

# The Top 15 Tips and Tricks for Studying for the NAVLE

Plus Three- and Six-month  
Tailored Study Programs

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Studying for the NAVLE can be a very daunting task. There is so much information on a wealth of different topics that you're going to need to know; just getting started can be overwhelming. The good news is that you have spent the last three years of your life preparing for this very test! You have already invested so much on your education, spending a few months preparing for the biggest test of your life will be very well worth it when you sit down to take the exam and you're relaxed and fully prepared to tackle the beast.

We've put together a **ton of great tips and tricks** for studying for the NAVLE along with **two tailored study programs** that will help you thoroughly prepare for the big day. *Remember, you've made it this far and you can totally do this!*

## 1. Familiarize Yourself with the Test Format

Be familiar with the test format so that you can spend less time on the tutorials come test day. This will make the day shorter for you. If you know in advance that the test is six blocks of 60 questions with each block of questions being 65 minutes then you will be able to better budget your time on test day. You only have a total of 45 minutes for break time so allocate your bathroom breaks and snack time in a way that makes the most sense for you.

## 2. Tackle the Weak Subjects Early

Schedule rotations of your weak subjects prior to the exam. If equine lameness is your nemesis, try to get your equine rotation done prior to your test date. Also, you can be studying for your weaker subjects prior to your big study push. It can be hard to whip out a chart of neurologic chicken diseases in the middle of your Summer, but if you familiarize yourself with these difficult subjects prior to starting practice questions, it will make studying a little less tedious.

## 3. Start Sooner and Ease Into It

If you wait too long to start studying or dive in too quickly, you're going to stress yourself out. Instead, start early and keep it light in the beginning to ease into it. To gradually get into test-taking mode, sign up for our **free Daily Dose email** and you'll get an interactive test prep question delivered to your email every weekday. Think of it as a quick morning crossword puzzle! Sign up at [vetprep.com/dailydose](https://vetprep.com/dailydose).

## 4. Stay on Track with a Study Time Line

Try to make a study time line to help yourself stay on track (and check out the three-month and six-month tailored time lines we've put together for you below!). When you are in a tough rotation, you will have less time to study, and when you are on an easy rotation, allot yourself more time for studying. It is important to be realistic. Ideally, you would study two hours every night and 10 hours every weekend, but when you work 14-16 hour shifts at the hospital, it is very unlikely that you will keep be able to keep up with such an aggressive regimen.

## 5. Don't Go At It Alone!

Study with a friend or study at a coffee shop so you continue to feel like a real person.

## 6. Plan Ahead

Give yourself a minimum of three months to study for the test. Start in August or September for the November/December NAVLE testing window. Starting too early will result in forgetting subjects that you learned and starting too late will mean stress and cramming. Obviously, this is just a guideline and you have to do what is right for you. Many students are starting to study earlier and that is OK, but studying too early and then forgetting important subjects near the end is a real phenomenon for many students. If you want to study ahead of the suggested three-month time frame, use that time to review VetPrep PowerPages and PowerLectures.

## 7. Write Down Difficult Topics to Improve Recall

When you come across subjects that are difficult, write them down (with a pen!). If you need to make yourself a chart for pig diarrhea to help you learn it, then take the time to do so. Writing helps commit information to your long-term memory.

## 8. Pay Attention to Clinics

Take time to review the cases you encounter as this provides a great opportunity to apply your theoretical knowledge to real-world experience. This can make your test questions very applicable. The NAVLE has increased its case-based questions, so paying attention to cases will only help you. Also, looking things up while you are in school will teach you how to efficiently look up information when you are in practice, which is ultimately the most important part of this whole process.

## 9. It's All About the Real World

Remember that this is a test for an entry-level veterinarian. Concentrate on the subjects that are of real-world importance AND are most likely to end up on the NAVLE. For example, there will be many more questions about dogs and cats than there will be about hamsters and teacup pigs.

## 10. Break Study Time into Smaller Sessions

Study for 4 to 15 hours per week. Break this time up into smaller study sessions. These numbers are from previous SAVMA questionnaires and as you can see, there is a pretty large range based on individual needs.

## 11. Practice, Practice, Practice!

Take the practice exams. This will help you get comfortable with multiple-choice questions and managing your time. Our practice exams were built to mimic the format of the NAVLE so the more of those you take, the more you will be prepared for the big exam. Studying your notes, books, PowerLectures and PowerPages is invaluable to your learning, and practicing how to excel at a multiple-choice test is key to passing the NAVLE. Reading the full question, thinking of your own answer, and narrowing down your choices are all important multiple-choice test taking skills you will master with VetPrep.

## 12. Save Resources on Harder Material and Keep References Nearby

When you come across a subject that needs more review, write it down and then find the resource that explains it best to you: PowerPages, PowerLectures, class notes, etc. It's also a good idea to keep Plumb's or the Papich Formulary near you while you study. When you come across a drug that you don't know, look it up.

## 13. Slow and Steady Wins the Race

Read the questions slowly and carefully. Rushing will sometimes result in answering the question incorrectly.

## 14. Be Healthy and Avoid Burnout

Be sure to take study breaks, exercise, eat healthy foods, and avoid burnout. This probably sounds a little like your mom talking, but we're serious. Take care of yourself. Medical professionals are notorious for neglecting their own needs much to the detriment of their own health.

## 15. Scope Out Test Day Ahead of Time

Review the NAVLE website well in advance so you know what to expect, where you will be going, how long the test will take, how many questions you will answer, what you are allowed to bring with you, what you need for identification, and more. This will take a lot of the stress out of test day and reduce anxiety.

# Tailored VetPrep Study Programs

## The Overachiever

### *Six-month Study Program*

#### **There's Nothing Wrong with a Little Extra Time**

Some students want a little extra time to study and there's no shame in that!

#### **Ease Into Study Mode with an Interactive Test Prep Question in Your Email Every Day**

To gradually get into test-taking mode, sign up for our free Daily Dose email and you'll get an interactive test prep question delivered to your email every weekday. Think of it as a quick morning crossword puzzle! Sign up at [vetprep.com/dailydose](http://vetprep.com/dailydose).

#### **Start with PowerPages and PowerLectures**

We recommend starting with the PowerPages and PowerLectures. Go through them by species, making your way through 6 - 8 PowerPages and 10 - 12 PowerLectures per week over the first three months.

#### **Complete 50 - 100 Questions per Week Over the First Three Months**

To keep it interesting, we recommend completing 50 - 100 practice questions per week over the first three months.

#### **Complete About 300 Questions per Week and Follow the Three-month Study Program**

For the final three months of your subscription, you will need to complete roughly 300 questions per week to finish the program in time for your exam. Follow the below guidelines for the Three-month Study Program. Thankfully, you won't need to spend as much time reviewing your notes, PowerLectures, and PowerPages since you have already spent a good amount of time with the information.

# The Go-getter

## *Three-month Study Program*

### **Complete Around 400 Questions Each Week**

To complete the VetPrep program, you will need to answer around 400 questions each week. It sounds like a lot but if you break it up, it's only about 60 questions a day. The speed at which you complete questions will depend on how many you get correct. Incorrectly answered or skipped questions will go back into your question bank.

### **Start on Random and Don't Sweat the Hard Questions Too Much**

We recommend starting with the practice questions on random, which will give you a good feel for what the questions are like and how you are doing. Do not be discouraged if you are getting questions wrong. Many are on subjects that you haven't thought about for a couple of years so it may be hard at first. Remember that you have plenty of time to prepare!

### **Use Your References and Resources**

As you come across questions that are confusing or difficult, we highly encourage you to look up the linked PowerPage or PowerLecture, consult your pharmacology references, class notes, or textbooks as you go through the questions. If you are studying in between classes or waiting in line at the grocery store with your smartphone and can't take the time to look up difficult subjects, at least make a list of topics you don't understand so you can research them later.

### **Take Advantage of Rotations and Immerse Yourself in Topics**

If you have your small animal cardiology rotation coming up, then the weekend before is a great time to tackle the canine and feline cardiology sections to beef up your knowledge and look super smart in front of your professors. Some students prefer to go through the practice questions by species or subject so they get fully immersed in a topic, learn everything there is to know, then move on to the next specialty.

### **Start with One or Two Practice Exams and Work Your Way Up**

We recommend starting with one or two, 60-question practice exams in the beginning and then as you get closer to the NAVLE, complete three to five practice tests per week.

### **Train Your Brain with Long Sessions**

Depending on your schedule, try to study for one or two hours, two to four nights a week and then set aside a good chunk of time to tackle questions on weekend. Sitting down at your computer for several hours at a time will help train your brain to stay focused for the seven-hour NAVLE exam.