

Snake Catcher interview questions

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What to expect

Interviews for snake catcher roles focus on your practical handling ability, safety mindset and how you deal with stressed members of the public. Employers want to know you can identify species accurately, follow licensing rules and stay calm under pressure.

- **Process:** Questions that ask you to walk through a standard call-out from start to finish, showing your routine and safety checks.
- **Behavioural:** Questions about past experiences where you stayed calm, handled a difficult animal or managed a distressed client.
- **Scenario:** Hypothetical situations that test your judgement, prioritisation and problem solving on the spot.
- **Technical:** Questions on species identification, venomous versus non-venomous features, and correct use of snake hooks, bags and gaiters.
- **Safety and compliance:** Questions about state wildlife licensing, first aid, record-keeping and work health and safety obligations.
- **Client-facing:** Questions on how you communicate with panicked or angry callers, and how you educate the public about snake avoidance.

Most interviews start with a brief phone screen, then move to a face-to-face or video interview with one or two people. You may be asked to complete a practical assessment, such as identifying a snake from a photo or demonstrating safe handling with a training aid. The conversation usually moves from your background and licensing to scenario-based questions, then ends with a chance for you to ask questions.

1. Walk me through your process from receiving a call-out to releasing the snake.

Why they ask

This shows whether you have a reliable routine, understand safety priorities and can describe your work clearly.

How to structure your answer

Step-by-step walk-through: start with taking the call and gathering key details, then travel and arrival, safety assessment, species identification, capture method, containment, transport, release site selection, and finally documentation and client education.

Example answer

"When the call comes in, I ask for the location, where the snake was last seen, whether anyone is in immediate danger, and if the snake is still visible. I remind the caller to keep children and pets away and not to approach the snake. On arrival, I put on my gaiters, grab my hook and bag, and do a quick safety scan of the area. I ask the caller to point out where the snake is and confirm the species using visual features and my identification app if needed. Once I know whether it is venomous, I use my hook to guide the snake into a secure bag. I keep the bag closed and place it in a safe spot in my vehicle. For release, I choose a site away from homes, with good cover and water, and I record the GPS coordinates. Back at the office, I log the call and follow up with the client to check they are comfortable and to give them prevention tips."

2. Tell me about a time you had to stay calm while handling a dangerous or distressed animal.

Why they ask

Snake catching can be unpredictable. Employers want to see that you can manage your own reactions and keep the animal and people safe.

How to structure your answer

STAR: describe the situation, the task you had, the action you took to stay calm and handle the animal, and the result.

Example answer

"Last summer I was called to a shed where a large eastern brown snake had become tangled in bird netting. The snake was thrashing and the owner was yelling from the doorway. I took a deep breath, asked the owner to step back and stay quiet, and I slowed my movements right down. I used my hook to gently lift the netting away from the snake's body, section by section, talking to the owner in a steady voice. It took about ten minutes, but I got the snake free without a single strike. I bagged it, relocated it to a nearby reserve, and then sat with the owner to explain why netting is a common trap. The result was a safe outcome for everyone, and the owner later called to say they had removed the rest of the netting."

3. You arrive at a property and the caller says the snake is in a child's bedroom. How do you proceed?

Why they ask

This tests your ability to prioritise safety, make quick decisions and communicate under pressure.

How to structure your answer

Judgement under pressure: assess immediate risk, secure the area, plan your approach, act methodically, and keep the client informed.

Example answer

"First, I ask the caller to get the child out of the room and close the door behind them, putting a towel along the bottom of the door if they can. I tell them not to open the door again until I arrive. When I get there, I confirm the child is safe and away from the room. I put on my gaiters and take my hook and bag. I open the door slowly, checking the floor, furniture and any gaps. If the snake is visible, I use my hook to guide it into the bag. If it is hidden, I carefully move items one at a time, keeping my body behind the hook. Once captured, I secure the bag, remove it from the room, and then speak to the parents about keeping doors closed and checking shoes and bedding. I also give them first aid information just in case."

4. How do you identify whether a snake is venomous, and what equipment do you use for safe capture?

Why they ask

Accurate identification and correct tool use are core technical skills. A wrong call can put you and the client at risk.

How to structure your answer

Explain key identification points first, then describe your equipment and handling technique in order.

Example answer

"I start with the head shape, but I know that is not reliable on its own, so I look at the pupils, the scales, the belly colour and the body shape. For example, many venomous snakes have a diamond-shaped head, but some non-venomous snakes flatten their heads when threatened. I also check the tail and the anal scale. If I am unsure, I treat it as venomous. For capture, I use a snake hook to lift and guide the snake, a snake bag to contain it, and protective gaiters that cover my lower legs. I never free-handle a snake unless I am absolutely certain of the species and have been trained for that specific animal. I also carry a first aid kit and my phone with a species identification app."

5. What steps do you take to ensure you meet state wildlife licensing and safety requirements on every job?

Why they ask

Compliance is non-negotiable. Employers need to know you understand your legal obligations and keep records.

How to structure your answer

List the compliance checks you do before, during and after a call-out, and mention record-keeping.

Example answer

"Before I start, I make sure my state wildlife handling permit is current and that my first aid certificate is up to date. On the job, I follow my safe handling procedure, wear my gaiters and use the correct equipment. I never attempt to handle a species I am not licensed or trained for. After the call, I log the details: date, location, species, release site and any incidents. I keep those records for the required period. I also check my equipment after each use and replace anything that is worn. If I am ever unsure about a regulation, I contact the state fauna authority for advice."

6. How do you handle a client who is panicking or angry about a snake on their property?

Why they ask

Snake call-outs often involve frightened people. Your ability to calm them down makes the job safer and improves the client's experience.

How to structure your answer

Empathy and clear communication: acknowledge their feelings, give simple instructions, keep them informed, and follow up with education.

Example answer

"I start by acknowledging how they feel. I say something like, 'I understand this is frightening, and you did the right thing by calling.' Then I give clear, simple instructions: keep everyone away from the area, close doors if possible, and do not try to move the snake yourself. I keep my voice calm and steady, and I tell them exactly what I am doing as I work. Once the snake is secured, I explain what species it was and why it might have been there. I leave them with a leaflet on snake avoidance and first aid. If they are still upset, I stay a few minutes to answer questions. The goal is for them to feel safe and in control again."