

Garment Cutter interview questions

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What to expect

Garment cutter interviews usually mix a conversation about your cutting background with a practical look at how you read specifications, lay fabric and check finished cut work. Employers want to know you can work accurately, keep waste down and stay safe around cutting equipment.

- **Practical and technical:** Questions about reading cutting tickets, pattern specifications, grain lines, ply depth, marker making and nesting, often with a practical cutting test or a walkthrough of a recent run.
- **Process and planning:** Questions that ask how you organise a cutting run from fabric inspection through to handing pieces to machinists, including checks and handover.
- **Quality and waste:** Questions about checking cut pieces against patterns, counting pieces, reporting faults and making the best use of fabric.
- **Safety and equipment:** Questions about Work Health and Safety, manual handling, machine guarding and safe use of hand and power cutting tools.
- **Behavioural and teamwork:** Questions about working with patternmakers, machinists and supervisors when deadlines, fit issues or fabric problems arise.
- **Scenario or problem-solving:** Questions that put you in a tight deadline, a fabric fault or a shortfall, so the interviewer can see how you judge and respond under pressure.

A typical interview starts with a short discussion of your cutting experience, then moves to a practical task or a detailed walkthrough of a cutting run. You may be asked to read a cutting ticket, explain how you would lay and nest a marker, or complete a trial in the cutting room. Safety and quality questions are often woven through the practical stage, and the employer may finish with a conversation about teamwork and availability.

1. Walk me through how you prepare a cutting run from receiving the cutting ticket to handing cut pieces to the machinists.

Why they ask

This shows whether you understand the full cutting process and can organise work without close supervision.

How to structure your answer

Use a step-by-step walk-through: read the ticket, check fabric and pattern, plan the lay, spread, mark or nest, cut, inspect and hand over. Name the checks you make at each stage.

Example answer

"First I read the cutting ticket and pattern specification, checking the style, fabric, colour, size breakdown and any notes about grain or nap. I inspect the fabric for faults before spreading, then work out the ply depth and lay length so I can use the roll efficiently. I spread the fabric, keep the grain straight and place the marker or nest the patterns. After cutting, I check the pieces against the pattern, count them and separate them by size. If anything is short or faulty, I report it before the bundle goes to the machinists, so they are not waiting on missing pieces."

2. Tell me about a time you spotted a fault in fabric or a cutting error. What did you do?

Why they ask

Employers want to see how you handle quality problems and whether you speak up early rather than letting a fault reach the machinists.

How to structure your answer

Use STAR: describe the situation, the task, the action you took and the result. Keep the focus on what you checked and who you told.

Example answer

"I was cutting a run of lined jackets in a wool blend when I noticed a faint fault line running across part of the fabric after spreading. The task was to keep the run on schedule without cutting faulty pieces. I stopped the lay, marked the affected area and checked how many pieces would be impacted. I told my supervisor and the patternmaker, and we re-nested the marker to move the affected sections into less visible panels. We completed the run with all pieces accounted for, and the fault was documented so the fabric supplier could be notified."

3. You are asked to cut a delicate fabric with a tight deadline and limited metreage. How would you approach it?

Why they ask

This scenario tests judgement under pressure, fabric knowledge and how you balance speed with accuracy and waste.

How to structure your answer

Use a judgement under pressure structure: assess the constraints, prioritise accuracy and fabric use, choose the right tools, act, then communicate progress.

Example answer

"I would start by checking the fabric and the cutting ticket so I know the exact piece count and any directional requirements. With limited metreage, I would plan the lay carefully, nest the patterns tightly and check whether any pieces can be rotated without breaking the grain or nap rules. For a delicate fabric, I would use the right hand tool or adjust the machine settings to avoid pulling or fraying the cloth. I would cut a small section first to confirm the approach, then keep the supervisor informed if the deadline looks at risk. If I cannot fit every piece without compromising quality, I would raise it early so the team can decide whether to add fabric or adjust the order."

4. What checks do you make to ensure cut pieces match the pattern and the correct number of pieces is produced?

Why they ask

This is a technical question about accuracy and quality control, which is central to the role.

How to structure your answer

Use a checklist structure: pattern matching, piece count, size sorting, notch and drill marks, fabric faults and bundle handover.

Example answer

"After cutting, I check the pieces against the pattern for shape, size and grain direction. I look for notches, drill holes and any marking that needs to transfer to the machinists. I count each size against the cutting ticket and sort the pieces into bundles, so missing or extra pieces are obvious before the run moves on. I also check for fraying, pulled threads or cutting errors along the edges. If anything does not match, I separate it and report it rather than sending it through."

5. What do you do to keep yourself and others safe when operating cutting equipment and moving fabric?

Why they ask

Safety is a core part of working in a cutting room with sharp tools, machines and heavy rolls.

How to structure your answer

Use a risk assessment structure: identify hazards, apply controls, follow procedures, report issues and keep the area clear.

Example answer

"Before I start, I check that the cutting machine guards are in place and that the work area is clear of offcuts and trip hazards. I use the correct gloves and handle fabric rolls with safe lifting techniques or a trolley, depending on the weight. When using a straight knife or rotary cutter, I keep my hands behind the blade and never cut toward myself. I keep the power lead clear and switch off the machine when I am not cutting. If I see a damaged lead or a guard missing, I stop and report it before anyone else uses the equipment."

6. Describe how you work with patternmakers and machinists when a pattern or fit issue comes up.

Why they ask

This shows you can communicate across the production floor and solve problems without creating delays.

How to structure your answer

Use a collaborative problem-solving structure: listen, clarify the issue, check the pattern or cut pieces, agree on a fix, follow up.

Example answer

"I start by listening to the patternmaker or machinist so I understand exactly what they are seeing, whether it is a seam that will not match or a piece that sits differently on the stand. I check the pattern and the cut pieces against the cutting ticket, and I look at the marker to see whether the issue came from layout, grain or cutting. If the pattern needs a small adjustment, I wait for the patternmaker to confirm the change before cutting more. If it is a cutting error, I recut the affected pieces and keep the machinist informed about timing. I follow up after the next bundle to make sure the fix worked."