

How to plan your USMLE step1 and / or step 2CK exam trip to Cairo, Egypt and Dubai, UAE

General travelling tips

- It is advisable to look for a travel companion as this would help decrease the cost.
- Try to select a place where you have a relative, so they can support you through your exam and help you cut the expenses a bit down. Otherwise travelling with a group is a great alternative option.
- For any trip you will need the release from the national service *خلو طرف خدمة وطنية* or if you did not finish your national service yet, you can get a travel permit *اذن سفر* .
- You can get the travel permit from any one of the major government service `s offices *منسقية الخدمة الوطنية* the two major ones are *المقرن* or *المنسقية العامة شارع 61*.
- For this permit you will need to provide *شهادة مواظبة*, copy of your entry visa and airline tickets. You might need more documents so you should go and check them out yourself as they change their requirements frequently.
- Usually the travel permit is for two months. Again you should double-check on that.
- The national number *الرقم الوطني* is a new requirement make sure to get one before planning your travel.
- **Make sure that your name on your passport matches your name on your ecfmg account and your scheduling permit as this will be your main identification to be allowed into the exam hall.**
- Print out both your scheduling permit and the confirmation of your appointment (with prometrics), find the map of the exact location of the test center on this confirmation paper together with the date and time of the exam.

Dubai, UAE:

- Generally it is more expensive but the center is more organized with more testing dates and seats than Cairo`s center.
- **Visa:** 2 weeks would cost 500 SDG. Use a reliable travelling agent for that and check with him on the prices.
- **Airline tickets:** this is very variable, the more expensive flights are with relatively fixed rates e.g. Aliti7ad and alkhaleej or gulf airways for example the prices range between 1000 to 1500 SDG and might even reach 2000 SDG.
- The cheaper airlines have a variable rate e.g. al3arabia and fly Dubai, the range of the prices escalates between 600 SDG to 1000 SDG.It depends on the season and other factors. The cheaper flights have luggage weight restrictions compared to the first category.
- If you have an access to a credit card you can book online, otherwise just use a reliable travelling agent.

Accommodation:

- You can stay with a relative if you have any and it was possible to do so.
- If that is not an option try searching for a hotel. The options are limitless.
- Use www.booking.com and select Dubai as a city then search for a hotel room within the range you are looking for.
- You will need someone who has a credit card to make the booking for you online, however no money will be deducted from that account, this is just the way you can confirm your booking. Try to check all the details provided about the hotel and always call the hotel when unsure about anything before making the booking.
- When choosing the hotel you need to take the location of the exam center into consideration as much as possible.

- Always make sure the hotel is located in a safe place. And read the reviews about the hotel to know about the untold stories.
- About arranging your meals, this depends on personal preference; however there is an easy access for many of the fast food stores. When you arrive to the hotel try to get a list of the nearby cafeterias and restaurants along with their delivery numbers.
- **How to commute inside the city:** it is advisable to choose a hotel which is near to one of the metro stations. This will cost much less than taxis and the metro is very organized with cut clear instructions.
- Other options are taxis and you might even order a taxi using the service number of the company you want to use, just search that online.
- For female travelers who need an airport pick up. They can utilize the services of the pink taxi (All female drivers).
- **Phone calls:** at the airport one can purchase a SIMS card using the passport as identification. You can charge your phone with the amount of credit you might need.
- **The exam center:** amid east office is located in the knowledge village.

Cairo, Egypt

- This would cost you much less, however things are a bit more difficult to arrange compared to Dubai.
- **Visa:** Sudanese citizens do not need an entry visa to Egypt.
- **Airline tickets:** use a reliable travelling agent to book a ticket. Try Egypt or Kenya airlines.
- **Accommodation:** usually when travelling with a group, renting a pre furnished apartment would be a good and a cheap option.
- Otherwise you should look for a hotel but you will need someone you know whom you trust to help you do that.
- **Food:** is cheap and available everywhere.

- **How to commute:** taxis are the best and if part of a group sharing its cost will not cost that much.

General tips for the day of the exam:

- Order a taxi to take you to the exam center. You can do it the night before the exam to make sure the taxi arrives at the specific time you need.
- Try to relax and have a good rest and sleep the night before.
- You should arrive at least half an hour before your appointment time.
- **Make sure you bring the following documents with you :**
- Scheduling permit
- Passport
- Prometric center`s appointment confirmation
- One or two bottles of water
- Food : sandwiches and some snacks
- Anything else you consider necessary
- However try to take only things you really need as they will give you a small locker to keep your stuff in.
- When you arrive to the test center find the place of the toilets so you won`t spend a long time looking for them during your breaks.
- **Electronic watches and mobile phones are not allowed into the test center. All what you need is your passport and only your passport , make sure that you are not forgetting any piece of paper within the passport like your boarding pass or practically any paper even if its blank. Doing any of that will be considered as an irregular behavior!!**
- **2 or 3 days before the exam try to go and check the center yourself and make an estimation of the distance from the place you are staying in.**