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# Cracking The Coding Interview: 150 Programming Questions And Solutions



## Synopsis

Now in the 5th edition, *Cracking the Coding Interview* gives you the interview preparation you need to get the top software developer jobs. This is a deeply technical book and focuses on the software engineering skills to ace your interview. The book is over 500 pages and includes 150 programming interview questions and answers, as well as other advice. The full list of topics are as follows:

- The Interview Process** This section offers an overview on questions are selected and how you will be evaluated. What happens when you get a question wrong? When should you start preparing, and how? What language should you use? All these questions and more are answered.
- Behind the Scenes** Learn what happens behind the scenes during your interview, how decisions really get made, who you interview with, and what they ask you. Companies covered include Google, , Yahoo, Microsoft, Apple and Facebook.
- Special Situations** This section explains the process for experience candidates, Program Managers, Dev Managers, Testers / SDETs, and more. Learn what your interviewers are looking for and how much code you need to know.
- Before the Interview** In order to ace the interview, you first need to get an interview. This section describes what a software engineer's resume should look like and what you should be doing well before your interview.
- Behavioral Preparation** Although most of a software engineering interview will be technical, behavioral questions matter too. This section covers how to prepare for behavioral questions and how to give strong, structured responses.
- Technical Questions (+ 5 Algorithm Approaches)** This section covers how to prepare for technical questions (without wasting your time) and teaches actionable ways to solve the trickiest algorithm problems. It also teaches you what exactly "good coding" is when it comes to an interview.

**150 Programming Questions and Answers** This section forms the bulk of the book. Each section opens with a discussion of the core knowledge and strategies to tackle this type of question, diving into exactly how you break down and solve it. Topics covered include:

- Arrays and Strings
- Linked Lists
- Stacks and Queues
- Trees and Graphs
- Bit Manipulation
- Brain Teasers
- Mathematics and Probability
- Object-Oriented Design
- Recursion and Dynamic Programming
- Sorting and Searching
- Scalability and Memory Limits
- Testing
- C and C++
- Java
- Databases
- Threads and Locks

For the widest degree of readability, the solutions are almost entirely written with Java (with the exception of C / C++ questions). A link is provided with the book so that you can download, compile, and play with the solutions yourself.

**Changes from the Fourth Edition:** The fifth edition includes over 200 pages of new content, bringing the book from 300 pages to over 500 pages. Major revisions were done to almost every solution, including a number of alternate solutions added. The introductory chapters were massively expanded, as were the opening of each of the chapters under Technical Questions. In addition, 24 new questions were

added. Cracking the Coding Interview, Fifth Edition is the most expansive, detailed guide on how to ace your software development / programming interviews.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

First things first: this book helped me get multiple offers, and I recently accepted a job at a top-name developer. My education is in computer science, and I have been writing software for about 10 years, but that's not enough for interviews these days. They will grill you repeatedly with varied problems, and see how you handle the pressure. I picked up this book mid-way through my interview process for a handful of software jobs. While I am confident in my ability to interview well from a personality perspective, the technical parts of the interview have always stressed me out, and frankly, I'd gotten a little cynical about the whole process. The problems in the book are cool, but you can find plenty of problems for free online. It's really everything \*around\* the problems in this book that make it great. The book starts by explaining the "why" of technical interviews, the peripheral stuff, such as how to dress, how to practice for non-technical questions, how to break down problems, how to write good code, and how to respond to rejection and acceptance. Then it breaks down technical problems into a series of categories, such various data structures (arrays, trees/graphs, linked lists, etc), object oriented design, and mathematics and probability. What helped me more than anything, though, was the breakdown of the "why" of technical problems. In one of my successful interviews, I was presented two purely mathematical physics problems. In both cases, I knew generally how the solution would work, but in one case, I couldn't remember the

formula, and in the other I knew the principle of the algorithm, but not the execution.

I respect this book for being jam packed with lots of info and no filler. It's very well-written, well-organized, and having authored many documents myself, I can tell you that I couldn't have done a better job! All that aside, I gave it 3 stars (instead of 5) because I had some significant issues with the content. I'd recommend skimming/ignoring everything in this book but the code examples. The code examples/exercises are where you'll find the most value in this book. If you're interested in my personal issues with the content, read on:<sup>1</sup>. The author presents her claims as if she's worldly, having worked for Microsoft, Google, et al. I simply didn't feel this book was very "real-world". I've been consulting for nearly 2 decades, have interviewed dozens of people, and have thus been on both sides of the interview many, many times. In all that time, I never witnessed some of the experiences/conditions that this book pretty much guarantees you'll encounter. Some of her advice is simply illogical and makes no sense. I'm not saying she's giving bad info, and the material is presented very well. I'm simply recommending you take what she says with a grain of salt.<sup>2</sup> The code style isn't the best. I hesitate to judge here because, not only have I seen SO much worse, but because well-written code doesn't always fit nicely into books. Sometimes everything gets crammed into tight, hard to read, crappy code statements with poor formatting. However, this is THE book (if there ever was a case to be made) that should have made space. Either that or the author simply doesn't care about code style. Then again, she may think her code looks wonderful. It's all perspective. Just wanted to include a warning that, given 2 candidates and one write clean code vs.

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