

Supplementary Law School Study and Stress-Management Tips

Graduation Confidence and Academic Journey: Law school is demanding but manageable. Nearly every first-year student experiences doubt at the start, but persistence—not perfection—is what leads to graduation. Confusion in the early months is normal. Over time, your commitment will carry you forward. While the experience has evolved since past generations, the challenge remains significant: it will stretch you in new and transformative ways.

AI Tools and School Policies: Artificial intelligence can be a valuable study aid when permitted by your institution. Many law schools impose restrictions on the use of AI, particularly regarding assignments submitted for credit. Always review your school's policies carefully to ensure compliance.

Class Participation and Socratic Method: When allowed, consider using AI research tools such as Perplexity to deepen your understanding. At the start of each course, use these tools to clarify the learning objectives.

When reviewing assigned cases, provide the case name and your initial interpretation of the holding, then ask the AI tool where your analysis may be incomplete. "What am I missing?" You can make PDF copies of case opinions on Google Scholar for upload into AI tools.

To prepare for classes, you might request your AI tool to generate a series of questions modeled after the Socratic method, which a professor could use in relation to the cases being examined, along with proposed answers. All students are called on unexpectedly at some point. Sometimes you'll know the answer; sometimes you won't. Blank moments pass quickly, and your peers are focused on their own challenges.

Preparing for Law Examinations: Effective exam preparation depends on identifying ambiguities in legal statements and recognizing that differing interpretations may yield distinct outcomes. Analyze each plausible reading and consider how it may impact rights and liabilities. For instance, the traditional saying "finders keepers, losers weepers" could lead to different legal consequences depending on whether the property was lost, mislaid, or abandoned. To sharpen your exam writing skills, consult resources such as *Getting to Maybe: How to Excel on Law School Exams* by Fischl and Paul.

Stress Management and Well-being: Prioritize your well-being throughout your studies. Incorporate short walks or movement breaks to restore focus and clarity. Stay hydrated. Consider part-time work if it supports your balance, but avoid overcommitment. Seek out academic support services early and make regular use of them—they exist to help you succeed.

Building Relationships and Utilizing Resources: Develop relationships with professors in your areas of interest, as their mentorship and guidance can open doors to opportunities. Take advantage of career services and placement resources. Support your classmates and contribute to a collaborative learning environment—you are all navigating this journey together.

Job Prospects and Other Opportunities: Even if you are not yet certain of your career path, preparing now will give you a competitive edge. Focus not only on coursework but also on developing practical skills, particularly negotiation. Many law schools offer negotiation workshops, and numerous books are available on the subject. For instance, when a prospective employer raises the question of salary, you may respond with, "What range do you have in mind?" rather than stating a number first.

Wishing you continued success as you build skills that will serve you throughout your career and beyond.