

Career & Money

## How to Interview a Nanny

Asking the right questions to find the right candidate

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Second to making the decision to hire a nanny for your family, choosing the right candidate is extremely important and requires a great amount of thought and consideration. The relationship between a nanny and his/her employer is personal, unique and an extension of each other's close family. Finding the perfect match for your family is the first step in forming a lasting and growing relationship between everyone involved, especially the children. Regardless of whether you're hiring a nanny or a babysitter, it is important to meet with every candidate for an in-depth interview and a chance to see how they interact with your family. This process is a delicate balance of knowing what questions to ask and how to communicate the responsibilities required for your family. Communicating the position's requirements at the initial meeting begins the relationship on a positive note. Never assume that an interviewee knows, or is comfortable with, the job requirements of your position. For example, a nanny's primary responsibility is to take care of your children, not to perform household chores such as cooking or cleaning. Anything beyond such tasks as picking up toys or making your children's lunch should be discussed at the beginning, and proper compensation might be required. It's more than appropriate to ask a nanny to make family meals, do your child's laundry, or other duties; however, communicating and discussing these needs from the beginning allows everyone to start off on the right foot.

Prior to the interview, write down a list of the questions you want to ask the candidate as well as all of the job's responsibilities so nothing gets overlooked. Take notes on his/her responses and how you felt about their answers to your questions. When considering your list of questions, keep in mind that this, like any other job interview, needs to be conducted in a professional manner and your questions should reflect such professionalism. Take this opportunity to understand how he/she will interact with your family on a daily basis as well as how they would handle any possible crisis situations.

Sample Interview Questions:

**We're looking for a nanny that is excited to grow with our family, are you able to agree to a yearlong commitment?**

- Don't be afraid to let your candidate know that you are looking for a commitment. Ideally the relationship will flourish into one that lasts for more than a year, but starting with this milestone is less intimidating and allows you to sit down together as the year is coming to an end and evaluate the situation.

**Please discuss how you handled difficult situations with a child?**

- Feel free to be specific, especially if it's a subject that pertains to your family such as inconsolable crying, biting, temper tantrums, etc.

**What is one of your favorite aspects of caring for children?**

**What is your least favorite part of caring for children?**

- The answer to this question could give you insight on the candidate's potential limitations.)

**Please describe a situation in which you had to discipline a child and why?**

In addition to conducting an in-depth interview, contact at least three professional references as well as three personal references. If you have chosen to use a nanny agency to help you find potential candidates, they should conduct a complete background check that includes the references checks, but you should also speak to them yourself. If you are not using a nanny agency, strongly consider running a background check on your own. Companies are available online and can run anything from a driving record to a credit check, but do your research and feel free to contact them for any additional questions you may have.

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