

Dentist interview checklist

Clinics and dental chains usually hold a discussion with the owner or clinical head, often followed by a case discussion or a supervised procedure on a patient or model, and a separate talk about pay and patient targets.

10 QUESTIONS TO PRACTISE OUT LOUD

1. How do you manage a patient who is very anxious about dental treatment?

What it checks: Whether you have practical ways to build trust, explain, give control and avoid rushing anxious patients.

2. Tell me about a time a procedure did not go as planned.

What it checks: Whether you stay calm, manage complications safely, communicate honestly with the patient and seek help when needed.

3. How do you feel about patient and revenue targets in a clinic?

What it checks: Whether you can contribute to the clinic's business while keeping every treatment recommendation ethical, honest and focused on what the patient needs.

4. Walk me through your sterilisation and cross-infection control routine.

What it checks: Whether you know the full instrument cycle, surface disinfection, PPE and waste segregation, since infection control is a basic expectation in every clinic.

5. Tell me about a patient complaint you handled.

What it checks: Whether you listen, stay professional, resolve issues fairly and protect the clinic's reputation without being defensive.

6. Why do you want to work at our clinic?

What it checks: Whether you have looked into the clinic's services, patient mix and growth plans, and have a genuine fit.

7. A patient faints in your chair during a procedure. What do you do?

What it checks: Whether you can recognise and manage common medical emergencies in the dental chair and know when to call for help.

8. Describe a time you worked closely with a dental assistant or team.

What it checks: Whether you respect support staff and work as a team, which affects clinic efficiency and patient experience.

9. Do you prefer a fixed salary or a percentage of your collections?

What it checks: Whether you understand common associate pay models and can negotiate sensibly based on your experience and patient load.

10. What do you do before extracting a tooth in a patient who takes blood thinners?

What it checks: Whether you know not to stop anticoagulants on your own, coordinate with the physician and plan local measures to control bleeding.

TIPS FOR THIS INTERVIEW

- Keep photos and X-rays of your best cases, with patient identity removed, on a tablet to show during the interview or case discussion.

- Revise medical emergencies in the dental chair, such as fainting, allergic reactions and hypoglycaemia, as clinic owners care a lot about safety.
- Be ready to do a supervised procedure: practise your rubber dam placement, access openings and composite layering on models the week before.
- Ask about pay structure, lab charge deductions, working hours and patient flow before accepting, so there are no surprises later.

THE DAY BEFORE

- ☐ Confirm the time, venue or video link and the interviewer's name
- ☐ Plan your route and leave time for traffic, or test your camera, microphone and internet
- ☐ Keep copies of your resume, ID proof, certificates and photographs in a folder
- ☐ Iron your clothes and charge your phone and laptop
- ☐ Do one final run-through of your introduction, then stop and rest

ON THE DAY

- ☐ Arrive 15 minutes early, or log in 5–10 minutes early for a video call
- ☐ Greet everyone politely, including the receptionist or coordinator
- ☐ Listen to the full question, pause, then answer in a clear structure
- ☐ Take brief notes of names and key points
- ☐ Ask your prepared questions and confirm the next steps before you leave