

Housekeeper interview questions

careertips.com.au: common questions and what they're really testing

What to expect

Housekeeper interviews are usually short and practical, focused on whether you can work efficiently, safely and to hygiene standards under time pressure. Expect a mix of questions about how you handle daily tasks and how you would respond to problems on the floor.

- **Process:** Questions asking you to walk through a routine cleaning or laundry task step by step.
- **Behavioural:** Questions about past experience handling workload, time pressure or team coordination.
- **Scenario:** Situational questions testing judgement when something goes wrong, such as damage or a complaint.
- **Safety and technical:** Questions checking your knowledge of infection control, chemical handling and WHS requirements.
- **Client-facing:** Questions about dealing directly with guests or residents, particularly complaints or requests.

Most housekeeper interviews run 20 to 30 minutes with one or two people, often a supervisor or housekeeping manager. They usually open with background and availability, move into task and safety questions, then a scenario or two, and close with your questions about shift patterns and rostering.

1. Can you walk me through how you would clean and prepare a room from start to finish?

Why they ask

Checks whether you understand a full room turnover and work through it in a logical, efficient order without missing steps.

How to structure your answer

Answer as a sequence: entry and initial safety check, stripping and remaking the bed, bathroom cleaning, dusting and surfaces, restocking supplies, final inspection before signing off.

Example answer

"I start by knocking and checking the room is empty, then open windows if needed for airflow. I strip the bed and start the laundry pile, then clean the bathroom first since it needs the most soaking time for sanitiser. While that sits, I dust and wipe surfaces, vacuum, and remake the bed with fresh linen. I finish by restocking toiletries and towels, doing a final walk-through to check for anything missed, then mark the room ready."

2. Tell me about a time you had to get through a heavy workload within a tight deadline.

Why they ask

Housekeeping shifts often have a fixed number of rooms to turn over before check-in, so employers want evidence you can pace yourself and still meet hygiene standards.

How to structure your answer

Use STAR: describe the situation, the task or target, the specific action you took to manage your time, and the result.

Example answer

"During a busy checkout morning we had a large group leaving and a similar-sized group arriving the same afternoon. I planned my room order based on which guests had already left, worked through

bathrooms and beds in a set sequence rather than switching between tasks, and asked a colleague to help with linen collection so I wasn't backtracking. We had every room ready before the new arrivals started checking in."

3. What would you do if you found a room with damage, or left in much worse condition than usual?

Why they ask

Tests judgement under pressure and whether you follow proper reporting steps rather than trying to fix or hide problems.

How to structure your answer

Walk through immediate assessment, any safety action needed, who you report to and how, and how you'd follow up.

Example answer

"I would first check if the damage created any safety risk, like broken glass or a hazard, and secure the area if it did. I'd take note of exactly what I found, then report it to my supervisor straight away rather than trying to sort it myself, since some issues need maintenance or management sign-off. I'd keep the room off the ready list until it was checked and cleared."

4. What do you know about infection control and the safe use of cleaning chemicals?

Why they ask

This role involves handling sanitisers and disinfectants daily, often in settings like aged care or health care where infection control matters more.

How to structure your answer

Give a brief knowledge statement, then ground it with a practical example of how you apply it.

Example answer

"I know cleaning products need to be used and stored according to their safety data sheets, including correct dilution and not mixing chemicals. In practice, I keep sanitiser sprays for bathrooms separate from surface cleaners, wear gloves when required, and follow colour-coded cloths so bathroom and bedroom cleaning don't cross-contaminate."

5. How would you handle a guest or resident who complains their room wasn't cleaned properly?

Why they ask

Housekeepers often deal directly with guests or residents, so employers check you can handle complaints calmly and fix the issue.

How to structure your answer

Service recovery approach: listen without getting defensive, apologise, fix the problem promptly, then follow up to confirm it's resolved.

Example answer

"I'd listen to exactly what they're unhappy about rather than assuming, apologise for the inconvenience, and offer to fix it straight away, like re-cleaning the bathroom or replacing linen on the spot. Afterwards I'd check back with them briefly to make sure they're satisfied, and mention it to my supervisor if it points to a bigger issue with that room."

6. How do you manage stock of cleaning supplies and linen so you don't run short during a shift?

Why they ask

Restocking and inventory awareness are part of daily duties, and running short mid-shift slows everyone down.

How to structure your answer

Describe your organisational habit or system, then how you handle it when supplies run low.

Example answer

"I check my trolley stock at the start of each shift against how many rooms I'm assigned, so I know roughly how many towels, linens and toiletries I'll need. If I notice something running low partway through, I flag it early with whoever manages the supply store rather than waiting until I'm out, so it doesn't hold up later rooms."