# OSCE checklist for lower limb examination

An OSCE checklist for lower limb examination covers both the nerves and the blood supply: inspection, tone, power, reflexes, sensation, pulses, and finally walking. This is our own practice list.

## The checklist, step by step

1. Wash your hands, introduce yourself, confirm identity, explain and gain consent. Offer a chaperone.
2. Expose the legs from the groin to the feet, keeping the patient covered.
3. Look at both legs for scars, swelling, wasting, skin colour, ulcers and the feet.
4. Feel the temperature, then the capillary refill and the pulses: femoral, popliteal, dorsalis pedis and posterior tibial.
5. Test tone, then power in the main muscle groups. Compare sides.
6. Test reflexes at the knee and ankle and the plantar response.
7. Test sensation, and compare both legs.
8. Test coordination with heel to shin.
9. Look at the joints: hip, knee and ankle, active and then passive.
10. Watch the patient walk, turn and walk back.
11. Say that you would examine the back and the abdomen, and check blood pressure.
12. Thank the patient, wash your hands and summarise your findings.

## What candidates commonly forget

- Looking between the toes and at the soles.
- Checking all four leg pulses.
- Testing sensation at the foot in a patient with diabetes.
- Comparing both legs.

- Asking the patient to walk.

## 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

### Is the lower limb examination neurological or vascular?

It can be either, or both. Read the task. Many candidates do the nerve examination and then add the pulses and skin.

### Why look at the feet in an OSCE?

Diabetes can damage the nerves and blood supply of the feet. NICE guidance on diabetic foot problems covers foot checks.

### Is this a marking sheet?

No. It is our own list for practice.

## Sources


- NICE: Diabetic foot problems (NG19)
- NICE: Peripheral arterial disease (CG147)
- NHS: Osteoarthritis
- WHO: Hand hygiene


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