

Self-Study Readiness Assessment

Evaluate Your Preparation Path in 15 Questions

SECTION 1: EXPERIENCE & KNOWLEDGE (5 questions)

1. Have you designed distributed systems in production?

- Yes (+3) Somewhat (+1) No (0)

2. Do you understand CAP theorem and can explain trade-offs?

- Yes (+2) Somewhat (+1) No (0)

3. Have you participated in architecture design reviews?

- Regularly (+3) Occasionally (+1) Never (0)

4. Do you have 7+ years of engineering experience?

- Yes (+2) 4–6 years (+1) <4 years (0)

5. Can you explain when to use different database types without looking it up?

- Yes (+2) Somewhat (+1) No (0)

SECTION 2: LEARNING STYLE & RESOURCES (5 questions)

6. Have you successfully taught yourself complex technical topics before?

- Yes (+3) Somewhat (+1) No (0)

7. Do you have access to engineers who can review your designs?

- Yes (+3) Occasionally (+1) No (0)

8. Are you comfortable learning without structured deadlines?

- Yes (+2) Somewhat (+1) No (0)

9. Do you have a track record of completing self-study projects?

- Yes (+2) Somewhat (+1) No (0)

10. Can you identify good resources vs poor ones quickly?

- Yes (+2) Somewhat (+1) No (0)

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SECTION 3: TIMELINE & STAKES (5 questions)

11. How long until your interviews?

4+ months (+3)

2–3 months (+1)

<2 months (0)

12. How important are these interviews to your career?

Practice (+3)

Important (+1)

Critical (0)

13. Can you dedicate 10–15 hours weekly to study?

Yes (+2)

5–10 hours (+1)

<5 hours (0)

14. Are you interviewing opportunistically or for specific roles?

Opportunistic (+2)

Specific (+1)

Urgent (0)

15. Can you afford to fail and reapply in 6 months?

Yes (+2)

Prefer not (+1)

No (0)

SCORING GUIDE

Total Score (sum all points):

____ / 45

36–45 points: Self-Study Recommended — you have the experience, resources, and timeline.

25–35 points: Hybrid Approach — self-study + paid mocks or focused feedback.

0–24 points: Structured Course Recommended — your situation favors built-in feedback & pacing.

Reminder: Be honest. A lower score doesn't mean you're "bad" — it means you need more structure, feedback, or time to avoid costly interview misses.