

Sterile Processing Technician Interview Guide

Common Interview Questions & Tips

1. Tell me about yourself.

- *Tip:* Focus on your training, certification (e.g., CRCST), and any hands-on experience in decontamination, sterilization, and instrument processing.
- *Example:* "I'm a certified sterile processing technician with experience in both hospital and surgical center settings. I'm skilled in instrument decontamination, sterilization procedures, and inventory management."

2. Why did you choose sterile processing as a career?

- *Tip:* Share your motivation for working behind the scenes to support patient safety and surgical success.
- *Example:* "I've always wanted to contribute to patient care, and sterile processing allows me to play a vital role in preventing infection and ensuring surgical teams are well-equipped."

3. How do you ensure that instruments are properly cleaned and sterilized?

- *Tip:* Describe your attention to detail and adherence to protocols.
- *Example:* "I follow manufacturer guidelines, verify that instruments are disassembled, use proper detergents and washers, and ensure sterility through indicators and proper documentation."

4. What are the different methods of sterilization you are familiar with?

- *Tip:* Mention steam sterilization, ethylene oxide (EtO), hydrogen peroxide plasma, etc.
- *Example:* "I'm trained in steam sterilization, low-temperature sterilization like hydrogen peroxide, and EtO sterilization. I choose the method based on the material and manufacturer's instructions."

5. Describe a time you noticed an issue with an instrument set. What did you do?

- *Tip:* Use the STAR method to describe the situation and your initiative.
- *Example:* "I noticed a cracked lens in a scope during inspection. I immediately reported it, pulled the set, and documented the issue for repair. This prevented potential harm and surgical delay."

6. How do you keep track of inventory and manage missing instruments?

- *Tip:* Emphasize your organization and communication with OR staff.
- *Example:* "I maintain accurate logs, use tracking software, and conduct regular audits. If an instrument is missing, I notify the appropriate team and initiate a replacement or repair request."

7. How do you handle high-pressure situations or a fast-paced environment?

- *Tip:* Show how you prioritize tasks and stay focused.
- *Example:* "I stay organized, prioritize urgent cases, and communicate with team members to ensure timely delivery without compromising quality."

8. What safety protocols do you follow in the decontamination area?

- *Tip:* Highlight knowledge of PPE, workflow separation, and infection control.
- *Example:* "I always wear proper PPE, separate dirty and clean workflows, and follow all OSHA and AAMI standards to prevent cross-contamination."

9. How do you stay current with industry standards and practices?

- *Tip:* Mention ongoing education, certifications, or memberships.
- *Example:* "I maintain my CRCST certification, attend seminars, and regularly review updates from IAHCSSM and AAMI."

10. Do you have any questions for us?

- *Tip:* Ask insightful questions about the facility, department, or training.
- *Example Questions:*
 - "What is your average surgical volume per day?"

- "How does the department handle ongoing training and continuing education?"
 - "What software or tracking systems are used here?"
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Final Tips:

- Bring copies of your resume, certifications, and letters of recommendation.
- Be ready to demonstrate knowledge of equipment and procedures.
- Show enthusiasm for supporting surgical and patient care teams.
- Follow up with a professional thank-you note after the interview.