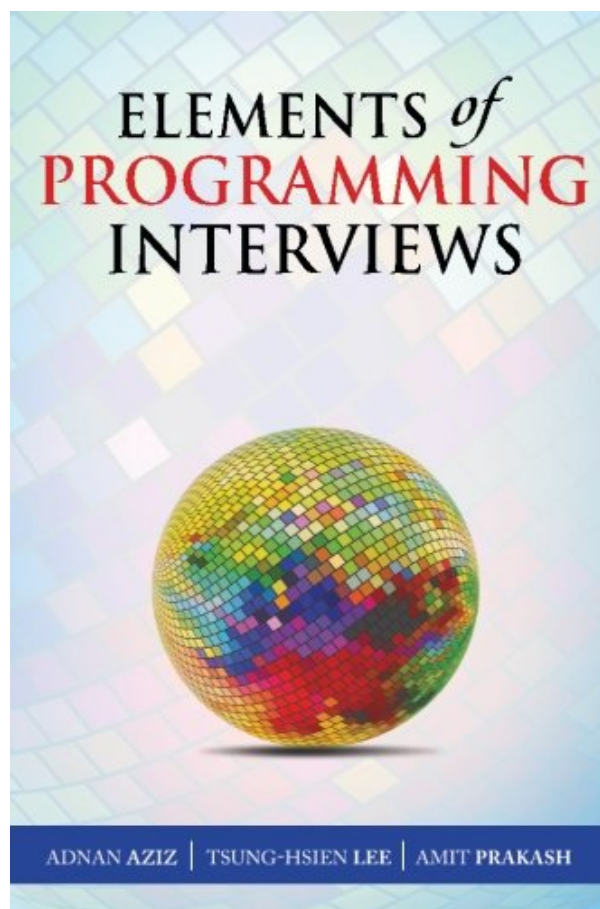


**ELEMENTS OF PROGRAMMING
INTERVIEWS: THE INSIDERS' GUIDE BY
ADNAN AZIZ, TSUNG-HSIEN LEE, AMIT
PRAKASH**



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Review

"A practical, fun approach to computer science fundamentals, as seen through the lens of common programming interview questions."

Jeff Atwood / Co-founder, Stack Overflow and Discourse

From the Author

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The Java version of EPI is available on Amazon! Search for Elements of Programming Interview in Java, or use the short link bit.ly/epijava This is the C++ version.

Before you buy this book, please first head over to our sample page - elementsofprogramminginterviews.com/sample

The sampler should give you a very good idea of the quality and style of our book. In particular, be sure you are comfortable with the level and with our C++ coding style.

Solutions include code snippets which are primarily in C++. Programs concerned with concurrency are in Java. Complete programs are available at epibook.github.io. Java versions of the C++ programs in the book can be found at the website.

Since different candidates have different time constraints, EPI includes a study guide with several scenarios, ranging from weekend Hackathon to semester long preparation with a recommended a subset of problems for each scenario.

All problems are classified in terms of their difficulty level and include many variants to help you apply what you have learned more widely.

All problems includes hints for readers who get stuck. This simulates what you will face in the real interview.

The version being sold by Amazon itself is always current. Some resellers may have older versions, especially if they sell used copies.

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- Published on: 2012-10-11
- Original language: English
- Number of items: 1
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- Binding: Paperback
- 530 pages

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Most helpful customer reviews

87 of 93 people found the following review helpful.

GETTING THE DREAM JOB... Comparing the Top 4 IT Interview Books

By Let's Compare Options Preptorial

I worked with the data science association on their new standards for "Data Scientist" interviews (entry salary of \$125,000), and both real questions and after interview polls were included for the biggest names in data today, from the web to corporate and government IT. "Data Scientist" is one of the hottest new jobs out there today, and some companies are even forming CDSO jobs--Chief Data Science Officer!

To begin, ALL FOUR of the books in this review are 5 star "superstars" for IT interviews. The two problems are, my library customers want to know the top two, and our Amazon shoppers want to know if they can get away with one, two, three, or if they have to buy all four! Of course the answer depends both on the focus of your resume, and the overlap/focus in the four books.

First, the summary, by author, title/Amazon link, year published/edition, number of pages, trim and cost, problems included, main language(s) foci. These four are the most frequently purchased by the over 100,000 libraries (including corporate technical libraries and schools as well as private and public) in our database. (Note: page counts are via visual inspection at the time of this writing, not Amazon stats. Pages can vary with on-demand books.).

Aziz, Elements of Programming Interviews: 300 Questions and Solutions by Aziz, Adnan, Prakash, Amit, Lee, Tsung-Hsien 1st (first) Edition (10/11/2012), 2012, 481 pages, 6 x 9, \$25, 300 problems (mostly C++, concurrency in Java, discrete math in formulas and English)

McDowell, Cracking the Coding Interview: 150 Programming Questions and Solutions, 2011 (5th edition), 500 pages, 6 x 9, \$23, 150 problems, (mostly all Java except of course the C, C++ question sections!)

Guinness, Ace the Programming Interview: 160 Questions and Answers for Success, 2013, 419 pages, 6 x 9, \$20, 160 problems, (mostly Java and C# but some unusual JavaScript, SQL, Ruby and Perl examples too)

Mongan, Programming Interviews Exposed: Secrets to Landing Your Next Job, 2013 (ed. 3), 301 pages, 7.4 x 9, \$18, 150+ problems (C, C++, C#, Java)

All four of these fine prep texts cover the usual suspects in Algorithms and Data structures, including a focus on "scalable" problems of most concern to the Amazons, Googles, Facebooks, etc. of the world. These

include recursion, arrays, lists, hash tables, binary searches and trees, and other foundation coding subjects. All also cover the usual tricks, brain teasers, presentation problems, prep, process, etc. issues, and in the case of Cracking, specifics on many different company processes.

The divergence is in the "extras." Aziz jumps into parallel computing and covers discrete math (in grad school joke terms, all the computer oriented math that has been taken out of high school courses). McDowell has an unusually well written probability section. Guinness is very up to date with cross platform apps and concurrent programming nightmares, and goes into both more depth and detail on individual topics like big O notation. Mongan is published by wrox, and has not only technical editors, but outstanding web resources. His database section is the most robust of the group.

Aziz and McDowell are print on demand, which usually means there are many more errors in early going, but much faster correction of them via almost weekly files to the printer. Guinness is Wiley and bulletproof. We've tested the code extensively in all four (my payroy sister programmers, not me!) and ALL of them are outstanding, with very few errors at this writing, which can only get better fast in the two PODs, and wasn't a problem to begin with via the technically edited wrox and wiley teams.

Surprisingly, there is NOT a lot of overlap in solutions in these four texts, just as there IS a lot of overlap in the questions (strings, arrays, binaries, hashes... structures are structures and algos are algos). The difference in ALL these books (as opposed to a Cormen) is that the algorithm examples are not academic--they give you many options to "cheat" - and most of the cheats are more real world than techniques given in the 1,300 page algo function texts.

McDowell is the industry standard, but she teaches very much to Google, as does Aziz, meaning web focus, and even a little forgiveness on php, but NO forgiveness on memory or scalability. If you're a library client and have to pick two, we advise one from the McDowell/ Aziz dyad and one from the Guinness/ Mongan dyad. If you're applying for a job with a specific language requirement, these self sort, although of course all are object oriented today.

For shoppers preparing for a real interview: buy all four. I mean, come on. This is your future! You can get all four for the price you'd pay for a larger (way less useful) algo + data structure or individual language text, and maybe less. Some points about interview technique are common, but all four offer different and important examples in approaches to solutions, even though they share common algorithmic and data structure challenges.

IRONY: The only programming area growing faster than data scientist today is at the other end of the big scale spectrum: embedded systems. I kid you not, specialize in embedded, and you're GUARANTEED a dream job, both due to the explosion of these systems, and the rarity of programmers here (but yes, you have to get into circuits!). Our sister Payroy group shows job stats, demand and salaries that are to die for if you go there-- way better than Google. NONE of these books cover it (because other than mobile and server embeds, embedded was traditionally automotive and industrial, but even "Google and Microsoft TV" type ventures are now hungering for it).

There is NO good interview book out on embedded yet, but these two are the best of breed in the field itself: 1. Samek (Practical UML Statecharts in C/C++: Event-Driven Programming for Embedded Systems) and 2. White (Making Embedded Systems: Design Patterns for Great Software). Why C and C++? Because that's where the majority of electronics still reside, and "object" programmers in the field often just use the C subset of ++ and don't really get into sexy classes/methods/parents/kids, etc.! 6 months brushing up on this, specializing, and going for an embedded job will be worth years of competing with the interviews in these

texts!!!

Now, a simple tip. I was part of a team that interviewed for a high level, very high paying digital art programming position at shaderjoes.com. One candidate stood out as really technically challenged--she even confused a call with a register in one of her answers! She called herself an "autodidact" - meaning, unlike Yahoo, we can't be recruiting only from the 18 top schools.

At the end of her interview, she asked us to check out a disc she'd brought. She had programmed her own video game with movie-real characters, explosions, storyline, etc. using Unity, Maya, Blastcode, Python, Lua and C#, with web distributions in Java, HTML 5 and php. She proceeded to explain her entire process, from idea to distribution. She was hired before she could reach the elevator. In olden-days, old timer parlance, don't forget your "portfolio" if you have one! It can trump a LOT of the bureaucratic hurdles!

EMAILERS ANSWER: IF you are a manager, rusty at coding, a data scientist, etc. and are in an interview where you have to "understand" coding basics, but not necessarily code, see our review of Karumanchi (Coding Interview Questions).

Library Picks reviews only for the benefit of Amazon shoppers and has nothing to do with Amazon, the authors, manufacturers or publishers of the items we review. We always buy the items we review for the sake of objectivity, and although we search for gems, are not shy about trashing an item if it's a waste of time or money for Amazon shoppers. If the reviewer identifies herself, her job or her field, it is only as a point of reference to help you gauge the background and any biases.

50 of 53 people found the following review helpful.

Great text for technical interviews

By goforfun

In summary, I strongly recommend this book for anyone who wants to excel in interviews in top software companies.

This book has extensive interview problems with detailed solutions. It covers basic to advanced algorithm solving techniques. The book is very comprehensive and detailed - it is by far the largest collections of such problems that I know of. I really liked the fact that most problems have detailed programs which I could download complete versions of. The figures were also very helpful for me to understand some of the harder concepts.

Materials in later chapters which contain dynamic programming and graph algorithms make this book stand out among other interview books. These materials especially help readers to think critically when facing difficult programming problems with efficiency constraints.

I also purchased "Cracking the Coding Interview" for preparing for my interviews. Compared to that book, I found Elements of Programming Interviews to be better preparation for the questions I was asked at the on-site interviews. Cracking the Coding Interview had more basic questions, the kind I was asked in phone screening and on-campus interviews.

I am very fond of algorithms, and, just like Keith wrote in his review, Elements of Programming Interviews nicely supplements traditional algorithm textbooks which lack of practical examples.

22 of 23 people found the following review helpful.

Most Helpful Book for Job Interviews

By F. Li

I am a Computer Science graduate. A friend of mine recommended it to me after he got offers from MSFT and FB by using the book. I have used the book for a while now, and I think I can give some information to help other readers to make a good decision.

Basically this book contains a set of programming problems to warm you up for a job interview. There are many other job hunting books too, so what makes this one special?

I would say it has the following advantages:

0. Smart algorithms and solutions. Better than many other resources you could find.
1. Challenging problems, making it useful for preparing top companies interviews.
2. Source code website. We can actually run the code and compare it with ours. Often, I first write my own program and test it with their driver program.
3. High quality C++11 code with very few bugs. It helped me to refine my coding skills and styles.
4. Study guide. Very helpful for iterative studying.
5. Book chapter organization. It is both detailed and close to complete.
6. Good coverage of recent algorithms.

Let me elaborate a bit.

Taking item 0, Smart algorithm and solutions as an example:

If you have prepared for job interviews just a bit, you may know there is a frequent question for "designing a Stack with Max/Min operations". I solved the problem by myself and after comparing my solution with other resources, I thought mine is optimal - until I saw the solution from this book. It is more space efficient by storing the frequency information.

Another example is the "Permutation Problem". Before I read the book, I already had a decent solution. But the "swap based" solution in this book is simply more elegant and more flexible for solving other problems. This kind of "Ah-ah" moments comes quite often when I read the book.

Taking item 6, Good coverage of recent algorithms as another example:

If you read the the Hashing chapter of the book, You will notice that it covers the "Min-hash" algorithm. This is quite surprising to me as it is a new algorithm in the document/image search area. I know it because I did my research on the topic. I'd never expect it to appear in an interview book.

To summarize, this is a well organized and supported book for learning CS problem solving. The high quality solutions presented in this book will definitely help us to impress interviewers. I think it is the most useful resource for preparing job interviews.

Other than interview preparation, we can learn a lot other practical skills/knowledge from the book too.

Finally, here is my personal advice about how to use the book: the book's study guide is your good friend. Because the book contains some quite hard problems, following the guide will make your learning more efficient.

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