

Interview Tips for Au Pairs

10 Tips for a successful video call interview

1. **Test Your Tech:** Make sure your internet connection, camera and microphone are all working properly. Test them beforehand to avoid any last-minute technical glitches.
2. **Choose the Right Location:** Find a quiet, well-lit space for your interview. Make sure the background is tidy and professional-looking. You want the focus to be on you, not your messy room!
3. **Dress Professionally:** Even though you're at home, dress as you would for an in-person interview. It not only helps make a good impression but can also put you in the right mindset.
4. **Eye Contact:** Look into the camera, not just at the screen. It gives the impression of direct eye contact and shows you're engaged.
5. **Practice Non-Verbal Cues:** Practice your body language. Sit up straight, smile, and nod appropriately. It might feel a bit weird, but it can make a big difference.
6. **Prepare Your Space:** Have a copy of your questions, any notes, and a glass of water handy. You don't want to be searching around during the interview.
7. **Eliminate Distractions:** Let family members or roommates know you're in an interview and silence your phone. Close unnecessary tabs on your computer to avoid any pop ups.
8. **Speak Clearly:** Sometimes, video calls can have a slight delay, so speak a bit slower than usual. And don't forget to enunciate your words.
9. **Research:** Read up about the family, the area they live in etc.
10. **Follow Up:** Send a thank you email after the interview, expressing your gratitude and interest in the position.

Interview questions to ask about the host kids.

- **Daily Routine:** What is the typical daily routine like? – Understanding their schedule can help you prepare for your responsibilities.
- **Hobbies and Interests:** What are the kids interested in or passionate about? – Knowing their hobbies can provide you with ideas for activities and bonding.
- **Discipline and Rules:** What are the household rules and how is discipline handled? – Understanding the boundaries will help you establish a consistent approach.
- **Meal Preferences and Allergies:** Are there any specific foods the kids love or dislike? Are there any allergies or dietary restrictions you should be aware of?
- **Bedtime Routine:** What is the bedtime routine? – Knowing their evening routine can help you transition them smoothly to bedtime.
- **School and Extracurricular Activities:** What are their school schedules and any extracurricular activities they participate in? – This information is vital for planning your day.
- **Health and Medical Information:** Are there any medical conditions or special health considerations you should be aware of? – It is important to be prepared for any health-related situations.
- **Preferred Activities:** What are their favorite games, toys, or activities? – This can help you plan engaging and enjoyable activities.
- **Communication with Parents:** How do the parents prefer to communicate about the children's day and any updates? How do the parents prefer to receive feedback and updates

about the children's activities and milestones? – Establishing clear communication channels is important.

- **Emergency Procedures:** What are the emergency procedures in case of accidents or unexpected events? – It is crucial to be well-informed about how to handle emergencies.
- **Screentime Rules:** What are the rules regarding screen time for the children? – Understanding the limits and guidelines can help you manage recreational activities.

Interview questions to ask about the host parents.

- **Parenting Style:** What is your parenting style? – Understanding their approach can help you align your caregiving style with theirs.
- **Household Rules:** Are there any specific household rules or routines you would like me to follow regarding the kids? – This ensures that you are on the same page regarding expectations.
- **Family Values:** What are the core values and principles you want to instil in your children? – This helps you understand the broader philosophy of the family.
- **Parental Involvement:** How involved are you in the daily activities and routines of the children? – Knowing their level of involvement can help you coordinate effectively.
- **Family Traditions:** Are there any family traditions or cultural practices that I should be aware of? – This can help you integrate seamlessly into the family.
- **Hobbies and interest:** What are your hobbies and interests outside of work and parenting? – This can provide insight into shared interests and help build a personal connection.
- **Favorite Family Activities:** What are some activities that the whole family enjoys doing together? – This question can give you ideas for bonding activities.
- **Travel Experiences:** Have you and your family travelled together? If so, what have been some memorable travel experiences? – This can be a great conversation starter and help you learn more about their family dynamics.
- **Relaxation Preferences:** How does your family like to unwind and relax? - Knowing their relaxation preferences can help you contribute to a positive and harmonious household environment.

Interview questions to ask about responsibilities.

Daily Routine and Schedule:

- What is a typical day like for the children and the family?
- Could you walk me through the children's daily schedule and routines?

Childcare Responsibilities:

- What specific childcare responsibilities will I have?
- Are there any particular activities or routines that the children are used to and enjoy?

Meal Preparation:

- What are the family's meal preferences?
- Will I be responsible for preparing meals for the children, and if so, are there any favorite dishes or food they particularly enjoy?

Transportation:

- Will I be responsible for transporting the children to school, activities, or playdates?
- Do you have any specific guidelines or preferences for transportation?
- Will there be a car available for the Au Pair to use during his/her off time? If yes, are there restrictions on how far or where the Au Pair can drive the car?

Free Time and Off-Duty Hours:

- What are the expectations regarding my free time and off-duty hours?
- Do you have a curfew for the Au Pair?

Cultural Exchange:

- How do you envision the cultural exchange aspect of having an Au Pair?
- Are there cultural activities or experiences you'd like to share with me or expect me to participate in?

Expectations for Integration:

- How do you envision the Au Pair fitting into the family dynamics?
- Are there family events or traditions that you hope the au pair will be part of?

Religious Practices:

- Are there any religious practices or traditions that are important to the family?
- If the family is not religious, would it be a problem for the family if the Au Pair still practises religion and attend services?

Household Tasks Beyond Childcare:

- Are there any specific cleaning or organizing routines that I should be aware of?
- Are there specific chores or responsibilities that are shared among the family members?
- If applicable do the children have any chores that the Au Pair should be aware of?

Interview questions to ask if the host family previously hosted an Au Pair.

- What worked well with the previous Au Pair, and what aspects of the arrangement were particularly successful?
- Were there any challenges or areas for improvement that arose during the previous Au Pair's stay? How were these challenges addressed.
- How did the family and the previous Au Pair handle communication? Are there specific communication preferences or tools that worked effectively for both parties?
- In what ways did the previous Au Pair contribute to the family's daily life and routines? Are there specific activities or tasks that were particularly appreciated?
- Did the family and the previous Au Pair establish clear expectations and boundaries from the beginning?
- What is the family's approach to conflict resolution, and how was conflict handled, if any, during the previous Au Pair's time with the family?
- How did the family and the previous Au Pair navigate cultural differences, if applicable? Were there specific cultural exchange activities or experiences that were particularly enjoyable?

- In terms of free time and off-duty hours, how did the family and the previous Au Pair manage expectations and balance of personal time with family time?
- How would the family describe their overall experience hosting an Au Pair, and are there any adjustments or improvements they are considering for future arrangements?

Interview questions to ask about the host family's environment.

- Can they describe the neighbourhood they live in?
- What is the typical weather like throughout the year in the area?
- Are there any specific seasonal activities or festivals that are popular in the region?
- How is the public transportation in the area?
- What are some notable attractions or landmarks in the area that I should explore?
- Are there sport leagues or fitness centres nearby that I could join?
- Can you provide information about the safety of the neighbourhood, especially for someone new to the area?
- Are there any other Au Pairs in the area that you are aware of?
- What are some local dishes or restaurants that you would recommend?
- Are there opportunities for personal exploration, and do you have recommendations for day trips or nearby excursions?

Interview questions the host family might ask you.

- Tell us about yourself and your background.
- What motivated you to become an Au Pair and travel abroad?
- Can you describe your experience with childcare, including the ages of the children you've cared for?
- What activities do you enjoy doing with children?
- How do you handle challenging or stressful situations?
- Do you have any specific educational or career goals?
- Have you had any experiences living in a different culture or adapting to a new environment?
- What is your approach to discipline and setting boundaries for children?
- How do you handle homesickness or being away from family and friends?
- Are you comfortable with light household tasks, such as meal preparation or tidying up?
- Do you have any special skills or hobbies that you can share with the children?
- How do you envision the cultural exchange aspect of being an Au Pair?
- What are your expectations for communication and collaboration with the host family?
- Can you share an example of a challenging situation you've faced while caring for children and how you handled it?
- Are you open to participating in family activities and events?

Important tips for the interview

1. If you find yourself needing to use the host family's car, kindly communicate any lack of experience in driving in snowy conditions (if applicable) or driving on main roads. It's important to ensure everyone's safety and be transparent about any potential challenges you may face.

2. If a family requests you to compromise on any program rules, consider it a red flag. Agreeing now might signal the potential for more significant issues once you arrive in the country.
3. If a family seems too good to be true, be cautious. Trust your instincts in these situations.
4. If for instance you come from a sunny, warm country, and match with a family in a location where it is consistently cold and snowy, ensure you are genuinely prepared to acclimate to the new weather. This adjustment can pose a significant challenge once you arrive with the family.
5. Ensure you are clear about the number of kids you will be responsible for. Avoid taking on more children than you can effectively handle.

Building a relationship with the host kids through video calls can be quite challenging, especially when they are shy. Here are some enjoyable games you can try to get to know the kids better and have some fun with them.

Two Truths and a Lie

Each person takes a turn sharing three statements about themselves – two true and one false. The others have to guess which statement is the lie.

Example:

"I've travelled to five different countries and tried exotic foods like fried crickets."

"I once had a pet parrot that could mimic funny sounds and phrases."

"I'm secretly a professional magician and can make objects disappear with a wave of my hand."

20 Questions

Asking a series of 20 questions is an excellent way to get to know someone better. This approach is particularly helpful for uncovering small details about your host kids.

Here are a few questions you can consider for this game:

1. What's your favorite subject in school?
2. Do you have a favorite hobby or activity you love to do?
3. If you could have any superpower, what would it be?
4. What's your favorite book or movie?
5. What do you want to be when you grow up?
6. Do you have a favorite place you've visited or would like to visit?
7. What's your favorite type of music or favorite song?
8. Do you have any pets, or would you like to have one?
9. What's your favorite thing to do with your family?
10. If you could have dinner with any fictional character, who would it be?
11. What's the most exciting thing that happened to you recently?
12. Are you a morning person or a night owl?
13. Do you have a favorite meal or snack?
14. What's your favorite season, and why?
15. If you could design your own amusement park ride, what would it be like?
16. What's the funniest joke you know?
17. Do you have a favorite sport or physical activity?
18. What's something you're really good at?

19. If you could learn any skill or talent, what would it be?
20. What's your dream adventure or vacation destination?
21. What's the most interesting fact you know?
22. What do you like to do on a rainy day?
23. What is your favorite color and why?
24. What's the coolest animal you can think of, and why do you like it?
25. What's your favorite type of game to play?
26. If you had a magic wand, what's one wish you would make?

You can adjust these questions according to the ages of the kids!

Story Building

Start a story with a sentence, and then each person adds a sentence to build a collaborative story.

Word Association

Say a word, and the next person responds with the first word that comes to their mind. See where the conversation takes you!

As you embark on your au pair interview journey, keep in mind that authenticity, preparation, and open communication are your greatest allies. Approach each interview with a genuine enthusiasm for the opportunity to become part of a new family and culture. Be yourself, stay calm, and remember that it's not just about showcasing your skills but also finding the right fit for both you and the family. Best of luck on your au pair adventure, and may your interviews be filled with positive connections and exciting possibilities!

Goodluck with your interviews!

