-multiple choice questions. Only 190 questions are graded; the remaining 10 questions, considered "pre-test" questions, are not identified and are interspersed throughout the exam. **A passing candidate in Virginia typically answers 125 or more questions correctly.**

Subjects & Number of Questions:

Constitutional Law - 33 Q's
Contracts/Sales - 34 Q's
Criminal Law/Procedure - 33 Q's
Evidence - 33 Q's
Real Property - 33 Q's
Torts - 34 Q's

Questions from each of the six MBE subjects are EQUALLY and RANDOMLY distributed between the morning and afternoon sessions.

The Multistate testing materials consist of more than 2,500 practice Multistate questions all with explanatory answers. (More than 12 full Multistate Exams). All of these questions have been updated to reflect recent exam modifications. The primary testing materials for the multistate section of the bar exam are the BARBRI Multistate Practice Question (MPQ1 & MPQ 2) Volumes. These volumes provide exposure to the various types of questions likely to be asked on the Multistate day of the bar exam. The questions represent the varying degrees of difficulty, types of questions and typical fact patterns you can expect to see on the actual bar exam.

The explanatory answers were drafted by BARBRI Multistate experts to give you a comprehensive explanation of the material tested. These answers not only explain the correct answers; they also provide insight as to why the other answers are incorrect.

When Multistate questions are assigned, it is suggested that you carefully review **all** explanatory answers, including the answers you got right. **DO NOT ASSUME YOU CHOSE THE RIGHT ANSWER FOR THE RIGHT REASON.**

Note: In MPQ1, all of Question Sets 2 & 4 have not been assigned. In MPQ2 the "Mixed Practice Questions", "Half Day Practice Exam", "Full Day Practice Exam" and the "Released Questions" have NOT been assigned. You will complete over 1,250 practice questions by the day of the bar exam if you follow the Paced Program™. If, at any time, you feel you have adequately reviewed the substantive material and would like to do more practice questions, these questions may be used as EXTRA PRACTICE QUESTIONS.

VI. STUDYSMART® SOFTWARE

Current BARBRI students who have internet access may download the StudySmart® Software

from barbri.com or use it online to complete practice question sets (these questions are the same as those in the MPQ1).

- MULTIPLE FORMATS allow you to do practice questions or take a simulated exam;
- CUSTOMIZED PRACTICE EXAMS let you choose questions by subtopic from any exam subject;
- IMMEDIATE FEEDBACK gives you a full explanatory answer as soon as you answer a practice question;
- OUTLINE LINKS FOR EVERY QUESTION so that one click takes you right to the section of the Conviser Mini Review Volume on the topic tested in that question;
- IN-DEPTH ANALYSIS tracks your progress and charts your results by subject and topic;
- RANK YOUR SCORE with thousands of other BARBRI students by uploading your test results to the BARBRI website.

For StudySmart® technical support, call 1-877-385-6238.

VII. PROCEDURAL QUESTIONS

If you have any questions of a procedural nature, you may call our office and speak to one of our directors or office personnel.

VIII. Q & A CLINIC™

You may submit substantive questions arising from the BARBRI lectures, outlines, handouts or testing materials during the bar review course up to the bar exam.

IX. CLOSING REMARKS

The BARBRI commitment is to assist you in every way possible to ensure you pass the Virginia Bar Exam. Please do not hesitate to contact our DC Office (which serves the Virginia course) at (202)833-3080 or va.bar@barbrigroup.com.

NOTE: This email account is monitored only during regular business hours. Email inquiries will be answered within 48 hours of receipt and by telephone only during business hours, so it is critical that you provide your telephone number with your request. If you need a faster response, please call our office during regular business hours to speak to our knowledgeable staff.