



# Interview Tips

A StoryCorps interview is a unique opportunity to find out more about someone in your life. 40 minutes may seem like a long time but the interview may go faster than you think!

Here are some tips to keep in mind when preparing for your interview.



## 01 TIP

**Choose about 10 main questions** for your interview. This gives a broad outline of what you're interested in and where you might want the interview to go.

## 03 TIP

**Start with open-ended questions** that don't assume the answers, letting the storyteller steer you towards what is most important to them. These questions start with "Tell me about..." or "What was it like..." or "How did you feel when...".

## 05 TIP

**Think of it as a conversation**, speak normally, and address the person you are interviewing. There is no right or wrong thing to talk about, as long as it's meaningful to you.

## 07 TIP

Keep in mind that future listeners may not be familiar with specific people and places you mention. **Set up context** and background for the interview where needed with questions like, "Who was Uncle Bill?" "Why was he such an influence on you?"

## 09 TIP

Your facilitator will signal when there are 10 and 5 minutes left in your interview. It can be nice to **plan some reflective questions** as time wraps up. "Looking back, what were the happiest times?" "What advice would you give to me about being a parent?" "What are your hopes for the future?"

## 02 TIP

From this list, **choose a first question** to get you started. You may want to begin at the beginning, with "Where were you born?" or jump to a specific time or topic in that person's life that most interests you, such as military service or parenthood.

## 04 TIP

Be prepared to **ask follow-up questions** or veer from your planned question list if you're curious about something. A memory about work could be followed up with, "What are you most proud of in your career?" You may hear stories you've never heard before.

## 06 TIP

Don't hesitate to **share a favorite story** about the storyteller or memories you shared together as you go along. This can be a time to tell your interview partner how much they mean to you or share something you've always wanted to tell them.

## 08 TIP

Questions that **encourage vivid details** can be surprising and make the interview special. "Can you paint a picture in words of your block?" or "What are some images that stand out when you think about your grandfather?"

## 10 TIP

Most of all, relax and **have fun**. Enjoy the opportunity to share the stories, thoughts, and the emotional closeness that comes with this experience.