

Nurse interview checklist

Hospitals usually start with an HR screen and document check, followed by a clinical interview with the nursing superintendent or ward in-charge, and some add a short written test or a bedside practical.

10 QUESTIONS TO PRACTISE OUT LOUD

1. Three patients call for you at the same moment. How do you decide who to see first?

What it checks: Whether you prioritise by clinical urgency using airway, breathing and circulation, and delegate safely rather than going in call order.

2. Tell me about a time you had to deal with a very upset family member.

What it checks: Whether you listen, stay calm, explain within your role, involve the doctor when needed and keep other patients' care going.

3. Are you comfortable working rotating shifts, including nights?

What it checks: Whether you understand that nursing is round-the-clock and will be dependable on the roster, with any real constraints stated honestly.

4. What do you check before giving any medication?

What it checks: Whether you follow the rights of medication administration, check allergies and use double-checks for high-alert medicines every time.

5. Tell me about a near miss or error you were involved in and what you did.

What it checks: Whether you are honest about mistakes, report them, and change your practice, since a safety culture depends on reporting.

6. Are you planning to work abroad in the next few years?

What it checks: Whether you will stay long enough to justify training you, and whether you answer honestly rather than giving a rehearsed denial.

7. A patient who had surgery this morning now has a falling blood pressure. What do you do?

What it checks: Whether you assess quickly, look for bleeding or other causes, escalate early with SBAR and act within your protocol while waiting.

8. Describe how you cared for a dying patient and their family.

What it checks: Whether you can provide compassionate end-of-life care, focusing on comfort, dignity, family support and respecting cultural or religious wishes.

9. What salary are you expecting, and what is your notice period?

What it checks: Whether you know typical pay for your experience and hospital type, and give a realistic joining timeline.

10. How do you prevent pressure injuries in bedbound patients?

What it checks: Whether you know risk assessment, repositioning, skin checks, nutrition and documentation as parts of routine pressure injury prevention.

TIPS FOR THIS INTERVIEW

- Revise basic life support steps, medication safety checks, SBAR and infection control, since almost every nursing panel asks about at least two of these.

- Keep your State Nursing Council registration, degree or diploma, and experience certificates ready with photocopies, as document checks are often done on the interview day.
- Prepare real examples from your wards: a deteriorating patient, a difficult family, a near miss and a time you spoke up for a patient.
- If there is a practical round, practise vital signs, IV cannulation set-up, catheter care and injection technique in the exact order you would do them at the bedside.

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