

Calm Parent

Sample Nanny Interview Questions

Why is the nanny looking for a job and do they want a live in or live out position?

Depending on the answers to these questions, there could be some pretty big implications for your family, including your legal obligations as an employer. Keep in mind that it is generally less expensive to hire a live in nanny. It can also be very convenient if you have room for them in your home and are not concerned about privacy issues (you don't have to worry about them not showing up on time). Live in nannies tend to be more open to providing support to parents in regard to household tasks compared to live out nannies. However, there can be a lot of paperwork involved if you choose to sponsor a live in nanny. It is also less common for live in nannies to have a drivers' licence (and own a vehicle) which can make it more difficult for them to take kids to and from school and other activities. Also, when a live in nanny receives their open permit, employers run the risk of losing them to an employer who is willing to pay more, especially in a competitive market.

When are they available to start?

If you're interested in hiring a nanny from overseas you may need to inquire with the agency you are working with (or the government) how long it will take for the nanny to start after you've completed the necessary paperwork. If the candidate you've selected already lives in your country of residence you may want to confirm their eligibility to work for you, especially if they do not have their open permit.

What is their availability and flexibility in terms of overtime?

Find out if the candidate is willing and able to work when you need them to. If they plan to keep another job on the side, you will want to make sure the other job would not conflict with when you need them.

Do they have any upcoming vacation plans or preferences in terms of when they would like to take vacation?

Being completely reliant on one person for childcare can be hard especially if you do not have a backup childcare arrangement. If your nanny requests time off or if there is an emergency, you may find yourself stuck taking more time off work than you might like.

What are their salary (or hourly rate) expectations, including bonuses and other perks?

Hiring a nanny can be expensive, especially after you account for bonuses, government contributions and increased food and utility bills. The nanny may also expect for you to pay for things like a cell phone and bus pass. If you are not using an agency ask your friends who have nannies or talk to other nannies you know about the going rate and appropriate perks. Depending on where you live it may be less expensive to pay a nanny a salary each month than send your children to daycare.

What is their nanny experience?

You may want to ask how many children the nanny has cared for at one time as well as the ages of the children. Also, the types of activities that the nanny likes to do with the children in their care. Ask if they are willing and able to care for children with special needs, or pets.

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Do they have specialized skills or training?

Make sure that your nanny has up to date and age appropriate First Aid and CPR training, even if you have to pay for it yourself. It may also be important that your nanny has other specialized skills or accreditations. For example, you may prefer that they are able to speak more than one language, have a valid driver's licence (and vehicle of their own) or early childhood education training. Note that, as a general rule, the more experience and training the nanny has the more expensive the hourly rate.

What household tasks are they willing to assist with?

Some nannies are only interested in caring for children and performing light housekeeping and meal prep, leaving you with tasks like grocery shopping, cleaning and laundry. Determine the level of support you will need from your nanny and know your deal breakers.

Does the candidate genuinely enjoy caring for children?

This is not always easy to figure out, especially since you and your new nanny will likely go through a *honeymoon* phase. If possible, have a trial run where you are able to observe the nanny interacting with your child.

Are they able to provide an up to date criminal record check?

Obtain a current certified criminal record check before you hire a nanny. You may be asked to pay for this but if you like the candidate it will be worth every penny (better safe than, well, you know...).

Are they able to provide the names and contact information for at least three references, preferably former employers?

It is important to conduct a thorough reference check, especially if you are trying to decide between one or more candidates. When checking references, it may be helpful to know whether former employers would hire them as a nanny again, and if not, why? If more than one former employer has similar concerns, it could indicate a pattern or character trait worth noting. At minimum, having this type of information could help you set appropriate ground rules for your new nanny to follow.

Other important questions

Depending on your specific situation there may be other important questions to ask, especially if you are nanny sharing with another family. Note that it is a good idea to consult with an employment lawyer to find out about the types of questions you are allowed to ask candidates before you start the interview process.

Please let us know your list of interview questions by commenting on our blog posts or sending an email. We hope to hear from you soon!