Item/Question Checklist

1. Is the item tied to an objective?
2. Is it easy to identify the knowledge and skill the item is testing?
3. Is the stem presented as a clinical scenario? (see templates)
4. Is the stem long with relatively shorter answers?
5. Does the item reflect higher-order thinking rather than rote recall of facts?
6. Can the item be answered directly by covering up the options?
7. Checked for proper grammar?
8. No use of negatively phrased stems such as “except”, “not” or “false”
9. Do the questions have 4 or more option choices that:
   - are similar in length and style?
   - are unique/distinct from each other?
   - do not repeat words from the stem?
   - do not include absolute terms such as “always” or “never”
   - do not include vague terms such as “rarely”, “frequently” or “usually”
   - do not include “none of the above”
10. Could you provide reasoning as to why the distracters are wrong?

Creating Well-Written Questions for Class Sessions and Examinations
Summarized from “Constructing Written Test Questions For the Basic and Clinical Sciences” (3rd edition)
National Board of Medical Examiners