



Green Card Marriage Interview Questions Checklist



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Introduction

For most immigrants, the permanent residence interview is the end of a long, stressful, and anxiety-ridden journey.

In some cases, the journey has taken over 20 years. In many, the wait has been 10 years or longer. In almost all of them, the date of the interview is a nerve-whacking experience where both husband and wife have to deal with knots in their stomachs, sweaty palms, and . . .

A distrustful immigration officer.

An officer who, with a stroke of a pen, has the ability to put a serious dent into a couple's life plans.

Every year more than 20,000 immigrants and their spouses go through this process.

Every year thousands are denied the chance to live happily ever after with the love of their lives, many of whom are then permanently separated from their children and extended family members.

Often, the problem is due to careless preparation. Faulty paperwork and inadequate evidence lead the government to schedule in-depth questioning of the husband and wife, separately, concerning the authentic nature of the marriage.

The numbers and types of questions that can be asked are nearly endless.

As a green card attorney, I've met couples who, despite a genuine marriage, were not able to convince government officers that their union was legitimate..

They failed to take the permanent residence interview process seriously enough. They

failed to review their life history together in advance and had difficulties remembering certain facts about their relationship.

Don't let that happen to you.

That's why I have put together this checklist.

The 250 questions outlined here are only a tiny sprinkling of what you may be asked.

But they are more than sufficient to get you ready for the type of matters you will be forced to recall.

Now it's up to you. Get to work and start studying.

To Your Immigration Success!

Carlos A. Batara

How You Met

- When and where did you and your spouse first meet?
- How were you introduced?
- Who first spoke to whom?
- Why were you there? What about your spouse?
- Were you there with any other people? Who?
- Was your spouse there with any other people? Who?
- Did you make arrangements to meet again?
- Did you exchange phone numbers or email addresses?
- When did you meet next?
- Where were you living at the time? Where was your spouse living?
- Where did you go for your first date?
- When did your relationship turn romantic?
- Who proposed to whom? Where were you at the time?
- How long was it before you decided to get married?
- When did you decide to get married? Where were you at the time?
- Why did you decide to have a long (or short) engagement?
- Did you live together before marriage?
- Did your parents approve of the match? Why or why not?
- Did your spouse's parents approve of the match? Why or why not?



Your Wedding & Marriage



- On the day of your wedding, where did you wake up? What about your spouse?
- Where was your wedding held?
- How did you get to the wedding? What about your spouse?
- How many people attended your wedding?
- Were there any bridesmaids and groomsmen? Who were they?
- Who were the witnesses to the ceremony?
- Who was present at your wedding?
- Did both of your parents attend the wedding?
- Did both of your spouse's parents attend the wedding?
- Did any of your family members attend? If so, who?

- Did any of your spouse's family members attend? If so, who?
- Did you exchange wedding rings?
- Where did you purchase these rings? Did you and your spouse purchase them together or separately?
- Did you have a reception after the ceremony?
- If you didn't have a reception, what did you do after the wedding ceremony?
- If you did have a reception, where was the reception held?
- Could you please describe the reception?
- Do you have photos of the wedding ceremony and/or reception?
- Did the bride change clothes for the reception?
- What kind of cake or other food was served?
- Was liquor served? What kind?
- Did anyone get drunk or embarrass themselves at the reception? Who? Describe what happened.
- Did you leave before your guests?
- What time did you and your spouse leave the reception?
- Was there music or other entertainment?
- What did you do after the wedding? Where did you go?
- Did you go on a honeymoon? When did you leave?
- Where did you go? For how long? How did you get there? If you flew, what airlines?

First Home Together

- When did you move in together? (Before or after marriage)
- Was it a house (single family, condominium, townhouse, etc.) or apartment?
- How many floors were in the house/apartment building where you live?
- What color was the outside of the house/apartment?
- How many rooms did it have?
- How many bedrooms did it have?
- How many bathrooms did it have?
- How much was rent or mortgage?
- Did you have cable television?
- Where did you get the furniture? Was it already there, did you buy it, was it a gift, or did it come from your or your spouse's previous residence?
- If brought to the house or apartment, describe how it was transported.



Your Current Home

- When did you move into your current residence?
- Do you live in a house (single family, condominium, townhouse, etc.) or apartment?
- How many floors are in the house/apartment building where you live?
- What color is the outside of the house/apartment?
- How many rooms does it have?
- How many bedrooms does it have?
- How many bathrooms does it have?
- How many sinks are there in your house/apartment in total?
- How many toilets are there in your house/apartment in total?
- How many showers are there in your house/apartment in total?
- How much is your current rent/mortgage payment?
- What day of the month is your payment due?
- How do you make your mortgage payment? Check, automatic debit, cash? By mail or in person?
- Do you pay on the same date each month?
- Do you have curtains or window coverings in your living room?
- What color are they?
- Do you have curtains or window coverings in your kitchen?
- What color are they?
- Do you have curtains or window coverings in your bedroom?
- What color are they?
- Is there a carpet in your living room?
- What color is it?
- Is there a carpet in your bedroom?
- What color is it?
- Where did you get your living room furniture? Was it already there, did you buy it, was it a gift, or did it come from your or your spouse's previous residence?
- If brought to the house or apartment, describe how it was transported.

- Where did you get your kitchen furniture?
- Was it already there, did you buy it, was it a gift, or did it come from your or your spouse's previous residence?
- If brought to the house or apartment, describe how it was transported.
- Where did you get your bedroom furniture? Was it already there, did you buy it, was it a gift, or did it come from your or your spouse's previous residence?
- If brought to the house or apartment, describe how it was transported.
- Is your sofa a regular one or does it have a pull-out bed? If the latter, have you ever had guests sleep there?
- Who cleans the house?
- Do you have any pets? What kinds (such as dog, cat, fish etc.)? Describe them.
- Do they have names? If so, what are the names? Who feeds them? Who walks them or cleans their cage, kitty litter box, etc?



General Information



- What is your name, address and date of birth?
- What is the name, address and date of birth of your spouse?
- What did you do for your last birthday?
- What did you do for your spouse's last birthday?
- What did you give each other for your last birthdays?
- How often and what time do you call each other by phone on a daily basis?
- Which holidays do you celebrate together?
- Which financial matters are shared, and who primarily supports the other financially?
- What is your phone number at work?
- What is your spouse's phone number at work?
- Do you and/or your spouse attend regular religious services?
- Where do you and/or your spouse attend these services?
- What is your favorite restaurant? What is your spouse's favorite restaurant?

Employment



- Where do you work?
- What are your working hours?
- What is your annual salary?
- Are you paid weekly, every two weeks, twice a month, or monthly?
- What is the name of your manager/boss at work?
- What time do you arrive home from work?
- What days of the week do you work?
- Where does your spouse work?
- What are your spouse's working hours?
- Do you know your spouse's salary? If yes, how much is it?
- Is your spouse paid weekly, every two weeks, twice a month, or monthly?
- What is the name of your spouse's manager/boss at work?
- What time does your spouse arrive home from work?
- What days of the week does your spouse work?
- What is your spouse's phone number at work?
- Where does your spouse work?
- What are your spouse's working hours?
- Do you know your spouse's salary? If yes, how much is it?
- Is your spouse paid weekly, every two weeks, twice a month, or monthly?
- What is the name of your spouse's manager/boss at work?

- What time does your spouse arrive home from work?
- What days of the week does your spouse work?

Your Kitchen



- Who goes grocery shopping? Where?
- How often does he/she go grocery shopping? How does he/she get there?
- What do you eat for breakfast? Your spouse?
- Who makes breakfast?
- What is your favorite breakfast meal? What is your spouse's favorite breakfast meal?
- Do you drink coffee in the morning? If so, do you use cream and/or sugar?
- Does your spouse drink coffee in the morning? If so, does your spouse use cream and/or sugar?
- Do you have a microwave oven?
- If you are standing at and facing your kitchen sink, where is the microwave oven?
- Is your microwave stationary or does it have a revolving plate?
- What are your most favorite foods? What are your spouse's most favorite foods?
- What are your least favorite foods? What are your spouse's least favorite foods?
- Is there a particular food that you and your spouse eat every week? What is it?

- Who does most of the cooking?
- Do you have a barbecue grill? Do you or your spouse use it? Is it gas or charcoal?
- How many times a week on average do you and your spouse eat out?
- Where is the garbage kept in your home?
- On what days is the garbage picked up?

Your Bedroom

- If you are lying in bed, who sleeps on what side of the bed?
- Do you have carpet in your bedroom? What color is it?
- Where do you keep your clothes? What about your spouse?
- How is your bedroom closet split up?
- Where do you keep your clean underwear? What about your spouse?
- Do you and your spouse use birth control? What kind?
- What size is your bed (twin, queen, king)?
- Do you have a regular mattress, futon, or waterbed?
- Do either of you read or watch television before going to sleep?
- Do you have lamps next to your bed?
- Who gets up first? At what time?



- Do you or your spouse set up the alarm clock to get up in the morning?
- Have you ever had an argument that resulted in one of you sleeping in another room? Who, and in which room?
- Do you leave any lights on when you go to sleep at night?
- How many windows are there in your bedroom?

- Where do you keep your toothbrushes?
- What color is your toothbrush? What color is your spouse's toothbrush?
- Does your spouse use a regular toothbrush or an electrical one?
- What kind of toothpaste do each of you use?
- Where are the bathroom towels kept?
- Where do you keep the dirty clothes?
- Do you have any scars or tattoos? If so, where on the body? What do they look like?
- Does your spouse have any scars or tattoos? If so, where on the body? What do they look like?

Technology



- Who keeps the garage door opener in the car?
- How many cars do you have? What make, color, and year are they?
- Which car do you normally use?
- Which car does your spouse normally use?
- Do you have an insurance policy listing your spouse as the beneficiary? (If so, did you bring a copy?)
- Do you have a garage? How many cars fit into it? Who parks in it? Do you use a garage door opener?
- How many televisions are in your house/apartment? In what rooms are they located?
- Are all the televisions the same size?
- Do you watch TV shows together or separately?

- Name one TV show that you watch together.
- In which room, do you watch television the most? Your spouse?
- Do you watch the news? Your spouse? What news station?
- How many telephones are in your house? Where are they?
- Do your telephones have an answering machine? Who checks the messages?
- Whose voice is on the answering machine?
- Do both of you have cell phones? Do you have a family plan on the phones?
- Do you have a VCR? What brand? Do you use it only to watch videos, or do you record any TV shows?
- Do you have a DVD player? What brand?
- Do you rent movies? Where do you rent movies from?
- Do you listen to the radio? What station(s)?
- Does your spouse listen to the radio? What station(s)?
- Do you have cable TV or satellite dish?
- Who is the cable/dish provider in your house?
- Do you listen to music? What kind of equipment do you have (Walkman, iPod, etc.)?
- Does your spouse listen to music? What kind of equipment does he/she have (Walkman, iPod etc.)?
- Do you have a still camera? Is it a digital camera or the one with the roll?
- Who uses the camera most often? You or your spouse?
- Do you or your husband take pictures at family occasions or during sightseeing?
- Do you have a camcorder? What brand is it?

Special Days And Vacations

- What religious holidays do you celebrate together?
- What is the most important holiday of the year in your household? Where do you typically celebrate it?
- What did the two of you do on the last New Year's Eve? Fourth of July? Thanksgiving? Christmas?
- How did you celebrate your most recent wedding anniversary?
- Have you and your spouse gone to see a movie (or any other form of entertainment) lately?
- When and what did you see?
- When was the last vacation you and your spouse took together?
- Did you and your spouse go anywhere together at that time?
- Where did you go? How did you get there?
- Do you have the photos from your last vacation together? Did you bring them?



Joint Financial Records

- Do you have any joint bank accounts? Where? What kind of accounts (checking, savings, money market etc)? Did you bring copies? Or proof like a bank letter or cancelled checks?
- Who takes care of paying the bills? Which bills are paid by check or which are paid online?
- Did you file a joint tax return this year? Did you bring a copy?
- Do you jointly own any property? What property? Did you bring a copy of the ownership?
- Do you have an insurance policy listing your spouse as the beneficiary? Did you bring a copy?
- Does your spouse have an insurance policy listing you as the beneficiary? Did you bring a copy?
- Do you have any utility bills where both of you are listed together? Did you bring copies?
- Do you have receipts from items you have purchased together? Did you bring copies?
- What other documentation do you have to prove that you are living together as a married couple?



Family And Friends



- How many brothers and sisters does your spouse have? What are their names?
- Who is your best friend? Who is your spouse's best friend?
- Do you know your spouse's family members? Which ones?
- Have you met each other's parents?
- How often do you see each other's parents?
- How do each of you get along with your parents-in-law?
- When did you see your parents the last time? For how long? Where?
- When did you see your spouse's parents the last time? For how long? Where?
- Do you buy gifts for your in-laws on important holidays? Do they buy gifts for you?
- Which members of your family do you see frequently? When was the last time you saw them? What did you do together?
- Which members of your spouse's family do you see frequently? When was the last time you saw them? What did you do together?

Children

- How many children do you have together with your spouse?
- What are the names, birth dates and birth places (hospital name, city) of each child?
- Which children were normal delivery and which ones were c-section?
- What is the name of your oldest child's best friend?
- Who prepares and/or packs the lunch for your children?
- What is your usual babysitter's name? What are the day care hours?
- What is the name of your oldest child's teacher?
- Who picks up the children at school?
- What are their least favorite foods?
- Which children (if any) still use a car seat?
- What are the favorite toys/activities of your children?
- What character were your children for last year's Halloween?
- If you have children from a previous marriage, has your spouse ever met them?
- If your spouse has children from a previous marriage, what are their names, ages, where do they live, and where do they go to school?



Just Before The Interview

- Did you go to work yesterday?
- If so, at what time did you leave the house and return?
- Did your spouse go to work yesterday?
- If so, at what time did your spouse leave the house and return?
- Did you eat dinner together last night? What did you have? What did your spouse have?
- Did anyone else have dinner with you last night?
- Who cooked the dinner last night? What time was dinner served?
- Did you watch TV after dinner? What shows did you watch?
- Who went to bed first?
- At what time did you go to bed?
- Did you have the AC, fan, or heater on?
- Who woke up first this morning? Did an alarm clock go off?
- Did you or your spouse take a shower this morning?
- Did you have breakfast? Where and what did you eat?
- Did your spouse have breakfast? With you? What did your spouse eat?
- Did you come to the interview together? Who drove?



Conclusion

"Just marry a U.S. citizen and everything will be okay."

Whenever I hear that claim, I cringe.

It's true. Marriage to a U.S. citizen is one of the fastest ways to qualify for permanent residency.

But it's not just marriage that counts.

Your marriage must be legal and bona fide, issues that I discuss in more detail in this free guide: *Permanent Residency Through Love And Marriage: Eight Important Tips*.

U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS) officers are trained to be suspicious about immigrants who file to adjust their status through a husband or wife.

According to USCIS, approximately one-third of spousal visa petitions are based on fraudulent marriages.

Strict standards and rigorous review await all applicants for green cards via marriage to a U.S. citizen (or a lawful permanent resident).

Clients who embark on this final step of their journey without the assistance of a lawyer assume an unnecessary risk - the risk of being unable to prove a history of togetherness - especially in unusual living arrangements, such as:

- The U.S. citizen spouse has kept the family home in her own name alone because he has children from a previous marriage whom he wants to inherit the property.
- There is a 20 - 30 year difference in the ages of the husband and wife.
- The couple lives apart in different cities or states on weekdays due to their work commitments.

For over two decades, my office has handled green card matters for immigrants from

more than 80 countries. We've learned many cases that appear simple on the surface to the lay person often disguise complicated legal issues.

USCIS is not in the business of giving you a green card. Rather, you must earn it. You must prove that you have met all the requirements for permanent residency.

One final point before closing. This guide is not intended for those who are trying to perpetuate a fraud, and marrying for the sole purpose of gaining immigration benefits is a fraud. If you are thinking about taking such dishonest actions, I truly hope you're exposed and caught in your web of deceit. For too long, many honest, hard-working immigrants and their families have suffered because of stereotypes bolstered by such negative behaviors.

In reality, this guide can only help those who are legitimately married, with a true love commitment to each other, avoid careless miscues.

Assuming that's you, may eternal happiness be yours together.

About The Author

Carlos Batara is an immigration attorney with offices in California and Arizona, focused on helping immigrants win permanent residence and earn citizenship through a wide variety of immigration programs.

His clients have come from over 80 different countries.

For over 20 years, Carlos has specialized in immigration court cases and assisted immigrants with deportation defense, immigration appeals, and HARD cases.

Carlos is a graduate of Harvard Law School and earned dual degrees in International Relations and Economics from the University of Southern California.

He is a past chairperson of the American Bar Association's Immigration Law Committee, Solo and Small Firm Division.

Carlos is a strong advocate of immigrants' rights and cultural diversity. His father was an immigrant from the Philippines and his mother, a U.S. citizen, brought Mexican, Native American, Spanish, Greek, and Turkish roots to his upbringing.

An outspoken critic of politically-charged and poorly-reasoned immigration policies and laws, he is the author of Immigration Law, Policy, And Politics, a popular blog covering all things immigration .

His website can be found at www.bataraimmigrationlaw.com .





Take The Next Step

Are you ready to book your personalized strategy
and planning consultation session?

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