



# OSCE Checklist: Vaginal Swabs

Introduction		
1	Gather equipment	
2	Wash your hands and don PPE if appropriate	
3	Introduce yourself to the patient including your name and role	
4	Confirm the patient's name and date of birth	
5	Explain what the procedure will involve using patient-friendly language	
6	Explain the need for a chaperone	
7	Gain consent to proceed with taking vaginal swabs	
8	Ask the patient if they have any pain before taking vaginal swabs	
9	Ask the patient to remove their underwear for the procedure and provide them with privacy whilst they get undressed	
Vulval inspection		
10	Don gloves (if not already wearing some) and position the patient in the modified lithotomy position	
11	Inspect the vulva	
Inserting the speculum		
12	Re-check that the patient is happy to continue with the procedure	
13	Use your left hand (index finger and thumb) to separate the labia	
14	Gently insert the speculum sideways (blades closed, angled downwards and backwards)	
15	Once inserted, rotate the speculum back 90° (so that the handle is facing upwards)	
16	Open the speculum blades until an optimal view of the cervix is achieved	
17	Tighten the locking nut to fix the position of the blades	
Visualising the cervix		
18	Inspect the cervix	
Taking the vaginal swabs		
19	Pick up the swab's sample tube using your dominant hand and pass it to your non-dominant hand	
20	Remove the lid of the sample tube using your dominant hand and place in the tray	
21	Pick up the swab itself with your dominant hand and take the relevant samples	
22	Place the used swab back into its tube, which should still be in your non-dominant hand and tighten the lid	
23	Place the completed swab into the tray	
Removing the speculum		
24	Loosen the locking nut on the speculum and partially close the blades	

<b>25</b>	Rotate the speculum 90°, back to its original insertion orientation	
<b>26</b>	Gently remove the speculum, inspecting the walls of the vagina as you do so	
<b>27</b>	Re-cover the patient and explain the examination is complete	
<b>28</b>	Dispose of the used equipment into a clinical waste bin	
<b>To complete the procedure...</b>		
<b>29</b>	Label the samples with the relevant details	
<b>30</b>	Thank the patient for their time	
<b>31</b>	Advise the patient that they'll be contacted with results via their preferred method (e.g. face to face or text message)	
<b>32</b>	Dispose of PPE appropriately and wash your hands	
<b>33</b>	Document the procedure in the medical notes including the details of the chaperone	
<b>34</b>	Send the vaginal swabs to the lab for processing	
<b>35</b>	Suggest further assessments and investigations (e.g. urinalysis, abdominal examination, bimanual vaginal examination)	

Read the full guide at  
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