

Factors to Consider When Selecting a Test Date for COMLEX Level 1 / USMLE Step 1

What are MSUCOM's requirements for taking COMLEX Level 1?

- Students *must* sit for COMLEX Level 1 prior to entering the Clerkship program (for specific policy language, please refer to the appropriate [College Retention Policy](#)). There is no MSUCOM requirement pertaining to USMLE Step 1—it can be taken at any time.
- Students *must* obtain a score of 450 or higher on COMSAE before being allowed to sit for COMLEX Level 1. If a student does not achieve the cut score of 450 on either the 1st (May) or 2nd (June) COMSAE provided by the MSUCOM, authorization to sit for COMLEX Level 1 will be withdrawn and the student will need to either cancel or reschedule their exam date ([NBOME Exam Fees](#)).

When should students *sign up* for a COMLEX Level 1 test date?

During Semester 5 you will receive a unique ID number from NBOME. As soon as you do, follow the instructions to set up an account. Then, six months prior to your exam (e.g., in December for a June test date) register for the exam and [select a test date](#) as slots fill quickly. Test dates can later be rescheduled if necessary, for example, if you feel underprepared as the date approaches or a more optimal test date becomes available ([NBOME Exam Fees](#)). If at all uncertain about what to do, it is recommended you meet with an [Academic Advisor](#) to discuss your best course of action.

Reminder

Be sure to set aside enough money to pay for the exam so you're not caught having to wait for your next loan disbursement.

When are COMLEX Level 1 and USMLE Step 1 *usually* taken?

You may select a COMLEX Level 1 test date that falls anywhere between late-May and mid-July, depending on availability at [Prometric Testing Centers](#). However, to remain authorized to sit for the scheduled COMLEX test date, you must achieve a score of 450 on COMSAE in May or June. Those who opt to sit for USMLE Step 1* usually take the exam within 7-10 days on either side of their COMLEX test date. *The majority of MSUCOM students have taken COMLEX during the second half of June.*

Dates-at-a-glance

Register with NBOME: Nov – Dec
Sign-up for test date: Dec – Jan
Get 450+ on COMSAE: May or June
Take exam(s): late-May – mid-July

*Procedural steps related to [registering for the USMLE Step 1](#).

What individual/personal factors should be considered when selecting a COMLEX Level 1 test date?

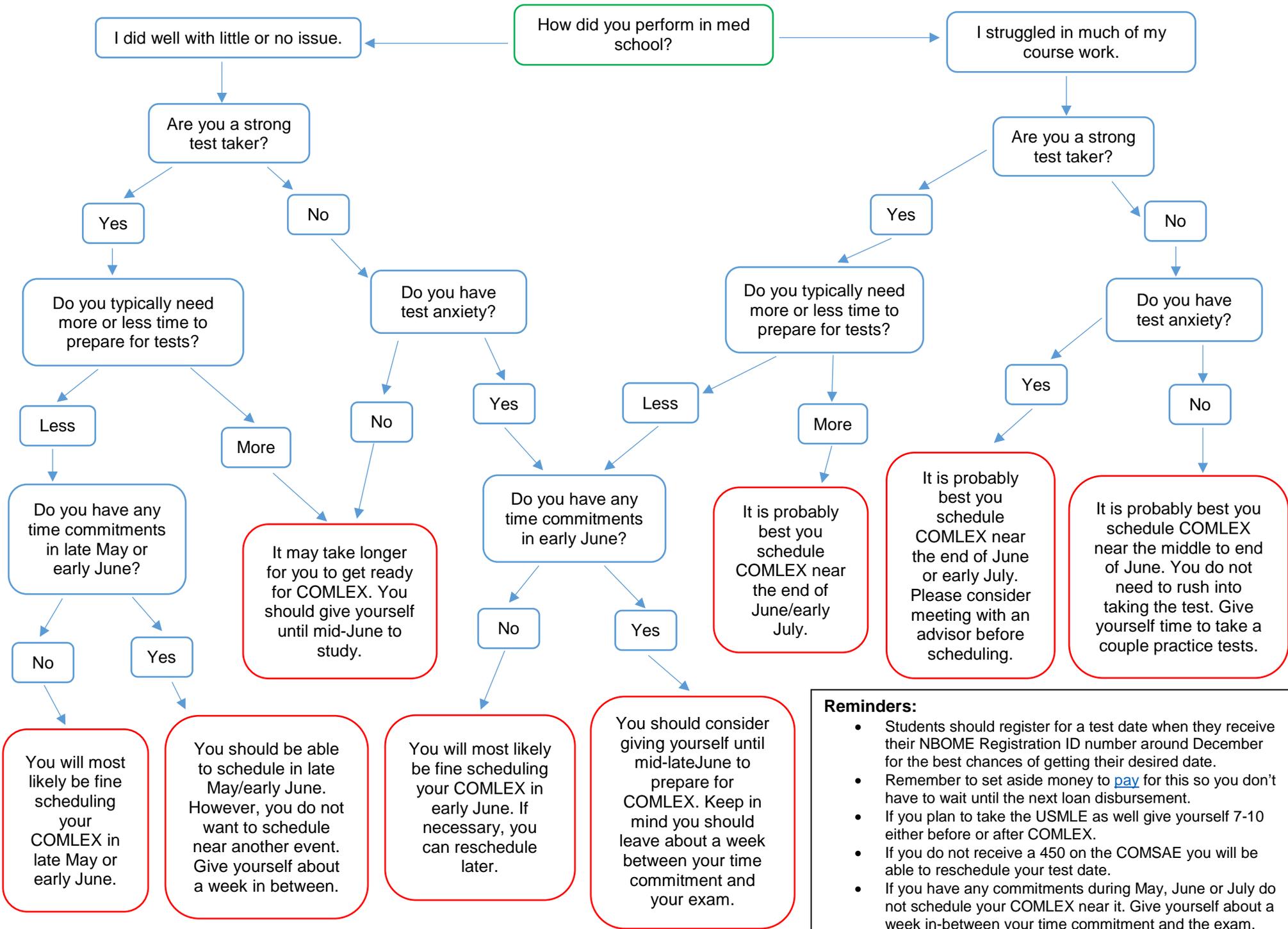
Academic risk factors are by far the most important consideration when selecting a test date. These include: low MSUCOM class rank (bottom quintiles), [MSUCOM course percentages consistently below 85%](#), multiple course failures, low first attempt scores on previous standardized exams, and high anxiety or low confidence levels relating to standardized tests in general or COMLEX specifically.

Some students are able / ready to take COMLEX earlier than others; there is no “one size fits all” test date. *Any student at high risk for low performance based on their academic risk factors should leave an adequate amount of time for thorough preparation.* This generally means scheduling a later test date (late-June – mid-July). It is inadvisable to take the exam early (e.g., prior to mid-June) simply to get it over with or to allow time to go on vacation or attend to personal business prior to the start of rotations.

To avoid scheduling conflicts and to ensure a sufficiently focused preparation period, make sure to consider the following additional factors when selecting a test date:

- College requirements: drug screens, ACLS/BLS, Mask Fit, course remediation exams, Semester 7 coursework (OST582 Transitions, Classroom to Bedside)
- Base hospital orientation date(s), which typically fall within a two-week period prior to the beginning of rotations (i.e., July 17 – July 31)
- Professional or personal obligations, such as moving to base hospital location, required military training, or course remediation
- Pre-planned personal events, such as weddings, graduations, family reunions, travel, etc.

When should I sit for COMLEX Level 1?



- Reminders:**
- Students should register for a test date when they receive their NBOME Registration ID number around December for the best chances of getting their desired date.
 - Remember to set aside money to [pay](#) for this so you don't have to wait until the next loan disbursement.
 - If you plan to take the USMLE as well give yourself 7-10 either before or after COMLEX.
 - If you do not receive a 450 on the COMSAE you will be able to reschedule your test date.
 - If you have any commitments during May, June or July do not schedule your COMLEX near it. Give yourself about a week in-between your time commitment and the exam.