

Commonly Asked Interview Questions

And Answer Tips!

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I've compiled a list of the most commonly asked dental school questions. Sometimes what you say, is not as important as how you say it. Answer the questions confidently and kindly. You don't need to memorize your answers, but it's good to have an idea of what you want to talk about so that you are ready!

TIP: Practice, practice, practice!! Have your friends ask you these questions like a mock interview, and answer them. Do this several times. That way, even if the questions are a little different, you can be prepared!

1. So tell me a little about yourself.

* This is your chance to tell them about yourself. Things that aren't listed on your application. Don't share your achievements yet. You can start with your extra curriculars

2. Why do you want to be a dentist?

* Be honest. Why do you want to be a dentist? Do you like being artistic? Do you like the mix of science and art? Do you like healthcare? Is one of your family members in dentistry? Maybe you like helping people!

3. Have you had any experience with dentistry?

* Here is your chance to mention your previous experiences, including research and clinical experiences. Maybe you shadowed someone and you enjoyed it. Maybe you have a relative in dentistry and you have helped out in the office.

4. What differentiates you from the rest of the applicants?

* Give them reasons of why you would benefit the school by being in the program. You don't know the other applicants or their potential, but you know your own potential.

5. Why did you apply to our Dental school? *

Read about the school and find about the program. See how the school functions. Maybe they have a different style of learning. Maybe the program is 3 years instead of 4 years. Find out what makes that program unique, and talk about it!

6. What other Dental schools have you applied to?

* Don't Lie: They know that everybody applies to various schools and

7. Have you had any other interviews at other schools?

* Again, Don't Lie: They know that everybody applies to various schools. Make sure you have reasons as to why you are more interested in their program rather than other programs.

8. What did you think about our school (ie. facilities, program)?

* Read about the school and find about it. Maybe they just redid some of the facilities. Maybe they just got some newer technologies. See what is important to school's philosophies

9. Can you explain the (A-F) grade you received in this class? OR Your grades slipped in particular semester, any reason?

* Be honest. Maybe you had a hardship. Now is your time to talk about it. But make sure you follow up with the fact that you know that wouldn't happen again because you learned how to get help from faculty if you are struggling. You learned from your previous experience.

10. In the past, what has happened to you that has made the biggest impact on your life?

* Talk about one of your experience- You may talk about your childhood experience, your ortho treatment, any accident that changed your views towards Dentistry, anything that may be inspiring

11. We noticed you withdrew from a class, why?

* The answers will vary dependent on the course you withdrew. You can say that you were not convinced about its usefulness, and lack of my interest, prioritization for other important topics etc. Please note your answer will guide your Interviewer to ask you more specific questions. You should steer the Interview by dropping some ideas that take your interviewer in the desired direction

12. Dentists require a great deal of hand coordination. Do you have any relevant experience?

* Maybe you play a musical instrument that requires a high level of manual dexterity. Maybe you play a sport that requires good hand-eye coordination.

13. Do you think the role of a Dentist has changed, and how so?

* You may say it has changed from extraction to preventive based, better equipment, better diagnostic facilities, Fluoride introduction has reduced caries)

14. How did your friends/family react to your interest in Dentistry?

* It can be a positive point for you to mention that your parents are dentists, or any experience that has convinced them that Dentistry has done wonders for you personally or your relatives. Maybe a smile that changed your sister's life. Maybe you had some bad experiences when you were younger, and you became interested in the field.

15. Do you have any plans after graduation?

* Maybe you want to specialize. You can express this and why you want to specialize and what intrigues you about the field. Maybe you want to join a dental practice. Maybe you want to have your own practice. Think of why you would want your own practice. The point is, you need to have something to say. Not just an "I'm not sure, let's see what happens" type of answer.

16. What would make you happy 10 years from now?

* You can talk about anything that your career as a dentist can help you with. For example, "I want to have my own practice and have a family. With Dentistry, I feel I can do both."

17. If you had to change anything about yourself, what would it be?

* Say something that has a "positively negative" impact on you. For example, you may want to say "I work too hard at times that I may not take care of myself as much as I should."

18. How do you spend your free time? OR What do you do to relax?

* Some good things to say are any sports you play, reading, spending time with your family. Stay away from "going out with friends" or any clubs you may have attended. Those don't show any value. If you say spending time with your family, put it in more important terms. Ex: "My parents are getting older, and it seems we are all getting busier so I make sure to spend quality time with them on my free time."

19. What would you say was the best day or experience you ever had?

* These kinds of questions are vague for a reason, they want to know how you think. Maybe it was the education you got in undergrad because you felt it really prepared you for your future. Maybe it was a recent trip you had with your family because you got to learn about the world and see things in a new perspective. Whatever it is, have an answer and have a reason WHY it was such a great experience.

20. What are your good characteristics?

* Are you organized? Good time management skills, always interested in learning new things?

21. How do you think the Dental profession has changed over the last 25 years?

* Do some research. We have newer materials. We have moved towards a more preventative approach. We have newer technologies (Example: Digital x-rays).

22. What book have you read recently?

* If the last book you read was for your biology class in undergrad, then find a book you read recently for pleasure. Make sure it's something useful, not the latest horror book.

23. Who is your favorite author?

* Find someone whose books you enjoy reading and talk about why. Maybe you like the way this person is so elaborate with the details and can really get your mind off of the stresses in your life. Maybe it's someone you learn from.

24. If you could meet anybody, in all of history, and eat dinner with them, who would it be?

* Pick anyone. They don't care who you pick, they care as to your reason why. Think about the WHY. Why do you want to have dinner with that person?

25. What do you do when you are stressed out?

* Use this to be productive. You can give an answer like, "I play the piano. It helps me clear my mind and then afterwards I usually have a solution as to how to fix the issue that is stressing me out."

26. At our university, we seek students who have a true passion for dentistry. What appeals to you most, about working in the field of dentistry?

* Maybe it's the fact that you get to help people. Maybe you like interacting with people. Maybe you want to be a pediatric dentist, and you just love working with kids. Maybe you like the mix of science and art.

27. What achievement are you most proud of, so far, on your path to dental school?

* Maybe you are proud of your high GPA from undergrad. Maybe undergrad was really difficult for you because you moved out of state and you didn't know anyone at your school, but you felt you conquered it and now you are more prepared for what else life will set in your path. Maybe you were able to maintain playing a sport in college, while keeping a high GPA. Maybe you worked full time, and still did good in college. Your answer doesn't have to be about your high GPA in college. The point is you need to have an accomplishment you are proud of and a good reason as to why you are MOST proud of that accomplishment.

28. Have you ever had significant dental work? Tell me about your experience as a patient. What made it memorable?

* Did you have a bad experience that you want to make sure nobody experiences? Or maybe you had a broken tooth and were terrified to get it fixed, but you had a great dentist and you strive to be like that dentist. Maybe your teeth were poorly aligned, but you had braces and your new smile gave you the confidence you needed!

Now that you are familiar with some of the most commonly asked dental school questions, it's time to write out your answers and PRACTICE!!! The more your practice, the better you will be able to answer these questions, and any questions you weren't prepared for!

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