

Circuit Breaker & Resilience - Discussion Topics

Architecture & Design

1. When should you use circuit breaker vs retry vs both?

- Transient vs persistent failures
- Combining patterns effectively
- Order of pattern application

2. How do you determine the right failure threshold for a circuit breaker?

- Balancing sensitivity vs stability
- Service-specific considerations
- Monitoring and tuning approaches

3. What are the trade-offs between thread pool isolation and semaphore-based bulkheads?

- Resource overhead
- Timeout handling
- Use cases for each approach

Real-World Scenarios

1. Design resilience patterns for a payment processing system

- Which patterns are critical?
- Fallback strategies for financial transactions
- Idempotency considerations

2. How would you handle a cascading failure in a microservices architecture?

- Detection and alerting
- Automatic vs manual intervention
- Recovery strategies

3. What happens when your circuit breaker opens during peak traffic?

- Capacity planning implications
- Fallback capacity requirements
- User experience considerations

Implementation Challenges

1. How do you test resilience patterns effectively?

- Chaos engineering approaches
- Simulating failures in staging
- Load testing with failure injection

2. What metrics should you monitor for circuit breakers?

- State transitions
- Failure rates and patterns
- Latency distributions

3. How do you handle circuit breaker state in a distributed system?

- Local vs shared state
- Consistency across instances
- Coordination challenges

Advanced Topics

1. How do you implement graceful degradation without losing critical functionality?

- Feature prioritization
- Partial response strategies

- User communication during degradation

2. What's the relationship between circuit breakers and rate limiting?

- Complementary patterns
- When to use each
- Combined implementation strategies

3. How do you handle retry storms in a distributed system?

- Jitter strategies
- Backpressure mechanisms
- Coordinated retry policies