

Receptionist interview checklist

Receptionist hiring is usually short: an HR interview, a meeting with the office or admin manager that may include a phone role-play or a basic computer test, and sometimes a chat with the person you will support.

10 QUESTIONS TO PRACTISE OUT LOUD

1. How do you answer and transfer a call on the front desk phone, step by step?

What it checks: Basic telephone etiquette and clarity, and whether you avoid blind transfers that leave callers stranded or repeating their story.

2. Tell me about a time a visitor or caller was rude to you. How did you respond?

What it checks: Emotional control and professionalism under pressure, and whether you resolve the situation rather than react to the rudeness.

3. Our reception opens at 8.30 in the morning and closes after the last visitor. Can you manage those timings?

What it checks: Reliability and punctuality, which are essential for a front desk, and whether your travel arrangements actually support the timings.

4. Walk me through how you check in a visitor, from arrival to meeting the host.

What it checks: Whether you follow a consistent and secure visitor process every time, while still making each visitor feel welcome.

5. Describe a time you made a mistake at the front desk, such as a wrong message or double booking.

What it checks: Honesty and the habit of fixing errors quickly, plus what you changed to prevent repeats.

6. What monthly pay are you hoping for at our front desk, and which benefits matter most to you?

What it checks: Whether your expectation is realistic for the city and type of organisation, and whether you can answer confidently and politely.

7. How do you manage meeting room bookings so two teams do not turn up for the same room?

What it checks: Organisation and use of shared calendars, and whether you prevent clashes instead of sorting them out on the spot.

8. Tell me about a time you had to handle the front desk alone on a very busy day.

What it checks: Organisation and composure when stretched, and whether you ask for help or adjust systems when needed.

9. Why do you want to be the first point of contact for our office?

What it checks: Whether you understand the importance of reception in creating first impressions, and have a genuine interest in the role and company.

10. How do you keep records of incoming and outgoing couriers and packages at reception?

What it checks: Attention to detail and accountability for items that pass through the desk, so nothing goes missing.

TIPS FOR THIS INTERVIEW

- Practise a phone greeting, a hold request and a call transfer out loud, because many interviewers do a quick phone role-play to hear your voice and tone.

- Dress neatly and arrive a little early, since the interviewer will judge you partly on how you would present the company to visitors.
- Refresh basic MS Office skills, including a formatted letter in Word, a sorted visitor log in Excel and a calendar invite in Outlook.
- Prepare examples of handling rude visitors, busy moments and confidential information from previous jobs, college events or part-time work.

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