

# Telecommunications Cable Joiner interview questions

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## What to expect

Interviews for telecommunications cable joiner roles blend a conversation about your tickets and experience with practical questions on splicing, testing and safety. Employers want to know you can work unsupervised, follow network standards and keep customers connected.

- **Technical and tool knowledge:** Questions on copper and fibre splicing, OTDR traces, optical power meters and cable locating, often with a practical demonstration.
- **Safety and compliance:** Questions on pit and pole safety, safe network access, asbestos awareness, traffic management and your White Card.
- **Scenario and fault-finding:** Hypothetical jobs where a joint fails, a cable is damaged or a customer is offline, testing your judgement under pressure.
- **Behavioural:** Tell me about a time questions on teamwork, meeting deadlines, handling difficult customers or finding faults others missed.
- **Process and planning:** How you organise a day with multiple jobs, read network plans and manage your vehicle and stock.
- **Client-facing:** How you explain faults, timelines and safety to customers at their premises, especially when their service is down.

Usually a phone screen with a recruiter or hiring manager to check tickets, licences and availability. That is followed by a technical interview or practical assessment with a supervisor, where you may splice a sample cable or interpret an OTDR trace. Some employers add a site walk-through or a short panel with a network operations lead. Questions on accreditations tend to come early.

## 1. Walk me through how you prepare and splice a copper cable joint to keep moisture out.

### Why they ask

This is the core trade skill for copper networks, and the interviewer wants to hear a repeatable method, not just a description of the tools.

### How to structure your answer

A step-by-step walk-through, from cable preparation to sealing and testing, in the order you would actually do it on site.

### Example answer

*"First I isolate the cable and confirm it is dead. I strip the sheath back without nicking the conductors, clean the pairs and fan them out in the correct colour code. I use a connector or straight-through joint, then seal the joint with a heat-shrink sleeve or a mechanical enclosure that keeps water out. I test continuity and insulation resistance with a multimeter before backfilling. If it is a pressurised cable, I follow the network standard for that system. The main thing is to keep everything clean and dry, because moisture is what kills copper joints."*

## 2. How do you use an OTDR to locate a fault on a fibre link?

### Why they ask

Fibre is a growing part of the role, and the interviewer needs to know you can set up, read and interpret a trace without guesswork.

### How to structure your answer

A technical walk-through: setup, trace capture, event interpretation, and what you do with the result.

**Example answer**

*"I clean the connector and patch lead first, then connect the OTDR to the fibre, set the wavelength and range for the link length, and take a trace in both directions if possible. I look for a reflective event or a drop in the backscatter that shows a break or a bad splice. Once I have the distance, I compare it with the network plan and use a cable locator or the pit schedule to find the exact spot. Then I repair the joint or replace the damaged section and re-test to confirm the loss is within spec."*

### **3. What safety checks do you complete before entering a pit or working on a pole?**

**Why they ask**

Safety is non-negotiable in this trade, and employers want to hear a routine that covers atmosphere, traffic, power and safe network access.

**How to structure your answer**

A list in order of priority, covering the hierarchy of control and the specific hazards of pits and poles.

**Example answer**

*"Before I open a pit, I check for traffic and set up signage and cones if needed. I test the atmosphere for gas and check for water, and I never enter a pit without a gas detector and a rescue plan. I look for overhead power lines before raising a pole ladder, and I confirm I have the right safe network access accreditation for that network. I also check for asbestos in older pits and follow the asbestos management plan if it is present. Only then do I start work."*

### **4. You arrive at a customer site and the fibre lead-in is damaged. The customer runs a business from home. How do you handle it?**

**Why they ask**

This tests your judgement under pressure, your customer communication and your ability to prioritise a commercial customer without cutting safety corners.

**How to structure your answer**

A scenario judgement structure: assess the situation, prioritise safety and service, communicate clearly, then act and follow up.

**Example answer**

*"First I make the area safe and confirm there is no live electrical hazard. I introduce myself to the customer, explain what I have found and give a realistic timeframe. Because it is a business, I check whether I can restore a temporary service or reroute the connection while I complete the permanent repair. If I need to escalate for a new lead-in, I call my supervisor and arrange a priority job. I keep the customer informed at each step and make sure they know when the service will be back."*

### **5. Tell me about a time you found a fault that others had missed.**

**Why they ask**

This is a behavioural question that shows your attention to detail and problem solving, which are core skills for jointing work.

**How to structure your answer**

STAR: situation, task, action, result, with a clear emphasis on what you noticed and what you did.

**Example answer**

*"On a maintenance job, a street had repeated broadband dropouts. The previous test results showed the line was fine, but I noticed the signal loss was worse after rain. I used an OTDR and a multimeter and traced it to a joint in a pit that was taking in water. The seal had failed but the joint still passed a basic continuity test. I re-sealed the joint and replaced the damaged section. The dropouts stopped"*

*and the customer cancelled their repeat fault calls. It taught me to look at patterns and weather, not just the meter reading."*

## **6. How do you plan a day's work when you have multiple jobs across a wide area?**

### **Why they ask**

This role often runs solo, so the interviewer wants to see that you can manage time, stock and travel without constant supervision.

### **How to structure your answer**

A process explanation: prioritise, plan the route, check stock and tickets, then adjust as the day unfolds.

### **Example answer**

*"I start by checking the job list and prioritising any faults or customers without service. I group jobs by suburb so I am not crossing the city twice. I check my vehicle stock for connectors, enclosures, patch leads and gas detector batteries before I leave the depot. I also confirm I have the right network access and plans for each site. During the day, I keep the dispatcher updated if a job runs long, and I re-order the remaining jobs so the most urgent ones still get done."*