Important clarification first (this is key)

EC2 instances **don't "run on a schedule" by themselves**.

What you really schedule is:

- **Start the instance**
- **Stop the instance**

👉 This is usually done with:

- AWS CLI + Bash
- Cron jobs
- (or Lambda + EventBridge in production)

Below is the **cron + bash + AWS CLI** version, which is what they were likely testing.

1️⃣ Bash scripts

Script to START the EC2 instance

```
#!/bin/bash

INSTANCE_ID="i-0123456789abcdef0"
REGION="us-east-1"

aws ec2 start-instances \
  --instance-ids "$INSTANCE_ID" \
  --region "$REGION"
```

Save as:

```
start-ec2.sh
```

Script to STOP the EC2 instance

```
#!/bin/bash
```

```
INSTANCE_ID="i-0123456789abcdef0"
REGION="us-east-1"

aws ec2 stop-instances \
  --instance-ids "$INSTANCE_ID" \
  --region "$REGION"
```

Save as:

`stop-ec2.sh`

Make both executable:

```
chmod +x start-ec2.sh stop-ec2.sh
```

2️⃣ AWS CLI prerequisites (they *expect* you to mention this)

Before cron can work:

```
aws configure
```

You need:

- Access key
- Secret key
- Correct IAM permissions (`ec2:StartInstances`, `ec2:StopInstances`)

3️⃣ Cron jobs (this is the trickiest part)

⏰ Schedule explained

- **Start at 12:00**
- **Stop at 09:00**
- **Monday–Saturday**

Because cron **can't span midnight**, you need **two cron entries**.

Start EC2 — Monday to Saturday at 12:00

```
0 12 * * 1-6 /path/to/start-ec2.sh
```

Stop EC2 — Tuesday to Sunday at 09:00

```
0 9 * * 2-7 /path/to/stop-ec2.sh
```

📌 Why Tuesday–Sunday?

- Instance starts **Monday 12:00**
- It should stop **Tuesday 09:00**
- Saturday 12:00 → stops Sunday 09:00

That's the subtle detail interviewers look for 👀

4️⃣ How you'd explain this in an interview (very important)

"EC2 itself doesn't support scheduling, so I used AWS CLI commands wrapped in Bash scripts and cron jobs. Since the schedule crosses midnight, I separated start and stop times into two cron entries with different weekday ranges."