

Car Park Attendant interview questions

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What to expect

Car park attendant interviews are practical rather than academic. Employers are checking that you'll turn up reliably, handle money accurately, stay calm with frustrated drivers and notice problems on site before they become incidents. Expect the conversation to lean on real situations and a walk through of the facility.

- **Process questions:** How you run a shift, from opening checks through to reconciliation and handover.
- **Behavioural questions:** Past examples of handling an angry driver, a dispute over a fee, or a long quiet shift on your own.
- **Scenario and judgement questions:** Equipment failures, blocked lanes, medical incidents or suspicious behaviour, where you have to decide what to do first.
- **Technical and equipment questions:** Comfort with Skidata, Amano or PayStay, EFTPOS terminals, barrier controls and reporting systems.
- **Safety and security questions:** What you look for on patrol, how you record it, and how you escalate.
- **Customer-facing questions:** Explaining ticketing and payment options to people who don't use apps or machines often.

Usually a short phone screen first to confirm availability for shifts, then a face to face with the site supervisor or operations manager. That second interview often includes a walk through the car park itself, where you'll be shown the payment machines, barrier controls and camera room. Some employers add a brief practical task, such as processing a mock ticket, counting a float or talking through how you'd handle a complaint. A National Police Check and, in some sites, a security licence check come after the offer.

1. Walk me through what you do from the moment you start a shift until you hand over.

Why they ask

The interviewer wants to see whether you understand the rhythm of a parking site, not just the tasks in isolation.

How to structure your answer

Use a chronological walk-through: start of shift checks, peak period, quiet period tasks, then end of shift reconciliation and handover. Name the systems and equipment you touch along the way.

Example answer

"I start by reading the handover notes and walking the site, checking that the barriers raise and lower properly, the payment machines have paper and no error lights, and there's nothing blocking the lanes or fire exits. I count my float and log it. Through the peak I stay near the entry and exit so I can help with tickets and watch for anyone struggling at the pay station. When it quietens down I do a level patrol, pick up rubbish, check the lighting and stairwells, and note anything that needs maintenance. Near the end I close off any machines that need it, reconcile the takings against the system report, bag and record the cash, and leave written notes for the next attendant about faults or anything unusual that happened."

2. Tell me about a time you dealt with a driver who was angry about a parking fee.

Why they ask

Disputes over fees and overstay are the most common source of conflict in this role, and the interviewer needs to know you can defuse them without escalating.

How to structure your answer

Use STAR, and be honest about the outcome, including what you couldn't resolve and passed on.

Example answer

"A driver came to the booth upset because he'd been charged for a full day when he'd only parked for about an hour. He'd lost his ticket, so the system charged him the daily rate. I let him finish, apologised for the confusion and explained how the lost ticket charge works rather than arguing the point. Then I asked whether he had anything showing his entry time, and he found a phone photo of his ticket from earlier. I noted the details, gave him a dispute form, and told him the supervisor would review it the next morning. He left calm, and the refund was approved. Since then I always suggest customers photograph their ticket or use the app if they're worried about losing it."

3. A barrier jams at 8.30am with a line of cars building behind it and no supervisor on site. What do you do?

Why they ask

This tests judgement under pressure and whether you default to safety and clear communication rather than improvising something risky.

How to structure your answer

Work through it in priority order: make the area safe, get traffic moving, communicate, then escalate and document. Say what you would not do as well as what you would.

Example answer

"First I'd make sure nobody is standing in the lane where they could be hit, and I'd put on the high-vis vest and grab the manual release or crank handle for that barrier. I'd raise the barrier manually so cars can leave, and stand where drivers can see me while I wave them through slowly. I'd put a sign or cone at the entry so new arrivals know to wait or use the other lane, and I'd radio or phone the supervisor straight away. Once the queue clears I'd log the fault with the time, the barrier number and what I did, and stay on that lane until it's fixed or my shift ends. What I wouldn't do is leave the barrier up unattended, because then nobody is controlling entry or payment."

4. How would you go about reconciling the daily takings at the end of a shift?

Why they ask

Cash and card accuracy is a core accountability of the role, and employers want to hear that you follow a set process rather than a rough count.

How to structure your answer

Describe the sequence step by step, then explain how you handle a discrepancy and what gets documented.

Example answer

"I'd print the shift report from the parking system first so the expected totals are locked in, then count the cash float and the takings separately, and check the EFTPOS and PayStay totals against their own settlement reports. If the cash is short or over, I'd recount before assuming anything, then check whether a refund or a manual release was recorded during the shift that might explain it. Whatever the outcome, I'd write it on the reconciliation sheet with the amounts and a short note, bag the takings according to the site procedure, and hand it to the supervisor or drop it in the safe. I'd never adjust a figure to make it balance, and I'd report a difference straight away rather than leaving it for the next person."

5. What would you check on a patrol of a multi-level car park?

Why they ask

Patrolling is a core task, and the answer shows whether you notice the things that actually cause incidents rather than just walking the route.

How to structure your answer

Give a prioritised checklist, starting with immediate safety risks, then security, then presentation and maintenance. Mention how you record what you find.

Example answer

"I'd start with anything that could hurt someone right now, like a spill, broken glass, a damaged barrier or a light fitting hanging loose. Then I'd look at security: stairwells and lift lobbies with no lighting, doors that should be locked but aren't, people loitering or sleeping in vehicles, and cars parked across accessible spaces without a permit. After that it's the presentation and maintenance side, overflowing bins, graffiti, trolleys left in bays and ticket machines that are offline. I note the level and bay number for everything, take a photo where the site allows it, and log it on the patrol sheet. Anything that's a safety or security risk, I radio through immediately rather than waiting for the end of the shift."

6. How would you help an older customer who has never used a ticketless payment app?

Why they ask

Parking is moving towards app based payment, and the interviewer wants to know you can support people who find that unfamiliar without making them feel stupid.

How to structure your answer

Show empathy first, then a plain language explanation, an alternative option, and a check that they're comfortable before they drive off.

Example answer

"I'd start by reassuring them that plenty of people haven't used it before and it's no trouble to walk them through it. Then I'd ask what phone they have and show them the steps slowly, downloading the app, entering the plate and bay number, and paying, using their own phone so they can see it working. If they'd rather not use the app at all, I'd point them to the nearest pay station or the booth and explain the options there, including that they can pay on exit. Before they leave I'd ask them to repeat back what they'll do next time, and if they still look unsure I'd give them the site phone number and tell them to call from the car park and I'll sort it out."