

System Design Interview Anxiety Recognition Checklist

Use this tool to build self-awareness during practice sessions

1. Physical Warning Signs

- Elevated heart rate or palpitations
- Shallow or rapid breathing
- Tension in shoulders, neck, or jaw
- Feeling warm or sweating
- Dry mouth or difficulty swallowing

2. Cognitive Warning Signs

- Thoughts racing or speeding up
- Difficulty finishing sentences coherently
- Awareness that you are talking too fast
- Trouble tracking multiple ideas simultaneously
- Feeling mentally foggy or slow

System Design Interview Anxiety Recognition Checklist

Use this tool to build self-awareness during practice sessions

3. Behavioral Warning Signs

- Drawing components without explaining them
- Asking questions you do not need answers to
- Defending choices before they are challenged
- Jumping between topics without transitions
- Over-explaining trivial details

4. Brief Response

When you notice 3+ signs above, pause and take three slow breaths. This is anxiety activating, not evidence of poor performance.