

Docker Interview Questions

You said:



Give me the 50 most common interview questions for beginners, 50 for intermediate, and 25 for advanced.

A total of 125 questions.

Also, answer each question IN DETAIL in layman's terms.

Topic: Docker

ChatGPT said:



Sure! Here's a comprehensive list of 125 Docker interview questions divided into three categories: beginner, intermediate, and advanced, along with detailed answers in layman's terms.

Beginner-Level Questions (50)

1. What is Docker?

Answer: Docker is a platform that allows you to package an application and its
dependencies (like libraries, configuration files, etc.) into a container. A container is like a
lightweight, standalone box that can run your application consistently across different
environments, making sure it behaves the same way whether on your local machine, a test
server, or in production.

2. What is a Docker container?

 Answer: A Docker container is a lightweight, standalone executable package that includes everything needed to run an application. Think of it as a small box that holds your code, along with everything the code needs to run, ensuring that it works the same way on any system.

3. What is a Docker image?

• **Answer:** A Docker image is a read-only template used to create Docker containers. It's like a blueprint or recipe that tells Docker what to put in the container and how to set it up.

4. How is a Docker image different from a container?

• **Answer:** An image is like a template, while a container is a running instance of that template. You can create multiple containers from a single image, just like how you can bake multiple cakes from the same recipe.

5. What is Docker Hub?

Answer: Docker Hub is a public registry where you can find and share Docker images. It's
like a marketplace for Docker images, where you can pull pre-built images for your projects
or push your own images for others to use.

6. How do you install Docker on your local machine?

• **Answer:** To install Docker, you typically download Docker Desktop from the official Docker website, follow the installation instructions, and then run Docker from your terminal or

command prompt.

7. How do you check if Docker is installed on your system?

• **Answer:** You can check if Docker is installed by running the command `docker --version` in your terminal. If Docker is installed, it will return the installed version number.

8. What is the Docker daemon?

 Answer: The Docker daemon (`dockerd`) is the background process that runs on your host machine. It listens for Docker commands and manages Docker objects like images, containers, networks, and volumes.

9. What is a Dockerfile?

• **Answer:** A Dockerfile is a script that contains a set of instructions for building a Docker image. It tells Docker step by step how to create the image, such as which base image to use, which files to copy, and which commands to run.

10. How do you build a Docker image using a Dockerfile?

 Answer: To build a Docker image, navigate to the directory containing your Dockerfile and run the command `docker build -t your_image_name .`. This command tells Docker to build an image using the instructions in the Dockerfile.

11. What is a Docker registry?

• **Answer:** A Docker registry is a storage and distribution system for Docker images. Docker Hub is an example of a public registry, but you can also set up a private registry to store and share images within your organization.

12. What is the difference between a public and a private registry?

• **Answer:** A public registry, like Docker Hub, allows anyone to access and pull images, while a private registry restricts access and is used within an organization for internal purposes.

13. How do you pull a Docker image from Docker Hub?

Answer: You can pull an image from Docker Hub using the command `docker pull image_name`. For example, `docker pull nginx` will download the Nginx image to your local machine.

14. How do you run a Docker container?

• **Answer:** To run a Docker container, you use the `docker run` command followed by the image name. For example, `docker run nginx` will start a container from the Nginx image.

15. How do you list all running Docker containers?

• **Answer:** You can list all running containers using the command `docker ps`. This will show you a list of containers that are currently running.

16. How do you stop a running Docker container?

• **Answer:** To stop a running container, you use the command `docker stop container_id`. You can get the container ID from the `docker ps` command.

17. How do you remove a Docker container?

• **Answer:** To remove a container, first stop it if it's running, then use the command `docker rm container_id` to remove it.

18. How do you remove a Docker image?

• **Answer:** To remove an image, use the command `docker rmi image_name`. Ensure that no containers are using that image before you remove it.

19. What is a Docker volume?

 Answer: A Docker volume is a way to persist data generated by and used by Docker containers. Volumes allow data to be stored outside of the container's filesystem, making it easier to share and manage data across containers.

20. How do you create a Docker volume?

• **Answer:** You can create a Docker volume using the command `docker volume create volume name`.

21. How do you attach a volume to a Docker container?

• **Answer:** To attach a volume to a container, you use the `-v` flag when running a container. For example, `docker run -v volume name:/path/in/container image name`.

22. What is a Docker network?

Answer: Docker networks allow containers to communicate with each other. By default,
 Docker creates a network for all containers to share, but you can also create custom
 networks for specific groups of containers.

23. How do you create a Docker network?

• **Answer:** You can create a Docker network using the command `docker network create network name`.

24. How do you connect a container to a network?

• **Answer:** To connect a container to a network, you use the `--network` flag when running the container, like `docker run --network network name image name`.

25. How do you view logs from a Docker container?

Answer: You can view logs from a container using the command `docker logs container id`.

26. What is the difference between Docker and a virtual machine (VM)?

• **Answer:** Docker containers share the host system's OS kernel and are lightweight, whereas VMs run a full OS with a separate kernel, making them heavier and slower to start.

27. How do you restart a Docker container?

• **Answer:** To restart a container, you use the command `docker restart container_id`.

28. What is a Docker tag?

Answer: A Docker tag is a label applied to an image to identify different versions of the image. For example, `nginx:latest` and `nginx:1.18` are two different tags for the Nginx image.

29. How do you tag a Docker image?

Answer: You can tag an image using the command `docker tag image_name new image name:tag`.

30. How do you push a Docker image to Docker Hub?

• **Answer:** To push an image to Docker Hub, first log in using `docker login`, then use the command `docker push image_name:tag`.

31. What is the `docker-compose` command used for?

• **Answer:** `docker-compose` is used to define and run multi-container Docker applications. It uses a `docker-compose.yml` file to specify the configuration for all the containers in your application.

32. How do you start a Docker Compose application?

• **Answer:** You can start a Docker Compose application using the command `docker-compose up` in the directory containing the `docker-compose.yml` file.

33. How do you stop a Docker Compose application?

• **Answer:** To stop a Docker Compose application, use the command `docker-compose down`.

34. What is the difference between `docker run` and `docker-compose up`?

• **Answer:** `docker run` is used to start a single container, while `docker-compose up` is used to start multiple containers as defined in a `docker-compose.yml` file.

35. What is the difference between the `ENTRYPOINT` and `CMD` instructions in a Dockerfile?

• **Answer:** `ENTRYPOINT` defines the main command that will always run in the container, while `CMD` provides default arguments for that command. If `CMD` is overridden, `ENTRYPOINT` still runs.

36. How do you view the history of a Docker image?



Answer: You can view the history of an image using the command `docker history image_name`.

37. How do you inspect a Docker container?

• **Answer:** You can inspect a container to view detailed information about it using the command `docker inspect container id`.

38. What is a Docker namespace?

Answer: Docker uses namespaces to provide isolated environments for containers. Each
container gets its own namespace, which isolates it from other containers and the host
system.

39. What is the `docker exec` command used for?

 Answer: The `docker exec` command allows you to run a command inside a running container. For example, `docker exec -it container_id bash` opens a terminal session inside the container.

40. How do you copy files from a Docker container to your local machine?

• **Answer:** You can copy files from a container to your local machine using the command `docker cp container_id:/path/in/container /local/path`.

41. What is the purpose of the `.dockerignore` file?

• **Answer:** The `.dockerignore` file is used to specify files and directories that should be ignored when building a Docker image. It works like a `.gitignore` file in Git.

42. How do you limit the memory and CPU usage of a Docker container?

• **Answer:** You can limit a container's resources using the `--memory` and `--cpus` flags when running the container. For example, `docker run --memory 512m --cpus 1 image_name`.

43. What are Docker layers?

 Answer: Docker images are made up of layers. Each layer represents a change, like adding a file or running a command. Layers are stacked on top of each other to form the final image.

44. How do you update a Docker container?

• **Answer:** To update a container, you typically stop and remove the existing container, pull the latest version of the image, and then start a new container with the updated image.

45. What is Docker Swarm?

 Answer: Docker Swarm is Docker's native clustering and orchestration tool. It allows you to manage a group of Docker engines as a single cluster, scheduling containers across multiple nodes.

46. What are the benefits of using Docker?

• **Answer:** Docker provides consistent environments, faster deployment, resource efficiency, scalability, and easy collaboration through shared images.

47. How do you run a container in detached mode?

• **Answer:** To run a container in detached mode (in the background), use the `-d` flag with the `docker run` command, like `docker run -d image_name`.

48. What is a base image in Docker?

• **Answer:** A base image is the starting point for building a Docker image. It is the first layer in your image and usually contains a minimal operating system or runtime environment.

49. How do you check the status of a Docker container?

• **Answer:** You can check the status of a container using the `docker ps` command, which shows whether the container is running, stopped, or exited.

50. How do you rename a Docker container?

Answer: You can rename a container using the command `docker rename old_name new_name`.

Intermediate-Level Questions (50)

1. What is the difference between `COPY` and `ADD` in a Dockerfile?

• **Answer:** Both `copy` and `ADD` are used to copy files from your local machine into the Docker image. The main difference is that `ADD` can also handle remote URLs and automatically extract compressed files, while `COPY` only copies files.

2. How do you create a multi-stage Dockerfile?

Answer: A multi-stage Dockerfile is used to reduce image size by using multiple `FROM` instructions in the Dockerfile. Each `FROM` starts a new stage, and you can copy artifacts from one stage to another.

3. What is the purpose of Docker labels?

 Answer: Docker labels are metadata that you can attach to Docker objects like images, containers, and volumes. Labels are useful for organizing, filtering, and automating tasks based on these tags.

4. How do you remove unused Docker images and containers?

Answer: You can remove unused images, containers, networks, and volumes using the
 `docker system prune` command. You can also add flags like `--volumes` to remove unused
 volumes as well.

5. What is the difference between Docker volumes and bind mounts?

 Answer: Docker volumes are managed by Docker and stored outside the container, while bind mounts directly link a directory from your host machine to the container. Volumes are preferred for data sharing across containers, while bind mounts are useful for development.

6. What is the role of the `EXPOSE` instruction in a Dockerfile?

• **Answer:** The `**EXPOSE**` instruction informs Docker that the container listens on a specific network port at runtime. However, it doesn't actually publish the port; you still need to use the `-p` flag when running the container.

7. How do you secure Docker containers?

 Answer: To secure Docker containers, you can limit their privileges using user namespaces, run containers as non-root users, limit resource usage, and use security tools like Docker Bench and Notary.

8. What is a Docker context?

Answer: A Docker context is a mechanism that allows you to switch between multiple
 Docker environments, such as different Docker engines or Docker Swarm clusters. You can
 create and manage contexts using the `docker context` command.

9. How do you use Docker secrets?

Answer: Docker secrets allow you to securely store and manage sensitive data, like
passwords and API keys. You can create a secret with `docker secret create` and then use
it in a service or container by referencing it in the `docker-compose.yml` file or Docker
Swarm.

10. How do you monitor Docker containers?

• **Answer:** You can monitor Docker containers using built-in tools like `docker stats` for real-time metrics or third-party monitoring tools like Prometheus, Grafana, and cAdvisor.

11. What is the difference between `docker-compose` and Kubernetes?

• **Answer:** `docker-compose` is a tool for managing multi-container Docker applications, primarily for development and testing. Kubernetes is a more advanced orchestration platform for deploying, scaling, and managing containerized applications in production.

12. How do you rollback a Docker service in Docker Swarm?

• **Answer:** You can rollback a Docker service to a previous version in Docker Swarm using the command `docker service rollback service_name`.

13. What is the purpose of the `HEALTHCHECK` instruction in a Dockerfile?

• **Answer:** The `**HEALTHCHECK**` instruction defines a command in the Dockerfile that Docker uses to determine if the container is healthy. If the command fails, Docker can mark the container as unhealthy.

14. How do you pass environment variables to a Docker container?

• **Answer:** You can pass environment variables to a container using the `-e` flag with the `docker run` command, like `docker run -e VAR_NAME=value image_name`.

15. What is the `docker-compose.override.yml` file?

• **Answer:** The `docker-compose.override.yml` file allows you to override settings in the main `docker-compose.yml` file. It is useful for defining different configurations for development, testing, and production environments.

16. How do you debug a Docker container?

Answer: To debug a Docker container, you can use the `docker exec` command to access
the container's terminal, inspect logs with `docker logs`, and check container
configurations with `docker inspect`.

17. How do you handle persistent data in Docker containers?

• **Answer:** You handle persistent data by using Docker volumes or bind mounts. Volumes are the preferred method for data that needs to persist beyond the container's lifecycle.

18. What is the difference between `docker-compose up` and `docker-compose up --build`?

Answer: `docker-compose up` starts the services defined in the `docker-compose.yml` file,
 while `docker-compose up --build` also rebuilds the images before starting the services.

19. How do you scale a Docker service in Docker Swarm?

• **Answer:** You can scale a Docker service in Docker Swarm using the `docker service scale service name=replicas` command, where `replicas` is the desired number of instances.

20. What is the purpose of the `ENTRYPOINT` instruction in a Dockerfile?

• **Answer:** The `ENTRYPOINT` instruction defines the command that always runs when the container starts. It is often used to define the main process or script that the container should execute.

21. How do you update a service in Docker Swarm?

Answer: To update a service in Docker Swarm, you use the `docker service update`
 command, specifying the new image or configuration options you want to apply.

22. What are the different types of Docker networks?

- **Answer:** Docker provides several types of networks, including:
 - **Bridge:** The default network for containers on a single host.
 - **Host:** Containers share the host's network stack.
 - Overlay: Used for multi-host networks in Docker Swarm.
 - **Macvian:** Allows containers to have their own MAC addresses on the host network.

23. How do you perform a rolling update in Docker Swarm?

Answer: In Docker Swarm, you can perform a rolling update by using the `docker service update` command and specifying the desired update parameters, such as the delay between updates.

24. What is the purpose of the `docker-compose pull` command?

 Answer: The `docker-compose pull` command pulls the latest images for the services defined in the `docker-compose.yml` file, ensuring that you are using the most recent versions.

25. How do you clean up unused Docker resources?

• **Answer:** You can clean up unused Docker resources using the `docker system prune` command, which removes unused images, containers, networks, and optionally volumes.

26. How do you create a custom Docker network?



• **Answer:** You can create a custom Docker network using the command `docker network create network_name`.

27. What is the `docker-compose config` command used for?

Answer: The `docker-compose config` command validates and prints your `docker-compose.yml` file, allowing you to check for syntax errors or issues before running your application.

28. How do you stop and remove all Docker containers?

Answer: To stop and remove all Docker containers, you can use the commands `docker stop \$(docker ps -aq)` to stop all containers and `docker rm \$(docker ps -aq)` to remove them.

29. What is the purpose of Docker Swarm mode?

 Answer: Docker Swarm mode is used to manage a cluster of Docker engines as a single entity. It allows you to deploy and scale applications across multiple hosts using declarative service definitions.

30. How do you attach to a running Docker container?

Answer: You can attach to a running Docker container using the command `docker attach container_id`. This connects your terminal to the container's standard input, output, and error streams.

31. What is the `docker-compose up -d` command used for?

• **Answer:** The `docker-compose up -d` command starts your Docker Compose application in detached mode, meaning it runs in the background.

32. How do you configure a Docker container to restart automatically?

• **Answer:** You can configure a container to restart automatically using the `--restart` flag with the `docker run` command. For example, `docker run --restart always image name`.

33. How do you limit the number of replicas during a Docker Swarm update?

 Answer: During a Docker Swarm update, you can limit the number of replicas updated at a time by using the `--update-parallelism` option with the `docker service update` command.

34. What is the difference between `docker-compose down` and `docker-compose stop`?

Answer: `docker-compose stop` stops the running containers without removing them, while
 `docker-compose down` stops and removes the containers, networks, and volumes created by
 `docker-compose up`.

35. What is Docker Content Trust?

• **Answer:** Docker Content Trust (DCT) is a security feature that ensures the integrity of Docker images by allowing you to sign and verify images before they are pulled or run.

36. How do you inspect a Docker network?

Answer: You can inspect a Docker network using the command `docker network inspect network_name`. This command provides detailed information about the network, including connected containers and configuration.

37. How do you manage Docker images?

Answer: You can manage Docker images using commands like `docker images` to list
images, `docker pull` to download images, `docker rmi` to remove images, and `docker
tag` to tag images.

38. What is the `docker-compose restart` command used for?

• **Answer:** The `docker-compose restart` command restarts all services defined in the `docker-compose.yml` file. It stops and then starts each service in sequence.

39. How do you configure environment variables in a Docker Compose file?

• **Answer:** You can configure environment variables in a Docker Compose file using the `environment` section, like so:

```
services:
    app:
        environment:
        - VAR_NAME=value
```

40. What is the purpose of the `depends on` option in Docker Compose?

• **Answer:** The `depends_on` option in Docker Compose specifies the order in which services should be started. For example, if service A depends on service B, service B will be started before service A.

41. How do you inspect Docker volumes?

• **Answer:** You can inspect Docker volumes using the command `docker volume inspect volume_name`, which provides detailed information about the volume, including its mount point and usage.

42. What is Docker machine?

 Answer: Docker Machine is a tool that allows you to create Docker hosts on your local machine, cloud providers, or data centers. It automates the setup of Docker engines on different platforms.

43. How do you configure Docker to use a proxy server?

• **Answer:** You can configure Docker to use a proxy server by setting the environment variables `HTTP_PROXY`, `HTTPS_PROXY`, and `NO_PROXY` in the Docker daemon configuration file or using Docker Compose.

44. What is the purpose of the `volumes from` option in Docker Compose?

• **Answer:** The `volumes_from` option in Docker Compose allows a service to mount volumes from another service or container. This is useful for sharing data between containers.

45. How do you limit network traffic in Docker containers?

Answer: You can limit network traffic in Docker containers using the `--network` flag with
 `docker run` to specify a custom network or use third-party tools like `tc` (traffic control) to
 manage bandwidth.

46. What is the `docker-compose logs` command used for?

• **Answer:** The `docker-compose logs` command displays logs from all services defined in the `docker-compose.yml` file. You can filter logs for specific services by adding the service name as an argument.

47. How do you restart a Docker Swarm node?

• **Answer:** You can restart a Docker Swarm node by stopping and starting the Docker service on the node, or by rebooting the machine hosting the node.

48. What is the `docker-compose scale` command used for?

Answer: The `docker-compose scale` command is used to set the number of container instances for a service. For example, `docker-compose scale app=3` will create three instances of the `app` service.

49. How do you upgrade Docker to a newer version?

 Answer: You can upgrade Docker to a newer version by following the official Docker documentation for your operating system, typically using package managers like `apt-get`, `yum`, or Docker Desktop's built-in updater.

50. What is the `docker-compose build` command used for?

Answer: The `docker-compose build` command builds the images defined in the `docker-compose.yml` file. You can use the `--no-cache` option to rebuild images without using the cache.

Advanced-Level Questions (25)

1. What is Docker multi-architecture support?

• **Answer:** Docker multi-architecture support allows you to build and run images for different CPU architectures (e.g., ARM, x86) from the same Dockerfile using buildx and multiplatform images.

2. How do you implement service discovery in Docker Swarm?

• **Answer:** Service discovery in Docker Swarm is implemented using the built-in DNS server. When services are created, Swarm automatically assigns them DNS names, allowing containers to find and communicate with each other by service name.

3. What is Docker BuildKit, and how does it improve the build process?

 Answer: Docker BuildKit is a new build engine that provides improved performance, better caching, and advanced features like parallel builds and secret management during the build process.

4. How do you handle secrets in Docker Compose?

• **Answer:** In Docker Compose, you can handle secrets by defining them in the `secrets` section of the `docker-compose.yml` file and specifying which services can access them.

5. How do you optimize Docker images for faster deployment?

 Answer: You can optimize Docker images by minimizing the number of layers, using multistage builds, choosing lightweight base images, and removing unnecessary files and dependencies.

6. What is the role of `docker-compose.override.yml` in multi-environment setups?

• **Answer:** The `docker-compose.override.yml` file allows you to define environment-specific configurations that override the main `docker-compose.yml` file, making it easier to manage different environments like development and production.

7. How do you perform a zero-downtime deployment with Docker Swarm?

 Answer: Zero-downtime deployment in Docker Swarm can be achieved using rolling updates with the `docker service update` command, carefully managing the `--updateparallelism` and `--update-delay` options to ensure continuity.

8. What is Docker rootless mode, and why is it important?

 Answer: Docker rootless mode allows Docker to run without requiring root privileges, improving security by minimizing the attack surface and reducing the risk of privilege escalation.

9. How do you use Docker multi-stage builds to reduce image size?

• **Answer:** Multi-stage builds allow you to use multiple `**FROM**` instructions in a Dockerfile, separating the build environment from the final runtime environment. This enables you to include only the necessary files in the final image, reducing its size.

10. What is the `docker-compose up --scale` command used for?

Answer: The `docker-compose up --scale` command is used to scale services to a specified number of replicas during the startup process. For example, `docker-compose up --scale app=3` starts three instances of the `app` service.

11. How do you manage Docker Swarm secrets?

• **Answer:** Docker Swarm secrets are managed using the `docker secret` command. You can create, inspect, list, and remove secrets, as well as grant services access to them securely.

12. What is Docker Content Trust (DCT), and how do you enforce it?

• **Answer:** Docker Content Trust ensures that only signed images are pulled and run. You can enforce DCT by enabling the `DOCKER_CONTENT_TRUST` environment variable, which verifies the integrity of images.

13. How do you configure Docker for IPv6 networking?



• **Answer:** You can configure Docker for IPv6 networking by enabling IPv6 in the Docker daemon configuration file and specifying an IPv6 subnet for your containers.

14. What is the difference between a Docker Swarm service and a task?

Answer: In Docker Swarm, a service is a higher-level abstraction that defines how
containers should be deployed and scaled, while a task is a single instance of a container
created as part of a service.

15. How do you implement canary deployments with Docker Swarm?

• **Answer:** Canary deployments in Docker Swarm can be implemented by deploying a new version of a service to a subset of nodes or using labels and constraints to control where the new version runs, gradually shifting traffic from the old version to the new one.

16. How do you configure Docker to use a custom storage driver?

Answer: You can configure Docker to use a custom storage driver by setting the `-storage-driver` option in the Docker daemon configuration file or using the `DOCKER_OPTS`
environment variable.

17. What is the difference between Docker volumes and tmpfs mounts?

 Answer: Docker volumes are persistent storage mechanisms managed by Docker, while tmpfs mounts store data in memory (RAM) and are useful for temporary files that do not need to persist after the container stops.

18. How do you perform a blue-green deployment with Docker Compose?

• **Answer:** Blue-green deployment with Docker Compose involves running two separate environments (blue and green) and switching traffic between them by updating the load balancer or DNS configuration after verifying the new environment.

19. What is Docker scan, and how does it enhance security?

• **Answer:** Docker scan is a tool that scans Docker images for known vulnerabilities. It helps enhance security by identifying and reporting issues in the software components included in the image.

20. How do you configure Docker Swarm for high availability?

 Answer: High availability in Docker Swarm is achieved by setting up multiple manager nodes and distributing services across worker nodes. Swarm automatically handles failover and load balancing to ensure service continuity.

21. How do you use Docker with Kubernetes?

 Answer: Docker can be used as a container runtime in Kubernetes by configuring the Kubernetes nodes to use Docker for running containers, or by building Docker images and deploying them as Kubernetes pods.

22. What is the purpose of Docker's BuildKit cache import/export feature?

• **Answer:** The BuildKit cache import/export feature allows you to save and reuse build cache across different environments or CI/CD pipelines, improving build performance by avoiding redundant operations.

23. How do you configure a Docker container with multiple networks?

Answer: You can configure a Docker container with multiple networks by specifying the `-network` flag multiple times with the `docker run` command or defining multiple networks
in the `docker-compose.yml` file.

24. What is the role of the `init` option in Docker Compose?

Answer: The `init` option in Docker Compose runs an init system (like `tini`) as PID 1
inside the container, ensuring proper handling of child processes and signal forwarding,
improving container management.

25. How do you automate Docker container deployments using GitOps?

• **Answer:** Docker container deployments can be automated using GitOps by setting up a Git repository as the source of truth for your deployment configuration and using tools like



Flux or Argo CD to automatically apply changes to your infrastructure when updates are pushed to the repository.

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