

Finding a Baby Sitter

Finding a babysitter you like and trust has always been a challenge. But if you know the right questions to ask, it does not have to be an overwhelming task. Here are some guidelines to help you choose a babysitter for your children.

The best way is to ask people you know. This way the babysitter will not be a complete stranger, and you will have a better idea about what to expect. Finding someone who has experience caring for children is also important because that person may be better able to anticipate and solve problems, especially if your child is very young.

What qualities and skills should a baby sitter possess?

- first-aid
- trustworthy and responsible
- attentive
- patient
- calm under pressure
- respect for your home and rules
- fondness for children
- willingness to ask for help

Questions you should ask a potential babysitter:

- What fun activities would you do with my child?
- How would you discipline my child?
- How often do you baby-sit?
- How old are the children whom you usually baby-sit?
- Are you comfortable with more than one child at a time?

Try to make your babysitter's job as easy as possible. Always leave emergency and contact numbers near the telephone. Familiarize the sitter with your house and make sure you explain where the first-aid supplies are kept. Provide a list of house rules, both for the children (such as bed times, snacking, and TV) and for the babysitter (such as snacking, phone use, and friends).

Always respect your babysitter's own schedule. Do not stay out too late, and call if you are going to be late getting home. One last, important tip: try to meet before actually hiring someone so that you can see how the babysitter gets along with your child.