

System Design Interview Preparation Checklist

Your Complete Pre-Interview Review Guide

Core Concepts (check off your review)

- | | |
|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Scalability patterns | <input type="checkbox"/> CAP theorem |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Caching strategies | <input type="checkbox"/> Consistency models |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Database sharding | <input type="checkbox"/> Rate limiting |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Load balancing | |

Practice Problem Categories (timed drills)

- | | |
|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> URL shorteners | <input type="checkbox"/> Search engines |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Rate limiters | <input type="checkbox"/> File storage |
| <input type="checkbox"/> News feeds | <input type="checkbox"/> Notification systems |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Chat systems | |

Interview Framework Steps (run this sequence)

- | | |
|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Requirement clarification | <input type="checkbox"/> Deep dive areas |
| <input type="checkbox"/> API design | <input type="checkbox"/> Scaling discussion |
| <input type="checkbox"/> High-level architecture | <input type="checkbox"/> Trade-off analysis |

Common Pitfalls to Avoid

- Jumping to solutions without requirements
- Over-engineering the first version
- Not explaining trade-offs out loud
- Spending too long on one area
- Not practicing verbally / out loud

Day-Before Checklist

- Review key patterns (caching, sharding, queues, rate limits)
- Practice one timed problem (45 minutes)
- Prepare 2-3 questions for the interviewer
- Get good sleep and arrive early (or set up your environment)