

Trolley Collector interview questions

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What to expect

Trolley Collector interviews are usually short and practical. Managers want to know you are reliable, safe, and comfortable working outdoors in all weather. They may also assess your customer service manner and physical readiness for the role.

- **Process and reliability:** Questions about how you organise your shift, handle peak periods, and maintain punctuality across casual or part-time rosters.
- **Safety and manual handling:** Questions about safe pushing techniques, use of motorised tugs, high-visibility gear, and reporting hazards or damage.
- **Customer service:** Questions about assisting shoppers with loading groceries, answering directions, and representing the store politely.
- **Scenario and judgement:** Questions that put you in a realistic car park situation, such as a broken trolley, bad weather, or a traffic hazard.

The interview is often a one-on-one chat with a store or duty manager, sometimes part of a group session for casual pools. Expect a brief conversation about your availability, then questions on safety, customer service and physical stamina. Some employers include a short walk-through of the car park or a practical demonstration of trolley pushing.

1. Walk me through how you would collect trolleys from the car park on a typical shift.

Why they ask

This shows the interviewer you understand the routine and can work independently.

How to structure your answer

Walk-through: describe your start-of-shift checks, the order you collect bays, how you use equipment, and how you finish the shift.

Example answer

"First I check my high-visibility vest, gloves and two-way radio, and make sure the motorised tug is charged. I start with the bays closest to the store so the entrance stays stocked, then work outward to the far corners. I push rows of up to ten trolleys by hand for short trips, but use the tug for long rows to save strain. Every so often I stop to inspect wheels and frames for damage. If I find a faulty trolley, I move it aside and radio the supervisor. At the end of the shift I do a final sweep of all bays, pick up any rubbish, and return the tug to its charging point."

2. Tell me about a time you had to work in difficult weather conditions.

Why they ask

This tests your resilience and safety awareness outdoors.

How to structure your answer

STAR: describe the situation, the task, the action you took, and the result.

Example answer

"During a wet winter, I was collecting trolleys in heavy rain. The task was to keep the bays clear without slipping or leaving trolleys scattered. I put on my wet-weather gear, checked that my boots had good grip, and used the tug for longer rows so I was not pushing too many at once. I also warned customers near the entrance to watch for wet floors. I kept the bays clear and finished my shift without any incidents, and the store manager thanked me for staying on top of it."

3. You notice a trolley with a broken wheel in the bay. What do you do?

Why they ask

This assesses your judgement, safety mindset and attention to detail.

How to structure your answer

Judgement under pressure: identify the hazard, isolate it, report it, and prevent it from returning to circulation.

Example answer

"I would stop using that trolley straight away. I would move it out of the bay so customers do not take it, and if I have a tag or a piece of tape I would mark it as faulty. Then I would radio my supervisor or take it to the designated repair area. I would also check nearby trolleys for similar damage. The main thing is not to let a broken trolley go back into the store where it could cause an injury or damage groceries."

4. A customer asks for help loading groceries while you are collecting trolleys. How do you respond?

Why they ask

This shows your customer service instincts and ability to balance duties.

How to structure your answer

Customer-first response: acknowledge, assist safely, then return to task.

Example answer

"I would stop what I am doing and help them. I would ask where they would like the bags placed and make sure I am not rushing or risking injury. If they need help with heavy items, I would lift carefully using my legs. Once they are sorted, I would wish them a good day and go back to collecting trolleys. The customer comes first, but I would also keep an eye on the bays so they do not get out of hand."

5. This role involves pushing heavy rows of trolleys for hours. How do you manage your physical stamina and safety?

Why they ask

This checks you understand manual handling and can work safely across a full shift.

How to structure your answer

Practical explanation: describe your warm-up, technique, break habits and how you report fatigue.

Example answer

"I treat it like any physical job. I start with a gentle warm-up and make sure my shoes are supportive. When pushing, I keep my back straight and use my legs, and I never push more trolleys than I can control. I use the motorised tug for long distances. I take my scheduled breaks, drink water, and if I feel pain or fatigue I tell my supervisor rather than pushing through. That way I stay safe and productive for the whole shift."

6. Why do you want to work as a Trolley Collector?

Why they ask

This reveals your motivation and whether you will stick with the role.

How to structure your answer

Concise and honest: link your enjoyment of outdoor work and customer service to the role's daily tasks.

Example answer

"I like being outdoors and staying active, and I take pride in keeping things tidy and safe for customers. I have worked in retail before and I enjoy the team atmosphere. This role suits me because I can see the result of my work at the end of every shift, with clear bays and happy shoppers."

I am reliable with my availability and I am looking for steady casual or part-time hours."