HOW TO USE SMART BAR PREP

Many students have asked about the best way to fit Smart Bar Prep into their study routine. Smart Bar Prep offers students a lot of tools, including: (1) Condensed Attack Sheets, (2) Essay Prep Outline (MEE), and (3) Sorted Essay Frequency Analysis. If you’re wondering how to use these Smart Bar Prep materials as you prepare for the exam, here is a step-by-step guide:

CONDESED ATTACK SHEETS

The Smart Bar Prep “Condensed Attack Sheets” are extremely beneficial because they condense the high volume of information you need to know for the bar exam.

1. Read the Attack Sheet for the Subject You’re Studying and Break It into Sections

Read the Attack Sheet subject from beginning to end. Just focus on the subject you are working on (e.g. Civil Procedure). Don’t read through all the Attack Sheets at once. The goal is to focus on a single subject at a time and drill down until you know everything well.

When you’re going through the Attack Sheet, study and digest it by section. For example, start with Federal Subject Matter Jurisdiction. Then, when you feel comfortable with that section, move onto Removal. The Attack Sheets are separated by subtopic within the subjects, so move through each part slowly and comfortably to ensure your understanding.

2. Teach Yourself the Law

If there are any topics in that subject (e.g., Personal Jurisdiction) that do not make sense to you, go to your substantive materials, supplements, etc. and figure out the correct rule. In essence, teach the rule to yourself. Make sure you understand not only what the rule means, but what sorts of facts could trigger its application, and how to apply it. This might take some time.

3. Make the Attack Sheet Your Own

Once all of the topics on the Attack Sheet for a given subject at least make sense, go back to the top of the subject and make it your own. You can do this by opening a new Word document and retyping (while editing) each rule covered on the Attack Sheet. Or if handwriting helps you study, you can also do this exercise by hand. It’s important to do this in small chunks. For example, rather than attempting a massive overhaul of Civil Procedure as a whole, start with one small topic, like Subject Matter Jurisdiction, and work your way through one-by-one. For example, you can:

- Carefully craft your rules. Once the law for a given topic or subtopic makes sense, turn everything you’ve just learned into a one or two sentence rule that includes numbered elements (followed by a few bullet points if necessary). Smart Bar Prep does a good job using bullet
points and elements. However, you might find that you need more. For example, for Diversity of Citizenship Jurisdiction, maybe it's important for you to remember what the rule is for aliens (which is not in the outline). You can make those additions.

- **Make attack plans.** After you have a tight, concise, element-driven rule statement with numbered elements, and the law itself makes sense for any given topic or subtopic, figure out an attack plan for each topic. What is the first question you need to be asking if you see this topic come up on an essay? What will the first header in an essay be for this issue? The attack plan structure, and even the rule statements you make now, can correspond to the headers and rules on an essay, so making really organized attack plans (and carefully crafting your rules) now can save you a lot of time and trouble later!

4. **Memorize**

Commit your new, personalized Attack Sheet to memory. There are several ways to do this. One fantastic method is to use the rule statements you've crafted when you practice writing essays. You can also try typing and retyping the rules until you know them verbatim without looking at your materials. Or, try handwriting them on a piece of scratch paper, or with dry erase markers on a white board. Whichever tactic you choose, though, we can't emphasize enough how important it is to make sure the rule statements you are memorizing are in a *useable format* for you personally before you spend time trying to memorize them. Write and rewrite the rules and attack plan for just one topic until you get really good at it. Start small and work your way up. Then see if you can add in another topic. Aim to be able to completely recreate your Attack Sheet for a given subject with rules and attack plans from memory.

5. **Practice and Review with Your Personalized Attack Sheet**

Use your Attack Sheet to review before and after writing practice essays. You can always go back and adjust your rule statements if you find that they are incorrect or incomplete. Writing and reviewing more essays can actually be helpful in figuring where you may be coming up short or skipping important components of the law. When you practice writing essays, try to phrase your rules exactly the way you have them on your personalized Attack Sheet. Again, though, this means that it is crucial that you get your rule to a point that it makes sense and is the best it can be before typing it into your Attack Sheet and memorizing it. This can take time to look up these rules, teach them to yourself, break them into elements, and make sure you understand how each element applies to facts, so make sure you are making room in your study schedule.

You can also use your Attack Sheets when practicing MBE questions. Remember that you might learn some rules that are unfamiliar to you when you are reviewing correct and incorrect answers to MBE questions. You may want to add some of these rules to your Attack Sheets.
**Remember:** The goal going into the exam is that you have memorized a short, accurate rule statement for every topic in every subject. In addition, it is important to have a plan memorized for how you will attack each topic should you see facts that trigger it.

**ESSAY PREP OUTLINE**

The Smart Bar Prep Essay Prep Outline is designed to help students with the MEE portion of the bar exam. It is broken up by subjects that are tested on the MEE and provides students with substantive material that they need to know in order to conquer any possible essay. Here is how you can use this tool:

1. **Read the Outline for the Subject You’re Studying**

   Start with the subject you are currently focusing on (e.g., Family Law). Similar to the Attack Sheets, your goal is to focus on one subject and drill it down before you move on to the next. Each subject of the outline is further broken down into subtopics and rules (e.g., Divorce).

   The Essay Prep Outline organizes the material in a certain way that is helpful for students. The title of the rule is in bold, and the rule statements will be in one or more bullet points under the rule title. Further, the right sidebar lists by date the exams where the rule was tested. This is helpful because if you want to practice a particular rule, you can go to that essay and see how the issue is presented in a fact pattern, and practice analyzing the rule with an essay question. So, if there’s a rule you’re not quite understanding, go to a corresponding essay and look at how the rule was used in the answer – it could definitely strengthen your understanding of a legal concept.

   (Note: you can use the “view by date” function in the Brainy Bar Bank to access the essays).

2. **Note and Use the Frequency Ratings**

   On the left-hand side of the rule statements, a priority rating (HIGH, MED, or LOW) is listed in a color-coded circle.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>HIGH</th>
<th>High Priority</th>
<th>The most important and frequently tested rules.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>MED</td>
<td>Medium Priority</td>
<td>Rules that are tested slightly less frequently, but are still important</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LOW</td>
<td>Low Priority</td>
<td>Rules that have been tested the least.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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The frequency ratings are useful and helpful because they show students how often each rule has been tested compared to other rules. Thus, you can prioritize your studying to focus on the most important and frequently tested rules first before moving on to less frequently tested rules.

One of the most important things to remember is that you shouldn’t completely rely on the priority ratings and look only at what is most frequently tested. A rule with a rating of LOW or MED may be on your bar examination. So, you shouldn’t ignore these rules – you should just use the ratings to prioritize your study. For example, in Family Law, division of property has appeared in 8 out of 46 exams, while annulment has appeared in 1 out of 46 exams. Therefore, it makes sense to spend more time first memorizing the division of property rules and practicing essays to test these rules rather than the rules for annulment.

3. **Memorize**

Use these outlines to memorize the rules of law that you need to freely recall for each essay. Some students like to memorize in different ways, such as rewriting the rule statements in these outlines on a piece of paper, or making flashcards of the rule statements. Nevertheless, you should eventually be able to freely recall these rules to memory, just like with your attack sheets.

4. **Use the Outlines to Practice Essays and to Review**

As mentioned above, each rule indicates which essays have tested that particular rule. For example, division of property (marital v. separate property) was tested in February 2017, Essay 3. Use the Brainy Bar Bank to find the essays that incorporate the rules that are most heavily tested, and be sure to practice all of those essays. Because the frequency indicates that those rules are tested most often, it's efficient to practice those essays before practicing essays based on less frequently tested rules. Don’t forget that you can use the “favorite” function in the Brainy Bar Bank to mark the questions that Smart Bar Prep outline flags as being useful for practicing heavily-tested rules.

When you’re practicing essays, don’t forget to still use the rules from your Attack Sheet, and write them in short, clear, and concise sentences. You want to memorize short and accurate rule statements to write on the bar exam. Not only will this make it easier to write a rule statement, but it will be easier to analyze a particular set of facts.

**ESSAY FREQUENCY ANALYSIS**

Smart Bar Prep put together an MEE frequency analysis, identifying which subjects have appeared on past UBE/MEE essays, which rules have appeared on past UBE/MEE essays sorted by overall frequency, and which rules have appeared on past UBE/MEE essays sorted by
frequency within each subject. Some students may be overwhelmed or confused by what to do with this information. Here are some tips on how to use the Essay Frequency Analysis:

1. **Don’t Completely Rely Only on the Analysis**

   First, you should not rely on this information as an accurate prediction of what will likely be tested on your bar exam. You should, of course, still study all of the subjects and focus on the most heavily tested topics within each subject. This frequency analysis shows you exactly what those heavily tested topics are!

2. **Pull Out the Heavily Tested Topics**

   The Frequency Chart shows you what subtopics within the subjects have been tested most frequently. This shows you what the most heavily tested topics are within each subject. For example, for Civil Procedure, Diversity of Citizenship Jurisdiction has been tested the most, followed by Federal Question Jurisdiction and Venue. Make a list of the most heavily tested topics within each subject, so that you are aware of exactly what subjects are really important to focus on during your bar exam study.

3. **Get a Strong Understanding of the Most Heavily Tested Topics**

   Since the frequency chart shows you what the most heavily tested topics are on the MEE, be sure that you have a clear and strong understanding of those topics. Since they come up more frequently than other topics, if you have a strong understanding of what is heavily tested, you will be more prepared to get those points for the bar exam! This is also true if you’re pressed for time and do not have time to memorize each rule for each topic. You can prioritize your memorization from the most frequently tested topics to the least frequently tested topics.

   *It’s important to stress that your understanding of topics that have not come up frequently is still important.* Even if a topic has only come up a small percentage of the time, it still may appear on your bar exam. So, you should not ignore those rules, and if you have enough time, you should also memorize them.

4. **Practice, Practice, Practice**

   One of the great things about the Frequency Analysis is that it tells you each legal issue that has been tested over many exam administrations. Thus, you can practice an essay focusing on each of the subtopics that have been tested within each subject. Be sure that you practice essays first in the subjects and subtopics that have been most heavily tested. For example, in planning your studying, you may want to practice more Civil Procedure essays than Constitutional Law essays.

   *Keep in mind that the Brainy Bar Bank has a frequency analysis as well. Use both tools to get a clear picture of what your priorities should be!*

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