



Interview Day Checklist



If you really want to be prepared to ace that big interview, the following checklist can help you manage your time and feel in control.

Let's assume that your interview date has been confirmed in about a week.

1. Week Before the Interview

Research - Start by reading and analyzing the job description and researching the company.

See Interview Prep for a detailed guide to conducting your pre-interview research. Remember that you should be **researching the position** (*and how your qualifications fit*), the company, the industry, and the interviewer(s).

Polish Your Résumé - Your résumé should be **tailored for each job** (see Landing the Interview and Interview Prep: Résumé Analysis).

Most likely, you have already submitted a customized résumé and that's how you lined up this interview invitation.

If the résumé that you submitted was not the best version possible, you can polish and customize it and bring copies of the new and improved version to the interview. Your interviewer(s) may not have the old version in front of them.

Even if they do, they will likely be open to seeing an updated version. Just make sure the versions don't contradict each other.

References -- Think about which references will be most appropriate for this job opportunity.

If the upcoming interview is second or third round, consider letting your references know that **someone may be calling** and provide some information about the job and the company.

Let your references know which strengths and aspects of your experience the company will be most interested in hearing about.

Prepare Your Presentation Packet — If you have been asked to prepare anything -- a questionnaire, presentation, list of recommendations, you should start preparing early.

Give yourself plenty of time to do a thorough job and print and package your work **professionally**.

Even if you haven't been assigned any homework, you may consider bringing relevant samples of your previous work (*professionally and neatly presented in a book or folder*).

If you don't have a portfolio to show, you may still want to prepare a folder to leave behind with the interviewer. You can include a copy of your résumé and any letters of reference (*strongest one on top*).

This will give your interviewer **something to remember** you by and will reinforce your attention to detail and your interest in the position, as well as providing a final confirmation of the contents.

Mock Interviews - Start your **mock interview practice** as early as you can. Use our video Mock Interview feature and customized question sets to practice your answers and see how you will look to the interviewer.

Share the video clips of your answers with a trusted friend or family member or one of our professional interview coaches to get feedback and ideas for improvement.

Advance Visit - Sometime during the week prior to the interview, make a **trial run** to the location where the interview is taking place.

Do it at the same approximate time of day under similar traffic conditions. Then plan to give yourself a 15- to 30-minute cushion on interview day.

This would be the time to **acquaint yourself with the neighborhood** and the building and any issues that may come up (*security check-in, limited parking, long walk from the bus stop*).

Plan Your Wardrobe - Now is the time to start thinking about what you'll wear and how you'll present yourself.

If in doubt about the dress code, plan to overdress. It's **better to look a bit more formal** than your interviewer than to seem sloppy or overly casual.

After all, people expect candidates to dress up for job interviews. It's hard to go wrong with a simple, dark-colored suit.

Schedule any needed appointments for a haircut or manicure. Shop for any items you'll need to complete your ensemble or drop off your favorite suit at the dry cleaner so it will be fresh and perfect on interview day.

2. Day or Night Before the Interview

Dress for Success — Lay out all of your clothing and **inspect each item** to make sure there are no stains, tears or wrinkles that require attention.

Mock Interview Dress Rehearsal -- Conduct a final mock interview to ensure that you **feel prepared** and you know your interview stories.

Last-Minute Check—The night before is the time to make sure you have everything you need for the next day.

If you need to pick up stockings or résumé paper or deodorant, do it the evening before so you can **go to bed with confidence** that everything is where it should be. You don't need additional anxiety or stress on the day of the interview.

3. Day of the Interview

Do Your Inventory Before You Leave — Stop to make sure that you have everything you need.

Directions to interview location

Presentation Packet

Résumé

Paper and pen (in case you want to take notes...see our advice on note taking)

Breath mints

Touch-up supplies -- Make-up, comb and hairspray, lint roller

Extra pair of stockings for women wearing skirt suits

Conduct a Final Review

Review your notes just **before you leave home** and/or on your way to the interview.

Once you're ready to walk into the office's reception area, however, put those notes away and stick to mental preparation.

You don't want your interviewer -- or any of her colleagues passing by, including the receptionist -- to view you as **nervous or unprepared**.

Take a few deep breaths and silently run through your key points in your head.

If you've followed the Big Interview program, you won't need your notes to wow them in the interview.

Get There on Time - But Not Too Early

You can be too early for a job interview. Arrive **no more than five minutes early** at the office where the interview is being conducted.

That may mean killing time in the coffee shop down the street because you'll want to give yourself a cushion so that you absolutely, positively do not arrive late.

Remember that you may be there to get a job, but the person interviewing you probably has a full agenda.

Showing up 20 minutes **early can be as disruptive as arriving late**. It also may send a message that you are too anxious.

Turn Your Gadgets Off

Make sure you've turned off ringers and alerts and stowed all electronic devices before you walk into that interview.

The hiring manager doesn't need any **mixed messages** that you might not be giving your full attention.

Interview with Confidence

Remember that this is just a conversation and you are ready for it. Push any final jitters aside and project confidence, even if you have to fake it a little bit at first.

There's **nothing like confidence** to help an interviewer see you as a strong candidate...and acting confident can make you feel more confident.