

Musician interview checklist

Most roles start with sending recordings, then a live audition or trial class, sometimes a sight-reading or jam test with the band, and a final talk about fees, schedules and travel.

10 QUESTIONS TO PRACTISE OUT LOUD

1. Play us two contrasting pieces. How did you choose your audition repertoire?

What it checks: Musical judgement and range: whether you choose pieces that show your strengths and fit the job, not just the hardest piece you know.

2. Tell me about a performance where something went wrong on stage.

What it checks: Composure and recovery during live performance, which matters more to employers than playing perfectly in a rehearsal room.

3. What fee or salary do you expect for this music teacher position?

What it checks: Whether your expectation is realistic for the role and city, and whether you understand how schools and academies usually pay music staff.

4. We will give you a sight-reading passage. How do you approach it?

What it checks: Your reading skills and composure with unfamiliar music, which matter for studio sessions, orchestras, theatre work, accompanying and teaching.

5. Describe a time you disagreed with a bandleader or producer about a part.

What it checks: Teamwork and ego: whether you can share ideas respectfully and then commit to the group's decision.

6. Can you commit to evening rehearsals, late shows and travel for gigs?

What it checks: Availability and reliability, which are critical for bands, event companies and cruise or hotel contracts.

7. You need to learn twenty songs for a wedding gig in one week. How do you do it?

What it checks: Efficiency and practice method, which are essential for working musicians who must learn sets quickly and reliably.

8. Tell me about a time you had to play a style you were not trained in.

What it checks: Versatility and learning approach, which are important for working musicians who play many kinds of events.

9. Why do you want to join our music school?

What it checks: Whether you have researched the school and have a genuine interest in teaching there, not just a temporary income source.

10. The singer asks you to play the song a tone lower right now. How do you transpose on the spot?

What it checks: Practical theory knowledge and quick thinking, which are needed in live settings, rehearsals and accompanying singers.

TIPS FOR THIS INTERVIEW

- Prepare two or three contrasting audition pieces that match the job, and practise them until you can play them well under pressure.

- Practise sight-reading daily for a few weeks before an audition, using material slightly below your playing level, and keep a steady pulse.
- Bring your instrument in good condition, with spare strings, cables or reeds, and arrive early enough to warm up properly.
- Keep short, clear recordings of your playing ready to share, including a live video and a clean studio or home recording.

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