

HOMEOWNER'S CHECKLIST AND INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

When you've short-listed your house sitters, it's important to organize an information conversation, preferably by video chat, to find out more about these potential sitters - their skills, their experience and their suitability to your particular assignment.

If you can meet in person, all the better, but this isn't always possible.

At the very least, a telephone conversation should take place where you can be open with each other and ask any questions necessary, to ensure that you choose the most suitable person or couple to look after your home and pets.

No one enjoys a tirade of questions, so we advise keeping the conversation nice and natural. A few "open" questions will draw out the answers to many of your questions without this feeling like a formal interview.

However, keep your personalized list of questions to hand so that you can refer to it if the conversation stops flowing organically.

It's difficult on video chats not to talk over each other, but try to allow enough time for your potential sitter to fully answer your questions, before giving more information about your house sit and pets.

Don't forget to ask your potential sitters what questions they have.

Remember this is a two-way exchange and they may have as many questions for you as you have for them!

Take a moment at the end of the conversation to check that everything you wanted to ask about has been answered.

CONSIDERATIONS WHEN MAKING YOUR PERSONAL LIST OF QUESTIONS

Before perfecting your own personal list, take some time to think about what you want from your house and pet sitter and the overall experience.

What daily routines will sitters need to undertake, and at what times? Be honest ALWAYS - it's so important that you both understand each other's expectations, as both parties need to feel comfortable. By being upfront and honest you'll quickly discover in conversation whether the potential sitters are happy with your particular requirements

- As well as taking care of the pets, will you have any other duties that sitters will need to perform?
- What special skills will they need?
- Do you have an off-grid property, solar system, large garden, or swimming pool?
- Do you have staff? Will sitters need to remain at property to oversee?
- How far is the closest supermarket or vets?
- If you have solar, will there be restrictions on use of electrical appliances?
- How good and consistent is the WIFI? This is an important consideration for nomadic workers.
- Do you have security systems, surveillance and/or cameras?

BE HONEST ABOUT YOUR PETS

- How well trained are your dogs? How timid is your cat?
- Do the pets sleep on or in your bed, or do they live outside?
- Do pets need toilet breaks during the night?
- What time do pets need to be let out in the morning?
- Do your dogs bark more than normal?
- How well socialized are your dogs around strangers and other dogs?
- Are your pets healthy or is medication required?
- Do the pets suffer with fleas, ticks or mites?

SAMPLE QUESTIONS FOR HOUSE SITTERS

These questions can form the basis of your own relevant list or can be used to get the conversation started. Try to ask "open" questions that help relax your potential sitters and encourage natural conversation.

- How long have you been house sitting?
- Are you able to provide references - can I contact these people?
- What do you enjoy most about house sitting?
- Do you have any special skills that have helped you secure house sits?
- Have you house sat in or visited Mexico before?
- What do you like least about house sitting?
- Have you previously owned (or do you still own) your own property?
- How do you enjoy spending your down time?
- What type of pets have you owned yourself?
- What's the most unusual pet you've looked after while house sitting?
- Do you have experience of caring for <your breed / type of animal>?
- Do you still work and if yes, what's your job? Will it impact on your ability to keep to the pet's routines?
- We also have a <pool/solar system/alarm system etc.>, what is your experience with these systems?
- We want you to be happy house sitting in our home, so what are you hoping to get out of staying here?
- Do you have your own transportation? If not, how will you get to us, and how will you get about while here? (If you, as the homeowner, are prepared to pick them up from bus station or airport, let them know. Also let them know if you have a suggestion for such transportation.)
- If you are leaving a vehicle, ask about experience of driving your type of car. Ask about any recent accidents or convictions. Be clear about how much mileage you are prepared to allow.
- Will you as the homeowner require a lift to and from your point of departure? At what time of day?
- Do you have a sit before or after our dates?
- Be clear about whether your sitters are permitted to entertain visitors.
- Indicate your level of cleanliness - are you super clean and tidy, more relaxed, quite casual. Will there be a cleaner?

- Talk about handovers - how long do you need to explain your pet routines, systems. Do you prefer your sitters to arrive a day or more before, will you provide accommodations; provide dinner etc.? Are they comfortable with your arrangements?
- If you're sure... a nice way to close is to ask...
"Do you like red or white wine?" It's nice to show some appreciation for your sitters, and leaving a bottle of wine is a nice, simple gesture.
- This is a great way to lead into... *"Well we are really happy with the way this conversation has gone, and would love you to be our sitters if you are happy too"*.

**REMEMBER THIS IS A GUIDE ONLY
TRY AND KEEP YOUR INTERVIEW NATURAL**

This checklist is produced by the FREE bi-monthly online publication and resource HouseSittingMagazine.com

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[How to Become a Successful International House Sitter](#)



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