



Babysitter/Nanny Interview Questions

Please let the variety of questions provided here serve as a starting point for the questions you could ask your potential babysitter or nanny. You can pick and choose the questions that most resonate with you and leave the rest or ask them all. While there are many questions included here, there may be additional questions that are important to you that you include in your interviews. We wish you well on your child care journey.

General Questions to Ask Potential Caregivers

1. Why are you interested in caring for children?

2. Do you have any training or experience in caring for infants, toddlers, preschoolers, or older children? Tell me about these experiences. Do you have a preferred age group?

3. What do you like best about working with children and families?

4. Do you know the community and neighborhood you will be working in? Resources, parks, playgrounds, safety issues, transportation, schools? If not, how will you go about learning about our neighborhood?

5. What is your availability?

Health and Safety Questions for Potential Caregivers

1. Have you taken First Aid or Child CPR? If yes, when did you take these classes and are you able to provide proof of completion? If you haven't taken these classes recently, are you willing to take these classes? (Be clear if you will pay for these classes for them, if you offer them the job, or if they need to pay for them.)

2. Have you applied to and submitted fingerprints to the TrustLine background check in CA? If not, will you apply to and fingerprint for the TrustLine check?

Note: TrustLine is California's gold standard background check for nannies and babysitters. It's the only background check for nannies and babysitters that uses fingerprint records at the California DOJ, and the FBI and accesses the Child Abuse Central Index of CA. It requires a one-time only fee of about \$130. Parents/guardians or the caregiver can pay for this important screening. www.trustline.org Be clear with the caregiver if you will pay for this background check for them, if you offer them the job, or if they need to pay for it. To check the status of anyone that's applied to TrustLine call 1-800-822-8490 and provide the person's full name and CA I.D. or Driver's license number.

3. What vaccines have you had? Childhood illnesses? Flu? Covid? Others? If they are missing vaccinations, you can ask: Are you willing to be vaccinated if you are offered this position?

4. If they are expected to prepare and provide nutritious meals – Ask: Do you have some examples of different foods you have prepared for children in the past?

5. If you have an infant – Ask: Do you have experience with breastmilk storage, weaning, bottle-feeding and feeding infants solid foods?

6. Do you know the basic signs of illness in children and how to recognize them? Please tell me more.

7. (If you expect them to drive) Are you licensed to drive, and do you have insurance? Clarify if they will be driving your car or are expected to drive their car if transporting your children. Note 1: If the child uses a car seat, and the caregiver is expected to install it in your or their car, be sure to demonstrate exactly how to install it. Note 2: California law requires that if your nanny or babysitter is asked to drive your children or drive for any reason related to their work for you using their own vehicle, you must provide a mileage reimbursement of 67 cents per mile (2024 rate).

Understanding Children and How They Learn and Develop - Questions for Potential Caregivers

1. Have you taken any classes on child care or child development?

2. If they are expected to help older children with homework and school assignments - Ask: what are your abilities in this area?

3. Please describe a little bit about what children are like at different ages.

4. Children's needs and interests change as they grow, and they may seek the company of other children. Are you willing to bring my child(ren) to playgrounds, playgroups, to playdates, or classes? Are you willing to host a playdate in our home with my child's friends? (If yes, clarify with the caregiver if they will receive extra pay for supervising the playdate.)

5. Do you have experience with toilet training, helping a child go to sleep, or feeding children? Tell me about your experience with these topics, and how you will be patient with my child as they learn new skills and try new things?

6. How do you set consistent boundaries and routines for children of different ages or personalities?

7. In general, how do you respond if a child does not comply with the boundaries or rules or expectations that have been set?

8. How do you address behaviors with children who are having difficulty sharing or are having a conflict?

9. Ask questions about how they would handle different situations. Give them examples like: how would you handle a tantrum, a child that does not listen to your requests, a child that refuses to nap, or eat, a fussy baby, or siblings fighting with each other, or a two-year-old drawing on the wall with crayons. How do they handle these typical child behaviors?

10. Have you ever had to address a child's challenging behavior to the parent? If so, how did you present the issue to the parents?

Is It a Good Fit – Question for Potential Caregivers

1. Ask the candidate about your child or children's interest areas. Are they interested in what your child likes?

2. Is the candidate more active or sedentary? Ask: Do you like to go outside, or do you prefer to be inside? (How does that align with your child?)

3. Do you play with children or watch them play? Ask for examples.

4. Do you have experience with setting up a range of activities and play opportunities? Please provide examples.

5. What do you think you'd like most about working with our child(ren)/family and what if anything would you like least or find most challenging?

6. Is there anything else about yourself that we haven't talked about that you'd like to share with me to help me make my decision on hiring a nanny/babysitter?

Closing Information

1. If there are any other tasks you expect the babysitter/nanny to assist with, i.e. laundry, making a meal for the entire family, not just the children, be clear about those expectations and if you will be paying extra for those services on top of what you will be paying for child care as this is additional work for them.

2. At the end of the interview, if you're potentially interested in hiring the candidate, ask them to provide at least three references.

3. If they say they are registered on TrustLine, ask to see their CA driver's license or CA I.D. and obtain their full name and license or I.D. number. If they aren't registered, provide them with the TrustLine application and website so they can apply.

4. Explain to the applicant the next steps in your hiring process.

5. Thank the applicant for their time.

Is It a Good Fit?

After the interviews have been done and references checked, when you're deciding on the nanny or babysitter you want to hire, think about which individual feels like the best match or fit for your children, you, and your family. What feels right? Trust your instincts.