

Photographer interview checklist

Most studios start with a portfolio review, move to a technical and practical round (a short shoot or an editing task), and end with an HR or owner discussion on pay, travel and weekend work.

10 QUESTIONS TO PRACTISE OUT LOUD

1. Walk us through your portfolio. Why these images, and why in this order?

What it checks: Whether you can edit your own work ruthlessly, explain the brief behind each image, and show a consistent style that fits the kind of work the studio does.

2. Tell me about a time a client did not like the photos you delivered.

What it checks: How you handle criticism of your creative work: whether you listen, find the real complaint and fix it without getting defensive or giving away endless free work.

3. What salary do you expect for this studio photographer position?

What it checks: Whether you know the market rate for your skill level and city, and can state a range calmly while showing flexibility on how pay is structured.

4. How do you get flattering outdoor portraits in harsh midday sun?

What it checks: Practical light control: whether you know how to find, block or add light instead of blaming the conditions or relying only on editing later.

5. Describe a shoot where your equipment failed in the middle of the job.

What it checks: Composure and backup planning: whether you have redundancy built in, and whether the client suffered because of the failure.

6. Are you comfortable with weekend shoots, late nights and travel for events?

What it checks: Whether you understand the reality of event photography schedules and will not drop out during the busy wedding season.

7. Explain the exposure triangle and when you would trade one setting for another.

What it checks: Core camera knowledge: whether you understand how aperture, shutter speed and ISO affect both brightness and the look of the image, not just memorised definitions.

8. Tell me about a time you had to deliver edited photos on a very tight deadline.

What it checks: Speed without sloppy work: whether you can plan your editing, prioritise the images that matter and communicate honestly about timelines.

9. Why do you want to join our studio instead of freelancing on your own?

What it checks: Whether you have a real reason to join and will stay long enough to be worth training, rather than using the job to collect clients and leave.

10. How would you cover a ceremony in a dim hall where flash is not allowed?

What it checks: Whether you have handled real low-light events and can plan kit, settings and positioning ahead rather than hoping the camera copes.

TIPS FOR THIS INTERVIEW

- Trim your portfolio to 15–25 images and lead with the type of work the studio actually shoots; be ready to explain the brief, settings and edit for each.

- Carry your camera to the interview with charged batteries and an empty card, because many studios ask for a short practical shoot on the spot.
- Prepare a before-and-after edit of two images to show your retouching and colour workflow, including what you left untouched.
- Know your costs and a clear price range for common jobs, since even salaried studio roles ask how you would quote a client.

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