FREE CISSP® Course
HOW TO STUDY GUIDE

How to study, make plans, tips, find materials, approach, and more from Thor Pedersen

Why CISSP®?

✓ The GOLD standard of IT Security Certifications, as well as the most sought-after.

✓ Granted by ISC2, known as the world's leading IT security organization.

✓ The global average salary is $119,170, while the average salary in the United States is $138,647.

✓ There are 159,679 CISSPs in over 172 countries as of June 2023.

✓ There are over 140,000 job vacancies in the United States that require CISSP certification.

✓ Globally, the number of cybersecurity positions has climbed by 720%, from one million in 2013 to 5.2 million filled jobs and 3.5 million cybersecurity job openings in 2023 .

CISSP®

4 things you need to pass your CISSP®

The Knowledge

1 You must find your study materials (videos, books, questions,...) and everything else necessary to gain the knowledge you need for the exam. Once you have gathered all your resources, create a study plan to keep you on track. Finally, you must be able to explain the concepts (what, where, when, why, and how).

The Ability to Deconstruct Questions

2 You need to figure out what they are ACTUALLY asking? ISC2 will use convoluted language or have a single keyword that changes the answer. It is important to answer what they asked, rather than what you want to answer. Read the questions a couple of times and boil the question down to its essence.

The Ability to Pick the MOST Right Answer

3 There could be two more-or-less correct answers among the options. Given a specific situation, you must be able to evaluate which one is the MOST right in the eyes of ISC2.
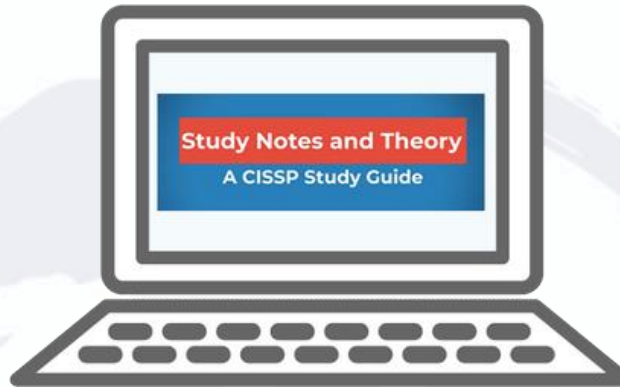
Time Management

4 On average, you have 82 seconds for each question. Spend more time on the first 20-30 questions to perform better on the CAT curve and receive harder questions—this will increase your chances of passing.

Study Materials: Videos

https://thorteaches.com/cissp

https://studynotesandtheory.com/signup

https://itpro.tv/courses/isc2

What Thor says

There are a number of good CISSP Videos in the market and I believe my courses are a part of that!
I think my courses are amazing, but I also think that Luke Ahmed's Study Notes and Theory and ITPro.tv with Adam Gordon are great courses as well.

I mention these two specifically because they are awesome instructors, they're good at conveying the curriculum and they truly care about advancing the profession.

When you need to find an instructor that works for you, look at their preview videos. Is this instructor a good fit for me?

Get at least 2-3 video courses because each instructor is good at explaining certain topics and has a unique point of view that will help you in the exam.

Study Materials: Videos

Other Notable Mentions

On-Demand Videos

DESTINATION CERTIFICATION

INTERNETWORK DEFENSE

Linked in Learning

CYBRARY

SariGreene GROUP
CYBERSECURITY LEADERSHIP

Bootcamps

ISC2

SANS

PRABH NAIR
SECURITY ADVISOR | INSTRUCTOR

✅ Bootcamps are heavily reliant on the instructor; if you get a fantastic instructor, you will have an incredible experience. Otherwise, it can be dreadful. There are numerous companies that provide boot camps, either in-person or live online.

✅ The cost of a boot camp ranges between $1,000 and $8,000. Make sure you do a lot of research, particularly on the instructor to ensure that you get your money's worth!
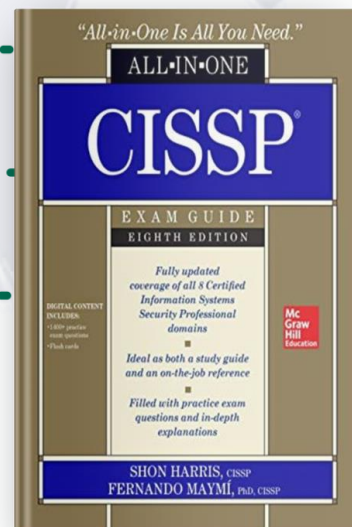
Study Materials: Main Books
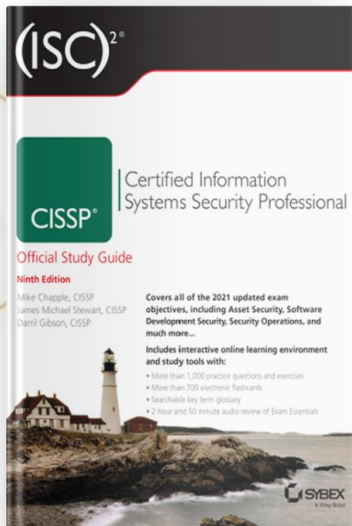
60%

of Thor Teaches' students preferred the Sybex's OSG

40%

of Thor Teaches' students preferred the AIO

1 You need at least one of the two main books — Sybex's ISC2 CISSP Certified Information Systems Security Professional Official Study Guide and Shon Harris' CISSP All-in-One (AIO) Exam Guide.
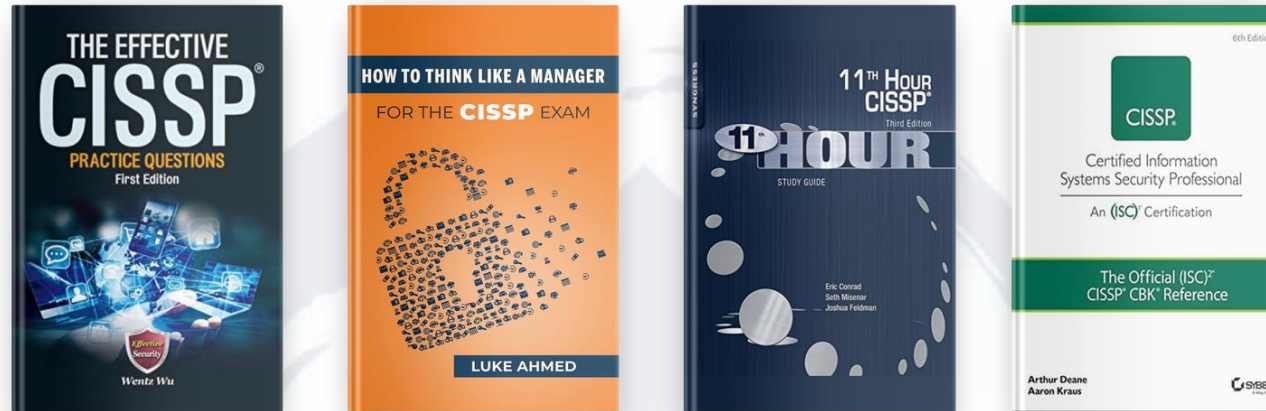
2 Read 2-3 paragraphs from each book, choose the one you like the most then buy it.

What Thor says

I personally like the AIO better because it goes more in-depth on some topics, but it is much longer than Sybex's OSG.

Study Materials: Secondary Books

Wentz Wu's book will help you develop the critical mentality required for the exam in order to answer all questions from the perspective of an IT Security Manager.

Luke Ahmed's book will help you deconstruct questions, which is a critical skill for the exam.

We also have the 11th Hour, which is already out of date because it hasn't been updated since 2015, but it's still a useful resource for brushing up on particular topics.

Finally, we have The Official ISC2 CISSP CBK—this is the truth of all CISSP knowledge, but it is also tough to read. This book is meant for reference work—if you're unsure about a specific topic, crack open the CISSP CBK and look it up.
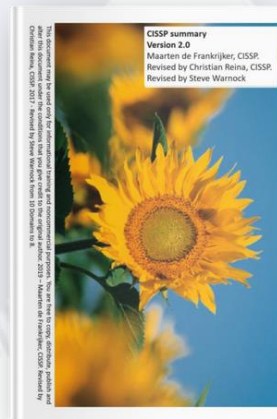
Study Materials: Free Resources

National Institute of Standards and Technology— a U.S. government agency that publishes special publications that are relevant to certifications

NIST   OWASP®

The Open Web Application Security Project (OWASP) does a lot of amazing stuff, but for CISSP, the most important thing to look into is the OWASP Top 10.

Study Guides

CISSP summary
Version 2.0
Maarten de Frankrijker, CISSP.
Revised by Christian Reina, CISSP.
Revised by Steve Warnock

A publication for Study Notes and Theory - A CISSP Study Guide

★★★★★

The Memory Palace - A Quick Refresher For Your CISSP Exam!

Written by Prashant Mohan, CISSP

★★★★★

CISSP Process Guide

V.20 21

Fadi Sodah (aka madunix)

Sunflower Notes by Maarten de Frankrijker
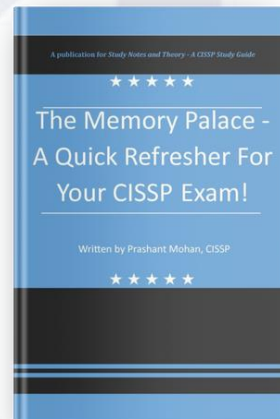
The Memory Palace by Prashant Mohan

CISSP Process Guide by Fadi Sodah (madunix)

✅ Study Guides are written by people who have passed the CISSP exam and want to give back to the community.

Study Materials: Free Resources

Facebook Study Groups

CISSP, CISM and PMP study group by ThorTeaches.com
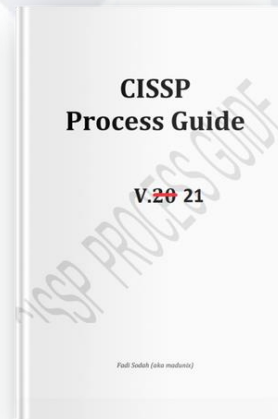
https://thorteaches.com/

Study Notes and Theory
A CISSP Study Guide

Wentz Wu
Professional Instructor
Inspirational Coach
Lifelong Learner
https://wentzwu.com

Effective Security

"If you always do what you've always done, you'll always get what you've always got."
-Henry Ford-

CEH ECSA

✓ Facebook groups are fantastic for sharing knowledge and information. However, unlike Discord, it is not very good for natural organic discussions.

Discord Servers

PROTECT
CS

Certification Station is THE most active certification Discord server. With 38k+ members they provide those critical discussions you need to pass your exam and they have helped thousands of members pass their exams.

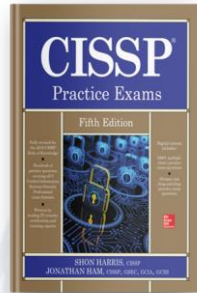## Others

reddit r/cissp ISACA® Glossary of Terms

💡 Visit thorteaches.com/study and look under Free Stuff for all of the free resources I recommend, which you can download from there.

Study Materials: Practice Questions

Easy/Mid

ThorTeaches.com
Easy/Mid Questions

CISSP Practice Exams
Fifth Edition
SHON HARRIS, CISSP
JONATHAN HAM, CISSP, GSEC, GCIA, GCIH

(ISC)²
CISSP
Certified Information
Systems Security Professional
OFFICIAL PRACTICE TESTS
Second Edition

Other Notable Mentions

IT·DOJO

Pocket Prep   CCCure

ThorTeaches QOTD

Wentz Wu QOTD

Adam Gordon QOTD

Hard

ThorTeaches.com
Hard Questions

Boson

Study Notes and Theory
A CISSP Study Guide

Hard questions should be used in the last 1-2 months of your studies because they are the most similar to exam questions, and I highly recommend getting your questions from these three: my own Hard Questions, Study Notes and Theory's, and Boson.

How Do I Use Practice Questions?

1 You should be able to explain the what, where, how, why and when of the concepts.

2 Take 1,500-3,500 easy/mid questions and at least 1,500 hard questions in the last 1-2 months of your studies.

3 Restudy all of the topics for all of the questions you marked for review as well as all of the questions you got wrong.

4 Don't reuse practice questions!

Spend more time on the first 20 questions on the CISSP CAT Exam.

Take breaks when you need them to reset your mind.

Answer like an IT Security Manager, a Risk Adviser, and a Lawyer.

How Should I Approach a Question?

1 Read the entire question.

2 Take the time you need to read the question— probably twice—and then deconstruct it to figure out what are they really asking.

3 Make sure that when you deconstruct the question, you break it down to its essence, which means that the question could be a long paragraph, but they're only asking about the last ten words.

4 You need to find the keywords (what is important) and their indicators (what happened).

5 Next, while selecting the correct answer, ensure that it satisfies the requirements posed by the question. You must be accurate and precise in order to select the MOST RIGHT answer in the eyes of ISC2.

Which resources should you get?

Videos

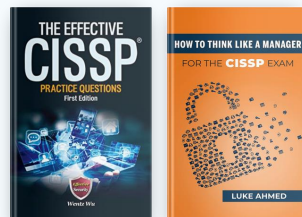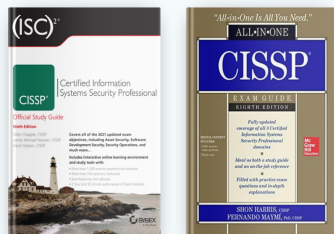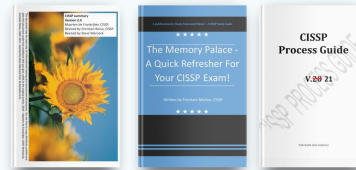ThorTeaches

DESTINATION CERTIFICATION

Books

Either of the two main books

(ISC)² CISSP Certified Information Systems Security Professional Official Study Guide

ALL-IN-ONE CISSP EXAM GUIDE EIGHTH EDITION SHON HARRIS, FERNANDO MAYMÍ

+

THE EFFECTIVE CISSP PRACTICE QUESTIONS First Edition Wentz Wu

HOW TO THINK LIKE A MANAGER FOR THE CISSP EXAM LUKE AHMED

Free Stuff

NIST OWASP

The Memory Palace - A Quick Refresher For Your CISSP Exam!

CISSP Process Guide V.20 21

reddit r/cissp

ISACA® Glossary of Terms

PROTECT CS

CISSP, CISM and PMP study group by ThorTeaches.com
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-Henry Ford-

Effective Security

Questions

Easy / Mid

CISSP Practice Exams Fifth Edition

(ISC)² CISSP Certified Information Systems Security Professional OFFICIAL PRACTICE TESTS

Hard   Choose 2 of 3

Boson

Study Notes and Theory
A CISSP Study Guide

+

Questions of the Day
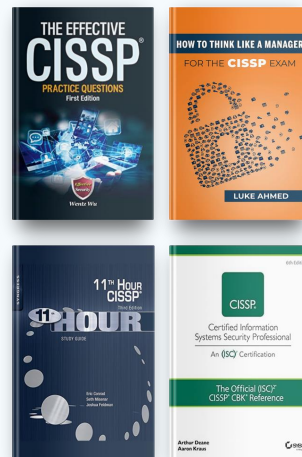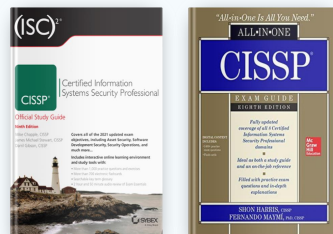
High

Which resources should you get?

Videos
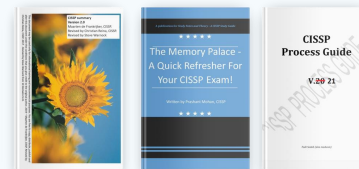
ThorTeaches

Study Notes and Theory
A CISSP Study Guide

ITPRO.TV

DESTINATION
CERTIFICATION

Books

Either of the two main books

(ISC)² CISSP Certified Information Systems Security Professional Official Study Guide

ALL-IN-ONE CISSP EXAM GUIDE

THE EFFECTIVE CISSP PRACTICE QUESTIONS First Edition
Wentz Wu

HOW TO THINK LIKE A MANAGER FOR THE CISSP EXAM
LUKE AHMED

11TH HOUR CISSP STUDY GUIDE

CISSP Certified Information Systems Security Professional An (ISC)² Certification
The Official (ISC)² CISSP CBK Reference

Free Stuff

NIST   OWASP

The Memory Palace - A Quick Refresher For Your CISSP Exam!

CISSP Process Guide V.20 21

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Questions

Easy / Mid

CISSP Practice Exams

(ISC)² CISSP Certified Information Systems Security Professional OFFICIAL PRACTICE TESTS

Hard

Boson

Study Notes and Theory
A CISSP Study Guide

Questions of the Day

CISSP® Study Plan

1 The amount of time spent studying CISSP differs from student to student because everyone has a varied background, knowledge, and learning speed. Other considerations include how much time they spend studying each day, how focused are they, and a variety of factors will determine how long a student must study for the CISSP. Some students study for a week and pass the exam, while others study for almost a year. The average duration is between 4 and 6 months.

2 You need to study 2-3 hours every day for something as large and sophisticated as the CISSP. You must identify those small pockets of time — 10, 15, or 20 minutes — when you are not doing anything else and use them to study. I have used lunch breaks, commutes, while waiting for meetings to start, and any small pockets of time like that.

3 The study plan is a living document; if you were unable to find a time to study the previous week, or if you have some more time to study, you change the plan accordingly.

CISSP® Study Plan: Thor's Approach

1 Watch the certification videos you have. I suggest 1-3 different sources. Watch all the videos and take notes on the downloadable study guides from ThorTeaches.com.

2 Read the book you chose. I suggest 1-2 different books, supplement your notes.

3 Read The Memory Palace, The CISSP Process Guide, The Sunflower Notes, and The NIST Publications.

4 Re-watch the videos, maybe at 1.5-2x speed— update your notes.

5 Re-read the books— update your notes.

6 Do practice questions. For the CISSP, do a lot of them— A LOT.
- It is normal for students to do between 2,500-3,000 easy/mid questions, and 1,000-1,500 hard questions.
- After each practice test, read all the explanations on the questions you got wrong and then re-study those areas until you can explain them (videos/books).

7 Do another practice test.

8 Repeat 6-7 until you hit 80%+ on multiple practice test engines on easy/mid questions, and 65-70%+ on hard questions.

✅ **Do not reuse practice tests! It will not give you an accurate result if you have answered the questions before.**

CISSP® Study Plan

week 1 Date:	Build your own study plan + watch the Thorteaches.com CISSP Introduction course. Study time: 2:00	Build your own study plan + watch the Thorteaches.com CISSP Introduction course. Study time: 2:00	Thorteaches.com CISSP domain 1 videos. Take notes on the ThorTeaches study guides. Study time: 02:00	Thorteaches.com CISSP domain 1 videos Take notes on the ThorTeaches study guides. Study time: 02:00	Thorteaches.com CISSP domain 2 videos Take notes on the ThorTeaches study guides. Study time: 02:00	Thorteaches.com CISSP domain 3 videos Take notes on the ThorTeaches study guides. Study time: 02:00	Thorteaches.com CISSP domain 3 videos Take notes on the ThorTeaches study guides. Study time: 02:00
week 2 Date:	Thorteaches.com CISSP domain 3 videos. Take notes on the ThorTeaches study guides. Study time: 02:00	Thorteaches.com CISSP domain 4 videos. Take notes on the ThorTeaches study guides. Study time: 02:00	Thorteaches.com CISSP domain 4 videos. Take notes on the ThorTeaches study guides. Study time: 02:00	Thorteaches.com CISSP domain 5 videos. Take notes on the ThorTeaches study guides. Study time: 02:00	Thorteaches.com CISSP domain 6 videos. Take notes on the ThorTeaches study guides. Study time: 02:00	Thorteaches.com CISSP domain 7 videos. Take notes on the ThorTeaches study guides. Study time: 02:00	Thorteaches.com CISSP domain 7 videos. Take notes on the ThorTeaches study guides. Study time: 02:00
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week 4 Date:	Secondary video course domain 4 videos. Take notes on the ThorTeaches study guides. Study time: 02:00	Secondary video course domain 4 videos. Take notes on the ThorTeaches study guides. Study time: 02:00	Secondary video course domain 5 videos. Take notes on the ThorTeaches study guides. Study time: 02:00	Secondary video course domain 6 videos. Take notes on the ThorTeaches study guides. Study time: 02:00	Secondary video course domain 7 videos. Take notes on the ThorTeaches study guides. Study time: 02:00	Secondary video course domain 7 videos. Take notes on the ThorTeaches study guides. Study time: 02:00	Secondary video course domain 8 videos. Take notes on the ThorTeaches study guides. Study time: 02:00

Thorteaches.com CISSP study plan

✅ My study plan template is based on two hours of study time per day, seven days a week. I also utilized my own resources, which I highly suggest; if you use different ones, simply replace them in the template.

Are you ready to start your CISSP® journey?

Free CISSP study course:

FREE

2+ hours of CISSP study videos.

A customizable CISSP study plan.

(Optional +$80) 750 Boson practice questions.

2021 exam version

Start Now

CISSP HARD questions:

$54.95

500 Hard CISSP practice questions.

The CISSP study course.

A customizable CISSP study plan.

(Optional +$75) 750 Boson practice questions.

2021 updated.

Start Now

CISSP EASY/MID and HARD questions:

$99.95

500 Hard CISSP practice questions.

1,000 Easy/Mid CISSP practice questions.

The CISSP study course.

A customizable CISSP study plan.

(Optional +$75) 750 Boson practice questions.

2021 updated.

Start Now

All CISSP videos and all questions:

$174.95

30+ hours of CISSP videos.

500 Hard + 1,000 Easy/Mid CISSP practice questions.

CISSP study guides from the lectures (277 pages).

The full CISSP study course.

A customizable CISSP study plan. 500+ CISSP links.

(Optional +$70) 750 Boson practice questions.

2021 updated.

Start Now

Resource Links

VIDEOS

🔗 ThorTeaches

🔗 Study Notes and Theory

🔗 ITPro.TV

🔗 Destination Certification

BOOKS

🔗 ISC2 CISSP Certified Information Systems
Security Professional Official Study Guide

🔗 CISSP All-in-One (AIO) Exam Guide

🔗 The Effective CISSP

🔗 How To Think Like A Manager

🔗 Eleventh Hour CISSP

🔗 The Official ISC2 CISSP CBK

PRACTICE QUESTIONS

🔗 ThorTeaches

🔗 Study Notes and Theory

🔗 Boson ExSim-Max for CISSP 2021

🔗 CISSP Practice Exams, 5th Edition

🔗 ISC2 CISSP Official Practice Tests, 3rd Edition

🔗 Thor Teaches QOTD

🔗 Wentz Wu QOTD

🔗 Adam Gordon QOTD

FREE RESOURCES

🔗 The Sunflower Notes

🔗 The Memory Palace

🔗 The CISSP Process Guide

🔗 Reddit – CISSP subreddit

🔗 ISACA® Glossary of Terms

🔗 Facebook – CISSP, CISM and CC certification training
and mentoring by Thor Teaches

🔗 Facebook – Effective CISSP by Wentz Wu

🔗 Facebook – CISSP Exam Preparation – Study Notes and Theory

🔗 Discord study group CISSP, CISM, PMP by ThorTeaches

🔗 Discord study group by Certification Station

🔗 The National Institute of Standards and Technology (NIST)

🔗 The Open Web Application Security Project® (OWASP)