

# Seriously Kids™

*Supporting, educating, empowering.... Seriously useful*

We encourage you to use this checklist as a source of information rather than as a prescriptive checklist. Checklists are great guides to help you determine what you may need, provide a starting point to help making a decision or establishing a clear view of the situation on paper.

## INTERVIEWING A NANNY

Are you interviewing a nanny?

Regardless of whether you have advertised or gone through an agency to find potential nanny candidates there will come the time when you will need to interview them and ask questions that seek out their suitability for your role.

It is recommended to start the search for a nanny 4-6 weeks prior to your need for new nanny to start. It is important to note that there is no typical timeline for hiring a nanny.

Be mindful that some candidates may be looking for an immediate start. This is something to bear in mind.

It is something for you to have already pondered that if you consider you find the suitable candidate right at the get go of your search are you willing to employ them perhaps earlier than required to secure them?

It also provides for the ability to source a nanny without any stress or pressure to find a nanny. This provides time to interview and complete all the HR requirements prior to offering a candidate your position.



[SERIOUSLYKIDS.COM.AU](https://seriouslykids.com.au)

Once you have gone through your applicants it is recommended to select 3-5 to progress to the next stage. It is considered good practice to make contact with all applicants to acknowledge their application even if they did not progress any further.

When contacting your potential candidates we suggest communicating with some level of caution. By this we mean not providing your home address or such until you have met with them and you are confident they are in the short list of candidates. This is purely to protect you and your family.

We would recommend a pre-interview phone chat. This pretty much happens as your first point of contact. This is no more than a 10 minute chat which helps you to establish a lot about their professionalism, personality and experience.

A informal pre-interview chat is a great way to get a feel for a person and it is generally more relaxed as it does not have the stress and/or nervousness of an interview.

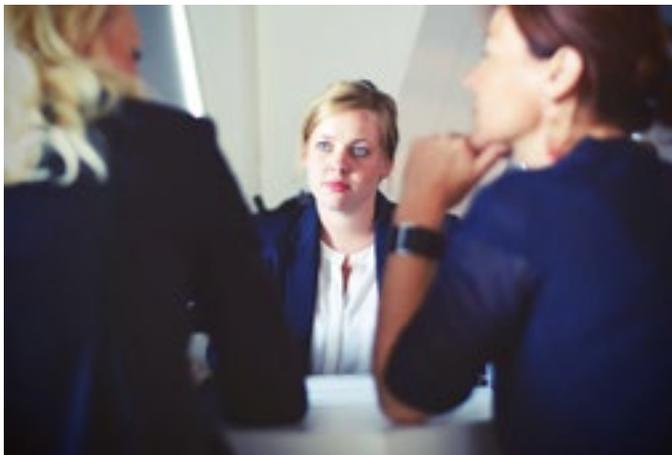
Trust your instinct here. If it doesn't feel right during this conversation red flag them. You may decide to not progress any further and that is OK to cease to progress them. You may decide to see how they go in the face to face interview. Just be sure to trust your gut and not feel pressured into employing someone that doesn't quite feel right.



Now you are feeling confident with your choice of candidates and are ready to progress to the face to face interviews. Ideally, a face to face interview will not take place in your home but rather at a public place like a coffee shop, your place of work, etc.

Whilst it is important that the children meet a potential new nanny it is not advisable that they meet every face to face candidate. Not only would this be potentially confusing and unsettling, not to mention time consuming for the completion of the interview process, it can be distracting as well.

Obviously, the children should meet the potential candidate who is your front runner after the face to face interview and prior to selecting them as your new nanny to gauge the interactions between the nanny and your children. This could be done briefly at the end of the interview should it be in a location that offers that flexibility or a later time.



---

## HOW LONG SHOULD THE INTERVIEW TAKE?

---

An interview should take between 45 minutes to 1 hour.

This enables you to go through the position, ask questions, have a chat and provides the opportunity for the candidate to ask any questions as well. It ensures that both parties feel they have covered everything. It safeguards that the interview does not feel rushed.

---

## STRUCTURE OF THE INTERVIEW

---

Generally following a formal structure to an interview enables all points and information to be disseminated and a chance to cover everything.

This is not quite as formal as the name suggests. It merely means having a flow to the interview so that you have the chance to cover all you want and they have the opportunity to respond and ask questions.

An example of an interview structure:

- Talk a little bit about the family and the children.
- Discuss the position.
- Ask them to tell you a little about themselves.
- Ask them what they are looking for in a position.
- Go over their resume. If you have any questions, for example, in relation to a previous role, length of time in a role, any gaps, etc this is the perfect opportunity to ask those questions of the candidate. This is also a good opportunity to ask about a role/s in more detail. Ask them to describe their responsibilities, etc.
- Ask your list of formulated interview questions.
- Ask if the candidate has any questions.
- Clarify any other specifics in detail. This would include things such as the expected start date, remuneration, conditions, duties, hours, etc not already covered in the initial discussion of the role. If it is a live in position it would also discuss the living arrangements.

There are many aspects for conducting a successful interview and some of those can be elements from you as the interviewee.

---

## TIPS FOR A SUCCESSFUL INTERVIEW

---

- Interview where there is limited chance of distractions.
- Interview without the children for the actual interview. If you feel that the candidate is a possible fit for your family then you can introduce the children to them. It is also not necessary for the children to meet all the candidates, especially as some will not be suitable.
- Try to offer a setting/situation where the candidate can relax. A nervous nanny can not necessarily show their best side. That does not mean they are not good with children or a great nanny as not all of us are good at everything and some might 'freeze' in the interview process.
- Offer them a drink and/or snack. That can help to clear the air. Offering a glass of wine however may be quite tricky as the nanny may feel conflicted as to whether to accept. It may be they do so as not to offend or they don't accept so as not to give a 'bad' impression as they may feel that if they accept then it says they are a drinker. It is best to keep it simple like a coffee or water or juice and that doesn't put them (or you) in a predicament.
- Break the ice by having a generalised chat about yourself, the family, the weather, etc. This can help the nanny relax before the questions of the interview start.
- The interview should have some sort of structure. A start, middle and end such as discussing the position; talking about your children; discussing what the role entails (hours, salary, start date, duties, routines, holidays, etc); asking the interview questions and then finishing the interview with all the what happens next information.
- Avoid questions that require a yes/no answer. These questions don't provide the candidate the opportunity to elaborate. Of course there are some questions that are simply a yes or no answer but we suggest limiting these if possible.
- Allow them the opportunity to talk.
- The interview is a great opportunity to establish if the candidate has the same/similar philosophy to you and your family.
- Establish the interview scene. For example will it be just yourself or your partner as well. Who is asking what questions, etc.
- At the end of the interview finish with asking the candidate do they have any questions and clarifying the process from there. For example, the time frame for when you will contact them, confirming reference contacts (if you are pleased with the interview and note that any offer of employment would be pending reference checks), discuss if there is a trial and/or change over, second interview, etc.
- Reference checks are vital. Ask the candidate for a minimum of two references but if they are able to provide more (although they need to be recent) that's great.

---

## POTENTIAL INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

---

There are a multitude of interview questions you can ask. We have provided some but of course you may have others that are specific to your family and/or needs and wants.

Tell me about yourself.

What would you say are your strengths and weaknesses?

Why do you want to work with children?

Why are you a nanny?

What is your training ? Do you have First Aid?

What is your experience and with what ages?

What appeals to you about taking care of children in the home environment? Why did you become a nanny?

Describe your ideal family/position?

Describe your last child care experience and why it ended?

What do you like least about being a nanny?

---

## POTENTIAL INTERVIEW QUESTIONS CONT.

---

How would you handle a crying baby?

How would you handle a toddler having a tantrum?

Are you willing to prepare meals/clean the children's space, etc?

Have you ever been in an emergency situation with children and how did you handle it?

What types of educational activities do you do to engage/interact with children?

What are your favourite activities to do with children?

What are your thoughts on discipline and your methods of maintaining it?

If I'm working in the house, will you be able to keep my child happily occupied without involving me? Have you worked with a family that works from home? What do you see as barriers, if any, to it being a successful mix?

What are your long term career plans?

What is your availability? When are you available to start? Do you have any immediate plans such as holidays, etc that I should be aware of that may affect you start/employment, etc? (If you meet someone you like and are flexible about the start date or their pre organised plans, let them know).

What salary are you looking for?

---

## POTENTIAL INTERVIEW QUESTIONS CONT.

---

Once you have found what you believe is a successful candidate then it progresses to the next phase.

At this stage it is also important to make sure they have provided proof of their identity (if this is requested in your initial advertisement if seeking a nanny privately). If it is not and they progress to an interview request they bring proof of identity to the interview.

Additionally, it's important to establish if they have a police clearance and/or Working With Children Check. Ideally this would have been included with the application and a professional nanny will generally automatically add this to their application.

This may include them meeting your child for the first time (if they didn't meet them previously at the interview). Your observations of that first contact with your children will play a large part in you making your final decision on a candidate.

---

## WHEN THEY MEET YOUR CHILD FOR THE FIRST TIME

---

- Does they seem attentive?
- How does your child interact with them? Do they seem to naturally bond with them?
- Does your child seem to feel at ease with them? Do they instinctively play/interact with your child?
- Do you feel comfortable and relaxed with this nanny and your children?
- Do they seem comfortable holding or speaking to your child?

---

## REFERENCE CHECKING

---

When reference checking ask specific questions rather than did you like them or were they a good nanny.

The more specific the question the better understanding of how they are as a nanny you will establish. Ask for examples to the questions and/or pose scenarios for them to give answers to gain more information.

The reference check may be in the form or a phone call or alternatively depending on location via email.

Questions such as:

- How did the nanny manage challenges?
- How well did the nanny communicate and how did they take direction?
- Were they flexible?
- Were they willing to undertake other household duties?
- What would you say are their strengths and weaknesses?
- Why did they leave the position?
- Would you employ them again?
- How long did they work for you?
- What was the reason they ceased employment with you?
- Were there any areas you feel they could work on?
- Were they reliable?
- Describe her personality and the type of person she was? And with your children?
- What additional duties did she perform for your family? How well did she do these?
- Did she ever have an emergency situation and if so how did you feel she handled it?
- Would you hire her again?
- Why would you recommend her to be our nanny?

After choosing a successful candidate, and their reference checks were completed then you need to discuss the commencement.

Upon offering a job offer then you need to go through and determine the nanny contract, the start with or without a change over/induction, etc.

