

Sports Commentator interview questions

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What to expect

Interviews for sports commentator roles often combine a conversation about your experience with a practical audition, where you commentate on a clip or a live feed. Employers want to see how you think on your feet, how you research, and how you work with producers.

- **Preparation and research:** Questions about how you get ready for a broadcast, including the tools and sources you use.
- **Live commentary technique:** Questions or exercises that assess your play-by-play and colour commentary skills.
- **Sports knowledge and analysis:** Questions that probe your depth of knowledge across specific sports and how you keep it current.
- **Handling pressure and unexpected events:** Scenario questions about technical faults, late changes or controversial moments.
- **Interviewing and presenting:** Questions about how you conduct interviews and present yourself on air.
- **Teamwork and production collaboration:** Questions about working with producers, directors and other crew.

Typically, you will start with a phone or video screen with a producer or hiring manager. If you progress, you will be invited to a practical audition, either in a studio or via a remote setup, where you commentate on a provided clip. The final stage is often a panel interview with senior commentators, producers and sometimes a talent manager, where they assess your fit and your ability to take direction.

1. How do you prepare for a live broadcast?

Why they ask

Assesses your research habits, organisational skills and ability to identify key storylines.

How to structure your answer

Walk-through: start with broad research, then narrow to key storylines, then final checks.

Example answer

"I start by gathering data from Champion Data and other stats sources. I look at recent form, head-to-head records, and any news about injuries or team changes. Then I identify three or four key storylines that I can weave into the commentary. On the day, I arrive early to check the rundown with the producer, test my equipment, and make sure I have my notes organised. I also keep a running sheet of player names and numbers to avoid mistakes."

2. Tell us about a time you had to adapt your commentary when a game took an unexpected turn.

Why they ask

Tests your flexibility, composure and ability to keep the audience engaged under changing circumstances.

How to structure your answer

STAR: Situation, Task, Action, Result.

Example answer

"During a live radio broadcast of a local football match, the star player went down with an injury in the first quarter. I had prepared notes on the team's bench players, so I quickly shifted to discussing the

potential replacements and how the team's structure might change. I also used the stoppage to recap the player's contribution so far. The producer later told me that listeners stayed tuned because I kept the analysis relevant and calm."

3. You are calling a game and the video feed drops for thirty seconds. What do you do?

Why they ask

Assesses your judgement under pressure and your ability to fill dead air without panicking.

How to structure your answer

Judgement under pressure: acknowledge the issue, fill with relevant content, hand back smoothly when the feed returns.

Example answer

"First, I would stay calm and keep talking to avoid dead air. I might say something like, 'We seem to have lost our pictures, but from what we saw, the momentum was with...' and then describe the likely situation based on what I last saw. I would also check with the producer in my earpiece for guidance. If the feed returns, I would seamlessly pick up the action. If it does not, I would continue with analysis and maybe interview a sideline reporter if available."

4. Which sports are you most knowledgeable about, and how do you keep your knowledge current?

Why they ask

Gauges your depth of expertise and your commitment to ongoing learning.

How to structure your answer

Direct answer then method: list your strongest sports, then describe how you stay updated.

Example answer

"I am strongest in cricket and Australian rules football. I watch as many games as I can, follow specialist journalists, and use Champion Data to track player statistics. I also listen to other commentators to learn different styles. I make a point of reading match reports and injury updates daily, and I maintain a personal database of player profiles and historical results."

5. How do you work with producers to shape a broadcast?

Why they ask

Assesses your collaboration skills and your ability to take direction in a live environment.

How to structure your answer

Process: pre-broadcast meeting, in-broadcast communication, post-broadcast debrief.

Example answer

"Before a broadcast, I meet with the producer to go over the rundown and discuss key angles. I share my research notes and suggest storylines. During the broadcast, I listen to the producer's cues in my earpiece and adjust my commentary accordingly, whether that is hitting a sponsor mention or cutting to a break. After the broadcast, we debrief on what worked and what could be improved. I see it as a partnership to serve the audience."

6. Describe your approach to interviewing a player or coach after a match.

Why they ask

Assesses your interview skills, empathy and ability to manage time effectively.

How to structure your answer

Approach: preparation, empathy, open questions, time management.

Example answer

"I research the player beforehand so I can ask informed questions. I start with a broad question about the game to let them settle, then move to specifics. I listen carefully to their answers and follow up on interesting points. I am mindful of their time and emotions, especially after a loss, so I keep it respectful and concise. I also make sure to thank them for their time."