Just a disclaimer at the very beginning, this is all based on only my personal experience. Please donot take this as the word of the Oracle :)

TIMELINE

Starting with the most common thing, the timeline of events. So the **GENERAL** pattern seen is that August beginning is when you start scratching your heads for finalising your resumes. August 3rd week onwards, some registrations for Day 0 companies begin. (Companies like Google and Codenation generally have their recruitments slightly earlier, that is, July end/August initial weeks). The major bulk of Day 0 coding rounds occur mostly around August end week. September first week is generally Day 0.

Day 1 tests generally occur in the first and second weeks of September followed by interviews in and around mid September. This is followed by Day 2 proceedings. By October first week generally Day 2 is wrapped up. After this, companies do keep coming in sporadic manner. There are some good companies that do come in later too so don't be riveted just at Day 2.

PREPARATION

Coming to my preparation strategy and resources, it was mainly based on InterviewBit and LeetCode for practice. I started off in late May and had a target of 60 days in my mind. My method for the same included to go Bucket by Bucket (InterviewBit people will know this the best). My thing was to see the name of the bucket first, go over GFG and other online resources to learn about them (generally I would spend 3-4 hours learning the concepts around a bucket) and then would jump straight into solving the bucket questions. Atleast 4-5 hours of coding per bucket/concept was necessary (for me atleast).

I focussed on this pattern throughout InterviewBit and comfortably finished InterviewBit in 55ish days. After this I shifted my focus to LeetCode for random practising. Since by this time most of the theory of DSA was already covered, I could focus only on solving questions. Hence here the target was a fixed number of questions daily (2 Hard, 3 medium and 3 easy….easy were mostly for stress busters post a failure at Hard ones :( ).

My failure:

One thing I lagged in here was that I didn't have enough time in my hand to appear for coding competitions. To the readers, I would suggest to please go through enough coding tests/competitions too as they focus tremendously on solving random questions covering multiple concepts in a stipulated time frame.

Some Tips

- Do not try to play around with too many platforms. You will end up solving same problems again and again without much variety.
- Do keep a track of the time you spend on each question. (If using InterviewBit, you don't have to worry as every minute spent on a question strips you off some points).
- Do not just keep doing questions. You need a good theory base too especially if you don't wanna sit dumb in an interview. (the next round after a coding test unless it is Walmart :))

BEYOND DSA

Apart from DSA basics, some basic understanding of Object Oriented Programming will be a good add on always. If you are a CS student, OOP and DBS are non-negotiable. Atleast for OOP, the companies do expect that you have a good knowledge of all the concepts of OOP and some implementation details of them too. Most questions asked here are practical and real time and it is fun if you have a good understanding. C++/Java knowledge will be an easy way out for most questions.

For DBS, the concepts surrounding Database design, Normalisations and ACID properties is mostly enough. Basic SQL queries shouldn't be a roadblock if you did attend the labs (heh ☺).

Do revise your concepts well for both of these courses atleast 2/3 weeks before the interviews (even if you had an A) and focus on the repetitive questions asked every year (you can find them easily anywhere or else just call up any senior).

Random tips:

- Books are really good if you spend time with them. Cormen for DSA and Headfirst's for Design Patterns are two books I really appreciate and went through too during my prep.
- Resume is very very very important. Donot mention things on the resume you yourself cannot defend. Please get your resumes approved by a handful of seniors atleast before putting it out.
- Donot get burnt out right away. The last one month would need the good of you.
- For people with social anxiety or introvertness or interview stress, do go through a good number of mock interviews. In gen for everyone, atleast 4 or 5 mocks are necessary just to prepare you for what is coming your way.