OSCE checklist for ABG sampling

An OSCE checklist for ABG sampling covers why the sample is needed, safety checks, the puncture, pressure afterwards and getting the result read. This is our own practice list.

The checklist, step by step

1. Wash your hands, introduce yourself, confirm identity and explain why the sample is needed.
2. Gain consent, and ask about bleeding problems, blood thinners and allergies.
3. Record what oxygen the patient is breathing, and wait for a steady state if the plan allows.
4. Gather and check the equipment: the syringe, needle, gloves, a sharps bin, swabs, a label and the sample route to the analyser.
5. Wash your hands and put on gloves.
6. Position the wrist, find the artery by feel, and check that the circulation to the hand is adequate using the method your course teaches.
7. Clean the skin and let it dry. Offer local anaesthetic unless it is an emergency.
8. Insert the needle, let the pulse fill the syringe, then withdraw.
9. Press firmly over the site until bleeding has stopped. Press for longer if the patient takes blood thinners.
10. Remove air, seal and label the sample, and get it analysed promptly.
11. Dispose of sharps safely, take off your gloves and wash your hands.
12. Check the site, read the result with the oxygen record, and act or escalate.

What candidates commonly forget

- Recording the oxygen the patient was breathing.
- Asking about blood thinners.
- Pressing long enough.
- Labelling and getting the sample read.

- Safe sharps disposal.

How to use this list

This is our own practice checklist. Exam bodies mark in their own way. Use it to build a routine, then say each step aloud as you do it. You can also practise with an AI patient on this site, and try one station free with no sign-up. For a general station frame, see the general OSCE checklist.

Common questions

Why do I record the oxygen?

The result only makes sense next to what the patient was breathing. The British Thoracic Society guideline sets out how to use oxygen safely.

Is a sample done the same way everywhere?

No. Local policy sets the equipment and checks. Follow what your course teaches.

Is this a marking sheet?

No. It is our own list for practice.

Sources

- British Thoracic Society: Guideline for oxygen use in healthcare and emergency settings
- WHO guidelines on drawing blood: best practices in phlebotomy
- WHO: Hand hygiene

Checked 2026-11-13. Fees and rules change, so confirm them with the regulator before you book.