

Pausing and Resuming

Your NBME® Self-Assessment



Use this guide to pause and resume your NBME Self-Assessment without losing time. Pausing your exam stops the timer and lets you return to the same question, which can also help you practice timing and break habits similar to exam day.

How to pause (take a break without losing time) while taking an NBME Self-Assessment

1. **Click “Pause.”**
You’ll usually see it in the navigation area or near the bottom of the screen.
2. **A pop-up will appear—click “OK”**
This is the key step that actually pauses your assessment.
3. **What you’ll notice next:**
 - Your **timer stops**.
 - The assessment **exits** (the browser tab/window closes automatically).

Tip: If you want a break between blocks, pause **right when the next block opens** (before you start answering). That way you don’t accidentally use block time while you’re away.

How to resume (pick up exactly where you left off)

1. Log back in and go to your assessment list.
2. Click **Return To Your Assessment**
3. You’ll return to the **same section and the same question** you were working on before pausing the exam.

One important reminder

- You can pause your exam to stop the timer and resume as long as your assessment is still available and your **Exam expiration date** has not passed.

How to use the pause function to simulate USMLE Step 1 / Step 2 CK breaks

On the United States Medical Licensing Examination® (USMLE®) Step 1 and Step 2 CK, you begin with a total of 45 minutes of break time for authorized breaks and computer transitions between blocks. If you complete the tutorial or other testing blocks early, the remaining time will be added to your total break time. To simulate this while using an NBME Self-Assessment, try to take breaks only between blocks and time these breaks, so you may build stamina and test-day pacing habits. To do this, it may help to set a personal break budget and stick to it.

Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)

I clicked around but I'm not sure I actually paused.

Make sure you clicked **Pause**, then clicked **OK** on the pop-up. That's what stops the timer and exits the assessment.

Will I lose my place?

No. When you resume, you'll come back to the **same section and question**.

Does pausing change my score?

Pausing doesn't change which questions you get or how they're scored—it simply stops the timer and lets you return later.