OSCE checklist for suturing

An OSCE checklist for suturing starts with the wound, not the needle: assess, get consent, check tetanus, numb, clean, close, dress and give advice. This is our own practice list.

The checklist, step by step

1. Wash your hands, introduce yourself, confirm identity and ask how the injury happened.
2. Assess the wound: depth, position, dirt, objects, and any damage to nerves, tendons or blood supply.
3. Ask about allergies, bleeding problems, medicines and tetanus protection. Explain and gain consent.
4. Decide whether suturing is right. Some wounds are not closed, and need a different plan.
5. Prepare the equipment and a sterile field. Wash your hands and put on gloves.
6. Give local anaesthetic and check that it has worked.
7. Clean and irrigate the wound, and look again for dirt.
8. Close with the stitch type your course teaches, passing the needle at the same depth on each side so that the edges meet and turn slightly outwards.
9. Tie secure knots, and trim the ends.
10. Dispose of the needle in a sharps bin and count the needles and swabs.
11. Dress the wound, and give aftercare advice: keep it clean, signs of infection, when to return and when stitches come out.
12. Record the procedure.

What candidates commonly forget

- Checking tetanus protection.
- Checking the nerves and tendons first.
- Testing that the numbing has worked.

- Safe sharps handling.
- Aftercare and removal advice.

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

How do I decide whether to stitch?

Look at the wound, its age and how clean it is. The NHS lists the wounds that need urgent care, such as bites and wounds with dirt that remains.

Where is tetanus guidance?

In the UK, the UKHSA Green Book has a chapter on tetanus, including tetanus-prone wounds. Other countries publish their own guidance.

Is this a marking sheet?

No. It is our own list for practice.

Sources

- NHS: Cuts and grazes
- UKHSA: Tetanus, the Green Book chapter 30
- WHO: Hand hygiene

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